

The Mustard Seed*

Newsletter for members and friends of
St. John's Lutheran Church, Waterloo
(Bennington) ELCA



2025



As I write this, I'm reflecting on how the temperatures changed noticeably overnight: warm and muggy Wednesday, 7-16, to cool and cloudy the next morning. In the 50s, even! Break out the blue jeans! Such dramatic changes can be attention getting.

What doesn't change, though, is God's love for you. There's a lot going on around us, with our health, our families, our communities, our nation and our world.

As we get ready to "Zoom In on God" through VBS, I encourage all of us to try to magnify the positives. We don't stick our heads in the sand and avoid what's going on, because that rarely works. But we can remember to pay attention to God, to share the light and compassion of God, and to be the kind of people that build up others because of the love of God.

Key dates to be aware of:

July 27: Worship, 9 a.m.

Aug. 3: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.

Aug. 10: Worship, 9 a.m.; Britain's last Sunday

Aug. 17: Worship w/HC, 9 a.m.; Cedric's last Sunday

VBS 3 p.m. at church with pizza supper; families drive to **pool party in Fairbank about 5:45ish. This is NOT a "Stop and Drop"** event as we need families to help and we want to give families a time to visit with each other, too! Come to one, both or either event! Get ready to **Zoom in On God!**

Aug. 24: Worship, 9 a.m.

Aug. 31: Worship, 9 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 3: Confirmation Orientation, 7 p.m.

Sept. 7: WELCOME SUNDAY, worship at 10 a.m. w/HC and then fellowship meal and service activities afterward.

Sept. 10: Confirmation, 7 p.m.

Sept. 14: SUNDAY SCHOOL starts, 9 a.m.; worship at 10 a.m.

School Kit Supply List

Our July and August mission collection is all about school supplies! Combined with the backpacks provided by our WELCA group, we fill sling-packs with supplies that help kids go to school.

- 4-70 page notebooks
- 1 30-centimeter ruler
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 1 pair blunt scissors
- 5 unsharpened #2 pencils
- 5 black or blue ballpoint pens
- 1 box 16 or 24 crayons
- 1 2.5" eraser

In 2024, the 40 kits that SJB provided became part of the 140,117 collected for distribution worldwide, including in the United States.

Other kits collected for LWR include personal care kits, baby care kits and fabric kits.

The quilts that our Monday quilters work on became part of a group of quilts numbering 370,818, also for use both worldwide and stateside.

Check out the chart on the bulletin board by the mailboxes for more information about this terrific ministry that we're thankful to support.

***Why "The Mustard Seed?"** In Matthew 17 and Luke 17, Jesus said that mustard seed size faith is enough. God is the one who makes things happen! Even a little belief is enough from us! This newsletter is a little glimpse into life here at SJB. Enjoy! We're also on Facebook! Look for the church page and the youth and Sunday school page, too

Scholarship Recipients

St John's will recognize this year's educational scholarship winners on Aug. 17 during worship.

Bethany Anderson and Brooke Best are working on graduate degrees in their respective fields, Bethany in nursing and Brooke in social work.



Congratulations to both Brooke and Bethany! We're pleased to help you reach your educational goals.

More Education News

1. Sunday School starts at 9 a.m. on Sept. 14. We'd like to get a feel for how many students we'll have in both lower grades and upper grades as it may be time to split into two classes.

Please keep that in mind when we meet for VBS so that we can more thoroughly plan. Classroom help will again be welcomed!

2. Confirmation Orientation for students in grades 7-8 will be Wednesday, Sept. 3, at 7 p.m. Students and at least one parent are to attend the meeting.

Farewells to Accompanists Britain and Cedric

Britain and Cedric have served as part of our accompanist rotation here at SJB for some time. Their music and their presence have been gifts to us. Now, they prepare to head off to college: Britain will be at Iowa, and Cedric will be at Columbia.

Despite getting packed up for school, they have served through the summer. Britain's last Sunday with us will be Aug. 10 and Cedric's will be Aug. 17.

Please make it a point to be at worship on either or both days to thank these young men and their families for the gifts they've shared at worship and to wish them well!



This happy crew, above, made good use of the rhythm instruments on our sending song on July 6. The instruments have missed being included in worship, so we're thankful we had a good group of young and willing musicians to use them!

Welcome Sunday, Sept. 7, and God's Work, Our Hands.

With Labor Day falling on Sept. 1, our Welcome Sunday will be Sept. 7. This is also the Sunday we change times for worship, back to 10 AM.

Following worship, we'll have a fellowship meal of some sort and activities, too. It'll be a good day to connect with folks and extend a welcome to the community!

We'll also have some service projects to work on together here at church: assembling the LWR backpacks and more.



Welcoming Two New Accompanists!

With Cedric and Britain off to college (see story, left), we're welcoming two accompanists into our rotation this summer.

Kevin Du and Ahan Tandon, both from the studio of Dr. Suzanne Torkelson, will become part of the regular worship rotation. Each has been here this summer to get a bit familiar with St. John's.

Kevin's first Sunday will be July 27, and Ahan will start the following month, on August 31.

Please give both our new accompanists a warm welcome, and let them—and their families—know how much we appreciate them! And give the same sort of appreciation to Alex, Sarah and Laurie as they continue to serve!

Float building pix



Top to bottom: Figuring out how to put our pants on...the clothesline! Checking out the blue jean quilt. Making sure things are just so!

Behind the Scenes for Dunkerton Days Float

Bringing to life the "Barefeet" part of the 2025 theme are Deanne, Kenedee, Lincoln and Bethany. Thanks to them for making barefeet T-shirts for the parade!

Thanks to everyone who helped, too: candy, blue jeans, bandannas, decorating/riding/driving the float and more. We appreciate the big team effort this was! More pics on Facebook!



SHINE FOR Jesus

This easy and colorful craft helps kids remember that Jesus is their light—no matter where they go!

What you need:

- Clear plastic cup
- Battery tea lights
- Tissue paper squares (pre-cut)
- Glue stick
- Markers (optional)
- Stickers (optional)

What you do:

1. Use the glue stick to press colorful tissue paper squares around the outside of the cup.
2. Add a simple phrase like "Jesus is my Light" or use fun stickers to decorate.
3. Turn on the tea light and place it inside the cup.
4. Turn off the lights and let your lantern glow!



Aug. 17: Zoom in on God!! **

Start at church at 3 for music, stories, crafts snacks, games, a pizza supper and then head to the Fairbank Aquatic Center at 5:45ish for family fun!

Families are encouraged to stay the whole time, starting at church. This is NOT a stop and drop event! We welcome parents to help with the various parts of VBS and then to drive to Fairbank for a fun time!

All generations welcomed to get involved!

****Zoom in on God** through the lens of Creation, Prayer, Welcome and Belonging. We'll dig out the magnifying glasses, make crafts for bigs and littles related to some of the themes and celebrate how God is near to us all the time!

2025 Semi-Annual Meeting Snippets

On July 19, the congregation met for its semi-annual meeting. Actions taken included empowering the finance committee to move investments to an area institution for the sake of local control, approving sending money from the Helping Hands fund to our SW Synod of Texas, ELCA, for flood disaster relief, and moving ahead with plans to clean the mold from steeple and the stucco and to repaint the stucco afterward.

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