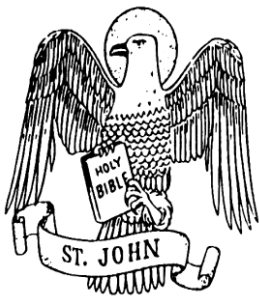


St. John's Lutheran Church
200 North Hickory
Toluca, IL 61369

Address Correction Requested



During this time of Covid-19 we are not having Worship or Sunday School. View weekly services with Pastor Nathan On Facebook and YouTube!

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pastor Nathan Johnson
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Cell Phone: 641-583-0106
E-mail: pastor@stjohnstoluca.org
Website: www.stjohnstoluca.org
Facebook: stjohnstoluca

THE EAGLE CRIER

Newsletter
St. John's Lutheran Church
May, 2020



Grace to you and Peace from the God who walks with us,

A few years ago now, Mary and I were looking for a church to go to one Sunday in Diyarbakir, Turkey. We were in Turkey as part of a post-graduate fellowship Mary was doing, travelling the world to learn from our Siblings in Christ about how their circumstances influenced their faith. Diyarbakir is in the far southeastern part of Turkey, not too far from the bordering countries of Syria, Iraq, and Iran. As you might suspect based on that trio of neighbors, from whom we never seem to hear good news, it is an area that has historically been plagued by unrest and violence. While Turkey is a majority Muslim country today, that was not always the case. Before the rise of Islam in the Middle East, the area that would one day become Turkey was a center of the development of Christianity, and many of our foundational doctrines were first conceived in the communities living there. The part of Turkey we were in has been a center for a group of our siblings called the Syriac Orthodox Church since shortly after Jesus walked this earth, and Mary and I were hoping to worship with them while we were in town.

According to our guide book there were three churches in Diyarbakir for us to choose from. We began with the one closest to where we were staying, but when we arrived the building was boarded up. Obviously, it had been closed. Undeterred, we continued to the next church in the guide book, but as we walked towards the church we were met by closed roads. We considered skipping worship and finding something else to do, but we gave the last church in the guidebook a shot before we gave up.

This one we found, and what's more, it was open. We were a little late and quietly went inside for worship. We found only a handful of people in the small stone building. There were more people in front leading the service in reading and song than there were in the pews, even after Mary and I arrived. They sang joyfully to our God: melodies that I did not recognize in words that I did not understand, but even so, it was moving to see their faith and devotion, proclaiming the Gospel here in Turkey as their ancestors had been doing for nearly 2000 years.

It was no coincidence that we had a hard time finding a church to go to that Sunday in Diyarbakir. Christians, and especially our siblings in the Orthodox tradition, have been an oppressed and abused minority in the region for centuries. They have had their property, their freedom, and even their lives taken from them by their government because they profess the same faith that we do at St. John's.

Sometimes I think about that small church in Diyarbakir and the people gathered there that Sunday when I am at Church without you in these days of quarantine and pandemic. I remember them when Mary and I sing and preach and read the Gospel in an empty sanctuary. When the frustrations of this time seem too much to bear, I think of them, I pray for them, and I remember that while this is but a season for us, it is a way of life for some of our siblings in

Christ. We are blessed to live in a land of freedom and opportunity, but as with all blessings that we receive from our God, we are called to respond with gratitude and appreciation; to be turned towards responsibility and care for our neighbor, and for the world around us.

Patience is not the chief of my virtues, and I am sure even those of you more saintly than I are growing tired of a wait that has no end in clear sight. This is new for us, but Christ's body has weathered far worse storms than this and always comes out the other side, proclaiming the Gospel, spreading God's love, and helping those around them. This is who we are, whether we are St. John's Lutheran Church in Toluca, gathered in a building on N. Hickory, or we are Christ's body gathered by the spirit wherever we are. No virus or quarantine or executive order can change that.

May God bless you and keep you safe. I am praying for you.

Pastor Nathan

Invitation to Bible Study

As you may remember, we were going to begin a class on the Gospel of Matthew before Covid-19 changed all of our plans. Pastor Nathan would like to invite you to the online version of that class beginning in June. We will read part of Matthew for each week, discuss its context, and dwell together in the word of our God and in community with each other. The class will be held on Wednesdays, both at 9:30am and at 7:00pm. If you are interested in participating, let Pastor Nathan know at pastor@stjohnstoluca.org and he will send you a Zoom link!

If you are interested in participating, but the suggested times do not work for you, let Pastor Nathan know that too so we can consider alternate times.

We Pray For...

Charlie Carroll, Alan Richard & Jane Spear: Heritage Health Center (201 Locust St., Minonk, IL 61760)

Edna Meinhold: Snyder Village Assisted Living, (1115 Harbers Lane, Metamora, IL 61548)

Helen Young: St. Joseph's Nursing Home, (401 Ninth St., Lacon, IL 61540)

Prayers Appreciated: Bob Baldwin, Erin Breyne, Dennis Conaway, Mary Haszler, Sandi Houtz, Emma Myers, Susan Petri, Alma Beth Pomeranke, Jan Pomeranke, Charlie Robinson, Gladys Schmillen, Charlotte Schulte, Holly Schumacher, Edie Soberri,

Ken Spear, Eva Stutzman, and Laura Weber.

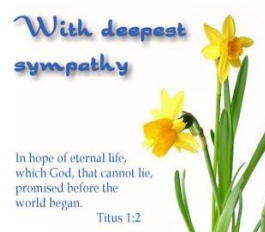
Currently Serving Our Country:

Hunter Conn, Frank Hall, Frederick Hall, Chris Leigh, Jeremy Luning, Jeremy Merdian, Sean O'Connor, Zach Richardson, Nicholas Swartz, David Thies, Josh Toepper, and Joe Tooley.

Liturgical Calendar

Year A focuses on the Gospel of Matthew.
Pentecost – May 31

June 7 – The Holy Trinity
Time after Pentecost
May 31 – November 25, 2020



We express our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Arthur Pitts who passed away during this time. A celebration of Art's life will be held at a later date.

Our sympathies go to Phil and Heidi Cook, their family and friends as Heidi's father, Howard Schumacher passed away during this time.

We are saddened at the passing of Carol Edwards, mother of Scott and Cindy (Haszler) Edwards.

Also leaving us at this time was Jim Myers, father to Joe Myers and Erin Breyne.



We are pleased to hear that Bob Calbert had his aorta repaired and after having coded 4 times had a pacemaker installed. He is doing well. Dara Jendrey had a partial leg amputation, is healing well and has received a prosthesis. Bob O'Connor had cancer surgery, is clear of cancer and needs no further treatments. Leone Skaggs broke her foot in several places, is doing well and ready to go on walks again. Both Pastor Bill Callister and Pastor Craig Swenson had surgeries and are back to preaching. Michael Topolski had cancer, but after his last pet scan he is cancer free. Jan Pomeranke is healing well after a second foot surgery and hopes to be able to wear a shoe soon. We pray for good healing for all.



We are pleased to announce that Mandy Mooberry had a baby boy! Kayson Dean Endress was born on April 10, 2020. He weighed 10 pounds and 2 ounces and was 21 ½ inches long. Congratulations on this new bundle!



In memory of those servicemen no longer with us:

Cedric Baker, Richard Baker, Donald Lee Ball Jr., Harry Bass, Oscar Bendlin, Louis Bendlin, Ernest Bendlin, Thomas Bond, William Brandt, Don Christ, Jack Clanin, Joe Clanin, Harry Clodfelter, Jack DeRubeis, Arnold Fandel, Kay Farner, Charles Fredricks, Elmer Fredricks, Blanche Kline Glazebrook, Theodore Guderjan, Otto Kenneth Hasse, Willard Hemenway, Elmer Henn, William R Holz, Alvin Huls, Raymond Imm Jr., John Juers, Charles Kline, Elmer Kline, Christian Korneman, Robert Kroeschen, Robert Leininger, Kenneth Litchfield, Lyle Gordon Mastalio, Albert McCasky, Chuck McCasky, Raymond McCasky, Chuck Morris, Donald Nuske, Roger Nuske, George Phillips, James Jim Peiper, Arthur Pitts, Donald Pomeranke, LaVern Pomeranke, Wayne Pomeranke, Melvin Porch, Stacy Porch, Gene Renken, Brunger Rodewald, Willard Schulte, Walter Shanklin, Robert Smith Jr., Donald Steinke, Roy Steinke, Gilbert Strobach, Robert G. Stutzman, Donald Sunken, Harold Swartz Sr., Tom Waddle, Walter Wink, Leland Winkle, Eugene Wood, George Young, Arthur Zilm, and William Zilm

Veterans from our congregation:
Jack Calbert, Bruce Clodfelter, David Clodfelter, Dr. Robert

Farner, Wayne Imm, Charlie Robinson, Willard Smith, and Ken Spear

Thank you to all who are serving or have served our country so well. We thank God for you!

Church Council

Current Members:
David Gerjets – President
Phil Cook – Vice President
Ruth Ann Clanin - Current Fund Treasurer
Ryan Gerjets - Bldg./Benevolent Fund Treas.
Paula Nenne - Secretary
Council Members at-Large:
Dennis Dahlbach
Tim O'Connor
Kate Reynolds
Melinda Tiraboschi
Alex Paulen
Dawn Gray
Tim O'Connor



March Birthdays:

3 Cara Keifner
6 Macy Gochanour
8 Mason Tiraboschi
9 Juanita Robinson
17 Chris Gordon
Justin Hahn
20 Jackson Lindberg
Gene Nenne
Rhonda Sunken
21 Tina Smith
26 Karen Kinsey
28 Kevin Cook
Jennifer Tooley
29 Pr. Nathan Johnson
31 Bruce Clodfelter
Sydni Tooley

April Birthdays:

4 Jodi Gochanour
7 Zach McClanahan
Anthony Tiraboschi

10 Aaron Suffern
11 Emma McClanahan
12 Chuck Swartz
13 Gary Haszler
14 Marilyn Juers
16 Rachel Cook
17 Liam Rodgers
18 Elliana Shide
21 Mila Magana
22 Ellen Fluech
23 Mary Haszler
 Susan Petri
24 Carol Hurlbut
25 Margaret Ann Stutzman

26 Edna Meinhold
28 Erin Breyne

Pastor's Address

Pastor Nathan's home address
is:
716 E. Lake Ave.
Peoria Heights, IL 61616

Newsletter Information

We ask all ministries of St. John's to please contribute updates on events and/or accomplishments to The Eagle Crier. It is the newsletter of St. John Lutheran Church and its congregation. Contact Carla and Tim O'Connor at (815) 452-2529 or toccmoc@att.net. Thank you.