



20165 Heath Ave. PO Box 955 Lakeville MN

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# Journal *Express*

April, 2021

Andy Smith - Pastor

Dear St. John's friends,

As you receive this month's newsletter, you will be joining us in the key days of Holy Week. The Last Supper and the Crucifixion of Jesus will be ahead straightaway. Then, finally, after a day of waiting, Easter will dawn. It is in Luke's gospel we read, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!" To me, those are the most powerful words each year. They defy all our instincts and experience. Though we often deny death, we also know it is the powerful reality of our lives.

Everything eventually ends in death. We simply must go on faith that Jesus' resurrection has opened that same possibility for us after death. Even lauded late seminary professor, Dr. Gerhard Frost, penned his famous yearning poem about resurrection, "It Had Better Be True."

Yet, we will be gathering at **6:30 am, 8:30 am, and 10:00 am on Easter Sunday** in the church parking lot to watch the sun rise, bring with us all our hope, and sing in our vehicles to the radio and a resounding brass quintet all the triumphant songs of our faith in the glory of God: that God raises people and things from death. "This is God's doing," as the psalmist writes in Psalm 118, "and it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it!" Alleluia!

It's not a stretch at all to open our eyes to smaller resurrections that are happening all around us after a year of pandemic deaths, sickness, grief, closures, fear, and life-changing experiences. Here

we are, climbing out of our quarantines, looking bravely at a new world around us,

and seeing new possibilities and new necessary ways of doing things spring up. But, we're still here. And faith and hope spring eternal. And we know God is carrying us into this brave new world not only to live in faith but to proclaim confidently together that God is the God of resurrection. Of new life. Of vibrant new life, at that!



Much is ahead for us, including a phased-in return to in-person worship, hopefully starting over the course of the next several weeks. This month, I want to thank you, Johnnies, not only for your patience, support, and continued faithfulness here at church, but

also for embracing this past year with us with the spirit of adventure and hope with which we tackled everything. You've been gracious. You've been joyful, even. You have opened your minds to new ways of having to do things and have discovered with us how good things at church could still be in those worship services, activities, and ministries we could still carry out. I salute you and celebrate you! And, I celebrate our God who brought new life to us in so many ways, who held us through it all, and who is guiding us still into the glorious light of new days ahead.

Blessed Holy Week and the sacred time of Easter to all of you.

In the crucified and risen Christ,

Pastor Andy

# Children, Youth and Family

## Events

**A few notes about upcoming events!** Please contact me for more information at [amanda@sjlcl.org](mailto:amanda@sjlcl.org) regarding the events listed below. A note- I will be on PTO for the month of April. So please contact me before Easter, April 4 for assistance. I will be back the beginning of May. During my absence please contact [candy@sjlcl.org](mailto:candy@sjlcl.org) and she can direct you to the CYF team member that may be able to help.

## Summer Camp Opportunities:

**Luther Crest Bible Camp in Alexandria MN** has opened some additional spots the week of June 27-July 1. We have a group of 13 youth going the week of August 1, that week is full! However, I wanted to make sure everyone has an opportunity to get to camp this summer! Please contact Amanda for more information. There are programs for Middle school and High School students. We will have a zoom with our current group of campers this Sunday, if you are interested in camp please join us to learn more about Luther Crest Bible Camp. Contact Amanda for more information [amanda@sjlcl.org](mailto:amanda@sjlcl.org)

**Luther Crest Camp Sunday!** Sunday July 18. Come and enjoy a fun camp style worship.

**Vacation Bible School: June 14-17! Age 4 thru 4<sup>th</sup> grade**  
Climb aboard for mountains of fun at our VBS, Rocky Railway! On this faith-filled adventure, kids discover that trusting Jesus pulls them through life's ups and downs.

## Summer Garden:

**ROOTS!** St. John's is blessed with an abundance of land, to be good stewards of the land, we are going to plant a garden to help our neighbors. Our New **Roots** group will be made of middle school and HS Students that are interested in

growing vegetables for the food shelf. Our first St. John's garden will need watering, tending, weeding and harvesting. Please contact Amanda, we will find a time that works for the group to meet.

## Thank you to all of your participation in our March Madness Service Blitz!

Our small groups have traveled to Feed My Starving Children, VEAP-a food shelf in Bloomington, and made Easter Baskets for service workers and they have made blankets for the Lewis House. We have one more week of service on March 24! Please contact your small group guide or Amanda if need to know where your group will be this week. These projects were made possible by funds from Thrivent. If you have Thrivent or another similar program through your work please connect with Amanda. We hope projects like these in the future.

## April Affirm/Ablaze Programs:

**Location:** April classes at St. John's Church

**Dates:** April 7, 14, 21, 28

**Time:** 7:00pm-7:30pm

We are planning to be in small groups at St. John's for our April classes, beginning on April 7! Ninth grade students are following a different schedule. We will have a large group/small group model. Students will meet in the Sanctuary for 10 minutes. Following the presentation from Pastor Andy, they will be excused to meet in their small groups in different areas of the church. Brenna Chapman, CYF team member will be assisting with this Affirm/Ablaze during the month of April.

## Youth Worship May 16

Youth are invited to join in the planning, preparation and participation of our Youth Worship on May 16. Join us on zoom for HS Youth Group, Sunday nights at 7:00pm. <https://>

[us02web.zoom.us/](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85808429879?pwd=VW9ycE1OSFdkaUI2RE5XTU1jVm5lQT09)

[j/85808429879?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85808429879?pwd=VW9ycE1OSFdkaUI2RE5XTU1jVm5lQT09)

[pwd=VW9ycE1OSFdkaUI2RE5XTU1jVm5lQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85808429879?pwd=VW9ycE1OSFdkaUI2RE5XTU1jVm5lQT09)

Perry Fuerniss, CYF team member will be leading this group during the month of April.

## Sunday School!

### April Sidewalk Sunday School!

Join us on the east side of the building during the month of April! We will learn our Bible Story each week on the sidewalk! We will be walking on the Road to Emmaus, journey to Jerusalem and venture to Ethiopia! Many amazing stories of the New Testament and the life of the early Christians! Abel and Zabel, our very own puppet duo and Elisa our VBS director will be some of our fun featured speakers! Come and take a walk with us! Look in your inbox for the weekly sign-ups! Jenni Tange and Elisa Brown from our CYF team will be assisting with Sunday School during the month of April.



**Easter EGG HUNT!** Join us following worship on Easter Sunday! We are going to have an outdoor Easter Egg Hunt! No sign up necessary, please bring your own basket.

## Looking Ahead:

High School Service Projects for May and June  
Feed My Starving Children and VEAP Watch for information to come soon.

## Graduating Senior Sunday June 6

We will likely have the option of three services, one inside the sanctuary, our parking lot worship and our online worship. However, we wish for you to attend the parking lot service so we can recognize you and have you together as a whole senior class from St. John's.

## Return Team update

The Return Team continues to meet every-other week to create policy and protocol for St. John's ministry activities. This team has been diligent in its work, placing the safety of St. John's members, staff, and participants as highest priority. We are grateful for your concern and prayer for our work and for your graciousness as we study data around COVID in our community, county, and area.

We thank the many of you who just completed our Return to Worship Survey. As of the end of the survey, 166 responses came in, a terrific return rate! Well done, Johnnies! In the coming days, we will report back to you the results and our interpretation of them. Suffice it to say, your feedback is very important to us and we thank you for it.

As you have heard, we are assisting church staff and leadership in the decision to return to in-person worship as soon as it is feasible and safe. Currently, we are watching two key variant strains of the virus, as well as the fallout from massive Spring Break travel. We will know much more in the coming 2-3 weeks. Numbers are back on the rise, however, so, in spite of vaccinations speeding ahead nicely, we continue to urge you to get vaccinated, wear your masks, socially distance, and wash your hands often. This is still our best way to do our part to bring as swift an end to this virus and pandemic as possible.

For now, be hopeful with us as we look forward to a limited return to in-person worship in the not too distant future. Watch our video update on the Johnnies Central website at [www.sjlcl.org](http://www.sjlcl.org). Also, we will keep you posted in e-blasts when a date is solidified and what the requirements will be. No matter the case, it will be a great day at St. John's!

## The Friendly Neighbor-Walker

### Methodist Highview Hills Community

Highview Hills is home to residents who want to enjoy all aspects of living, learning, friendship, and wellness. In our Lakeville senior community, you can live as independently as you wish with the peace of mind knowing a full range of services and care are available, should you ever need them. We offer independent living, assisted living, memory care, care suites (enhanced assisted living), and respite care. Our award-winning community is across the parking lot from St. John's Lutheran Church, blocks from historic downtown, and near restaurants, shopping, clinics, art center and many professional services.

For more information on Highview Hills Community contact Dino LoBaido, Director of Sales and Marketing, at 952-985-9002 or [dlobaido@walkermethodist.org](mailto:dlobaido@walkermethodist.org) . [Highview Hills \(walkermethodist.org\)](http://HighviewHills(walkermethodist.org))



### Notes from the Finance Office

Thank you to everyone who faithfully sends offering to church. Remember when sending offering envelopes by mail, please use this address, **(do not include the street)**

St. John's Lutheran Church  
P.O. Box 955  
Lakeville, MN 55044

Also, the Pink Envelope Support for March and April goes to College Scholarships.

### Cup-making 2021 22nd Annual - St. John's 5th Graders First Communion

COVID STYLE Glazing cups took place March 7 with the same set-up.



### First Communion Cup Making

Our 5th grade students were able to create their own communion cups for the Maundy Thursday first communion service. Here are photos of their class and the finished products. Thank you to Rollie and Phil Brant for all their work in helping these students with this important faith journey milestone.

## “God in My Life” Scholarship Opportunity

Attention High School Seniors! The Compassion Team has a scholarship fund available for active St. John's members who will be pursuing a post-secondary education. If you are interested, please submit a one-page essay entitled "God in My Life" along with the information and items listed below. The Compassion Team will then review the essays and select scholarship recipient (s). Scholarship award (s) will be announced Graduation Sunday, June 6. Essays will be shared with the congregation in the June edition of the Journal Express, along with pictures of the students. Required: 1. Word file, not PDF, of essay emailed to [pastorandy@sjlcl.org](mailto:pastorandy@sjlcl.org) by Sunday, April 18 2. a copy of the original file of your graduation photo (jpg) or, if you didn't do grad photos, a clear copy of a file of a recent photo of yourself 3. Contact information: your email and phone, parents' email and phone, college name and mailing address of the college.



**Scholarships will be distributed in January, 2022, after student's first semester grades have been submitted to Pastor Andy.** Deadline April 18, 2021

St. John's Lutheran Church  
April 2021 Newsletter  
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## Vacation Bible School

Welcome to St. John's Rocky Railway VBS! At Rocky Railway, kids will discover that they can trust Jesus. Life is rocky for kids - full of ups and downs and twists and turns. At VBS, kids will explore Jesus' power and how they can trust Jesus to pull them through. Kids will experience fun music, interesting crafts, exciting games and fun videos about kids' lives.

Come and join the fun!! There are two options to choose from: Traditional VBS program, June 14-17, 9AM - 12 pm , Age 4 - Grade 4.—AND—**NEW!!** Family VBS program, June 14-16, 6:00pm - 7:30pm

\*Activities will take place mostly outside and all COVID protocols in place at the time of our program will be followed.\*

There is **NO FEE** for Either VBS option. (We are suggesting a \$10/child donation for those families that are able)

Registration is required and available on the website: [www.sjlcl.org](http://www.sjlcl.org)