

St. John's Lutheran Church

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May 2026 Newsletter



Serving in Worship during May

Acolytes:

3: Jaxton Brancheau
10: Nevaeh Woods
17: Jaxton Brancheau
24: Nevaeh Woods
31: Gia Fiser

Lesson Readers:

3: Megan Hill
10: Confirmation students
17: Michael Kidston
24: Lonnie Gillen
31: Jeanne Willson

Greeters:

3: Sue Dewire, Deacons
10: Confirmation students, Deacons
17: Doran & Stacy DeMara, Deacons
24: Ric & Cindy Clark, Deacons
31: Jeanne Willson, Deacons





May Birthdays

3 – Nick Carlson
4 – Wesley Dye
4 – Ann Kidston
7 – Lennan Shoup
8 – Addi Elser
10 – Erin Elser
10 – Adam Scott
12 – Allye Scott
14 – Melinda Shilling
16 – Alison Clark
17 – Quin Burt
17 – Maraylie Baker
18 – Austin O’Neal
19 – Amy Eriksen

19 – Quinn Shoup
20 – David Elser
24 – Grace Saneholtz
24 – Jim Engels
24 – Ziva Kidston
25 – Dorothy Myers
27 – Ellen Gearhart
27 – Larry Poynter
28 – Rozetta Luke
28 – Jean Scott
29 – Kyler Sapp
31 – Cody Ewers
31 – Marilyn Parrish

From the Pastor's Desk

“After Easter?”

Confirmation is a few days away. We are in the middle of the season of Easter on our way to Pentecost as Jesus bids farewell to his disciples on the Day of Ascension (May 14). Most have heard the expression ‘graduation from church.’ I would like to expand this to ‘graduation from Easter.’ What happens, if anything, after we leave Easter Sunday behind us? What did post-Easter look like for the disciples of Jesus? At one point, Peter says “I’m going fishing” and others accompany him in what appears a return to the olden days.

The disciples had wrestled with all of the emotions of Jesus’s betrayal, trial, public humiliation, and with His cruel death on the cross. “It is finished.” Death had conquered and now the one whom they had believed in and followed was gone.

Yet, there was His promise to rise. They struggled through the Sabbath with their grief, pain, and their emptiness. Hopelessness and helplessness still gripped their lives as the sun rose on the first day of the week. The women would leave their safe and secure homes to head out to the tomb for their unfinished business. The silent grief of the cemetery would only be broken by a question that could not be answered; “Who will roll the stone away?” The heavy stone that sealed the tomb from the outside world was as big of a burden as they carried in their hearts. But Jesus had said; “I am the resurrection and the life.”

As they walk in the early morning quiet, and they near the tomb, they notice that the stone has already been rolled away. When they enter the tomb, it is as empty as their souls. He is gone! But where has He gone? Where have they laid His body? An angel proclaims a message of hope; “He is not here, He is risen!” Remember how he told you ... I will rise on the third

day. Without seeing Jesus – they believe and they rush to tell the others who do not believe the good news. Peter and John run to make the trip from unbelief to belief when they find the empty tomb as it was described by the women.

Jesus appears to two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Jesus appears to the disciples in the Upper Room where he offers them His peace. The apostle Paul notes how Jesus “appeared to more than five-hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive.” For forty-days after Easter, they saw Him, ate with Him, touched Him, and heard Him. He is alive, He is risen but He is not staying. He is returning to where he came from. On the Day of Ascension, the God-man Christ returns to heaven to reign over heaven and earth. The final step in the sovereignty of God’s anointed was foretold in the Messianic Hebrew writings. “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool” (Psalm 110:1).

It’s only forty-one days after the resurrection that we can truly call it “after-Easter.” His disciples could not go with Him yet. Instead, they were told that they needed to remain to continue His work and to share His message. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20).

He left His followers with the good news of salvation and the forgiveness of sin for them to share. I have to wonder if they felt deserted or alone when Jesus ascended? They know that He is alive and promised to always be with them. The message of the resurrection is not graduation from being the church – but rather, it is graduation to being more fully and energetically His Church – “the body of Christ” in this world.

Is there a Shortage and Surplus of Pastors?

Is it possible that Europe and North America might soon become the mission field of Christ's church? The availability of pastors in every denomination is declining. Within the 550+ churches of the NALC, there are 63 actively seeking pastors. The seminaries are calling on churches to seek out gifted men and women to serve God as ordained pastors.

Most pastor's graduate after the age of 25. The largest demographic of our population, the Baby-boomers (1946 to 1965) are now retired, while pastors are asked to delay retirement until their 70s. The birth rate may be increasing with Gen-Apha (2010-2020).

Going to church can be a burden and archaic. Young adults are looking for spiritual fulfilment, but not the church. Whereas the wide variety of modern churches provides a climactic high, like any opioid it is only temporary and it still takes away time for our busy schedules. During the Pandemic, up to 30% of churches per year, who were struggling to survive, were forced to close. Some had lots of money stored away for a rainy day while others had multiple clergy who had to be laid-off. And while we might be seeing a spiritual revival, it is being diluted with a multiplicity of beliefs which lead away from Christ.

Surprisingly, this is also true of the ministry of improperly or un-educated pastors. Consider what the church might have looked like when the apostle Paul was the sole missionary and educator to the churches of Asia. His letter to First Corinthians is a prime example. Pastors and people strayed from the message of the Gospel. Such is the case throughout the growing church of the 21st century.

I recently attended a Zoom presentation by Dr. Bielfeldt (President of the Institute of Lutheran Theology - ILT) on the "Global Church". The ILT in South Dakota provides real-time on-line training for theology. Dr. Bielfeldt was sharing the concerns with providing this live on-line teaching platform to people living in the different time-zones of the world, using

older internet connections, and the huge demand for Lutheran professionals. In the Global-South, the church is growing exponentially. Some individual churches have over two-million members. Those providing pastoral support and preaching in those churches are often teaching erroneous theology. The scholastic system in those regions is not capable of handling the demand for training proficient clergy, while the demand is also greater than the number of Lutheran educators in North America. There are at least 7000 to 8000 pastors needing education in Ethiopia alone and an equal number throughout the rest of Africa and Indonesia. If the tides don't change – these may also be our future pastor.

Congratulations to our Confirmands

Gia LeAnn Fiser, Addalyn Mae Hendricks, Charlotte Grace Johnston, Grace Katharina Saneholtz, and LoDena Sue Woods are affirming their baptism during the 10 a.m. service on Confirmation Sunday, May 3. We need to keep them in our prayers as they continue to grow on their faith journey and develop their relationship with our Lord.

Montpelier School News

Scholarship Banquet is May 4 at 6:30 p.m.

Baccalaureate Service is May 13 at 7 p.m.

High school graduation is May 24

North Central Schools News

High School Graduation is May 24 at 2 p.m.

75th National Day of Prayer Event

Glorify God Among the Nations

Seeking Him in All Generations (*1 Chronicles 16:24*)

Join us this Thursday, May 7, starting with a continental breakfast at 8:30 a.m., at 9 a.m. worship, followed by the speaker, Markie Repp, and then prayers for the different areas of our country. It will be held at First Presbyterian Church, 114 W. Washington St. here in Montpelier. Markie Repp will be speaking on Faith and Our Founding Father. National Day of Prayer is sponsored by Montpelier Ministerial Association who use your donations to help the needy in Montpelier.

GLORIFY GOD
AMONG THE NATIONS

The Prayer at Valley Forge
©1975 First Freedom Art Company

SEEKING HIM
IN ALL GENERATIONS
1 CHRONICLES 16:24 NASB

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2026

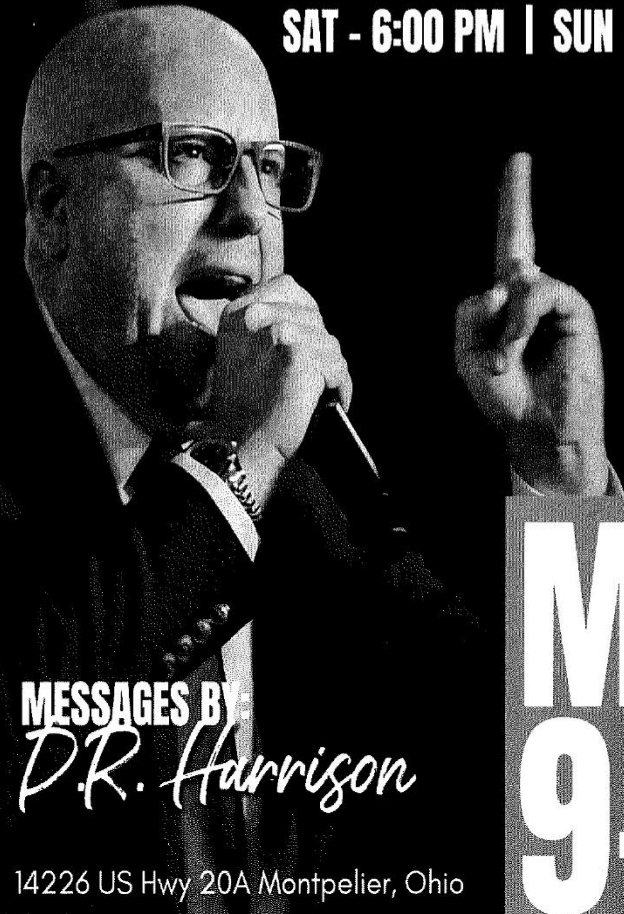
75th
NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

NATIONALDAYOFPRAYER.ORG

River of Life Worship Center

REVIVAL

SAT - 6:00 PM | SUN - 10:00 AM



MESSAGES BY
D.R. Harrison

MAY
9-10

14226 US Hwy 20A Montpelier, Ohio

Invitation to come, see, and hear at River of Life Church



MAY 15-17, 2026

PROUD SPONSOR OF THE YFC ONLINE SCHOLARSHIP AUCTION



PROCEEDS WILL BE DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENTS ATTENDING EVENTS AND FOR YFC LEADER TRAINING, ENSURING ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO OTHERWISE MAY NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE.



VISIT: [YFCSCHOLARSHIPAUCTION2026.GGO.BID](https://yfc.org/scholarshipauction2026.ggo.bid)

See bulletin board by church office for more details.

St. John's Outside Cleanup Day

The trustees could use your help to clean the outside of our church on **Saturday, May 16** starting at 8 a.m. Can you come and help them make our church beautiful after the long hard winter?

Movie Nights and Discussions

Wednesday, May 13, at 6:30 p.m., Pastor will be showing a movie and having a discussion on "Hung on a Twisted Cross", a 1996 documentary on the life and convictions of Detrich Bonhoeffer. This is NOT like Hollywood's version that came out last year.

Tuesday, May 19, at 6:30 p.m., Pastor will be showing "The Shack". Come and join in the discussion afterwards and share your thoughts.

Pastor Marc's Special Bible Studies

Now that Sunday School will not be meeting during the 9 a.m. on Sunday, Pastor Marc is offering on May 17, May 24, and May 31 a study "The Evolution of the Bible – How Did We Get Where We Are Today"? in between our two services of 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. We will meet in the WOTC room downstairs.

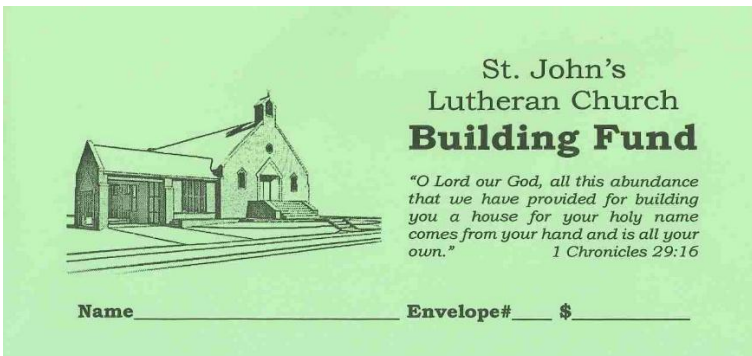
Invitation to the Village of Pioneer's One Day Celebration On May 17th, the Village of Pioneer is presenting United States of America, 250 Years, One Nation – Under God. It will include a community church service, family entertainment and activities, free meals, gifts, and a Drone show.

WOTC Collecting Bibles for the Month of May

The WOTC are collecting new and used Bibles this month to help with the NALC Disaster Response. These Bibles are passed out to those who have suffered greatly and lost so much during a disaster. It is hoped that handing out a Bible will give them comfort. You can donate them in the white boxes at each entrance.

Building Project Restarted

The Trustees want you to know that Building Project Fund donations are still being accepted as they recreate a new Building Committee again. More information will be shared with the congregation soon. You can use the green envelopes located in the pews for any donations you wish to contribute.



St. John's
Lutheran Church
Building Fund

*"O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own."
1 Chronicles 29:16*

Name _____ Envelope# _____ \$ _____



No WOTC Board Mtg. minutes for April or for May. They have decided to meet quarterly. The next meeting is June 14 at 9 a.m.



**St. John's Lutheran Church
Church Council Meeting
April 12, 2026**

Present: Ryan Burt, Mike Shilling, Jeanne Willson, Tiffany Thomas, Joey Burt, Al Henry, Brandon Shoup, Andy Carlson, Vonda Henry, Matthew Luke, Marilyn Parrish, Lisa Baker, Kati Burt, Robin Willson, Nathan Baker, Matt Sloan, Pastor Marc Lapointe, Brenda Athy, and guest, LoDena Woods.

- 1. Meeting Called to Order:** President Ryan called the meeting to order at 11:42 a.m.
- 2. Approve the Agenda:** Motion to approve the agenda made by Matt and seconded by Brandon. Motion approved.

3. **Opening Prayer:** Given by Pastor Marc.
4. **Devotions:** Given by Vonda Henry from the elders. (Parish Ed. in July)
5. **Approve Minutes of Last Meeting:** The March 8, 2026 Church Council meeting minutes, previously emailed, were read by council members. Motion to approve the March 8, 2026 Church Council meeting minutes made by Vonda and seconded by Joey. Motion approved.
6. **Treasurer's Report:** Given by Tiffany. (Copies of the March Financial Report are available on the bulletin board near the office and on the table in the yellow/orange folder by the front door entrance.).
 - No Treasurer's Notes for March
 - Motion to approve the March Treasurer's Report made by Lisa and seconded by Al. Motion approved.
7. **Board Reports:**
 - **Deacons** – given by Al. Present were Joey, Al, and Brandon.
 - There were 4 Sundays in March. The attendance for the 8 a.m. service had an average of 24, the 10 a.m. had an average of 59 which makes a total Sunday average of 82 for March. Wednesday Lenten services had an average of 27.
 - The deacons set up table and chairs for the Lenten meals.
 - **Elders** – given by Matthew. Present were Andy, Vonda, Matthew and Marilyn.
 - Discussed the elder assisting communion worship schedules.
 - Discussed the postcards for members who have not been attending church regularly. Still working on the list of names.
 - The elders have 4 volunteers that agreed to be on the Mutual Ministry Committee. Matthew will contact them this week to make sure they are still willing to be a volunteer.
 - **Parish Ed.** – Given by Kati. Present were Lisa, Kati, Megan, and Robin.

- Discussed Confirmation that is coming up May 3. The 5 girls will be wearing robes.
- Megan is getting gifts for graduates and teachers' recognition.
- VBS will be June 22-26 with the program on Sunday, June 28. Megan has already had some things arrive. Megan would like the adults that are helping to meet on May 6. Still looking for volunteers.
- Discussed about the community scheduling all their games for Wednesdays which interferes with church night.
- **Trustees** – Given by Matt. Present were Nathan, Dale, Bill, and Matt.
- Talked about spring cleanup day for the outside of the church which was rescheduled for Saturday, May 16 starting at 8 a.m.
- The downspout on the west side of the building which blew off in the storm is fixed.
- A piece of fascia is missing on the south side, but will not do anything because the building project will take place in that area.
- The IT person, Collin Turner, will be coming Tuesday to change the internet equipment location from Pastor Marc's office to downstairs in the boiler room on a rack on the wall.
- Al mentioned that the roof is still leaking in the peak by the bell tower which will need to be addressed during the building project.

8. Pastor's Report: Given by Pastor Marc.

- The Montpelier Good Friday Ecumenical service went well. \$450 was collected for the Montpelier Ministerial Association to help the needy people here in town.
- The National Day of Prayer will be at First Presbyterian Church starting at 8:30 a.m. with a light breakfast and then a service will start at 9 a.m. Markie Repp will be the speaker on History and the Religious Heritage of our Nation which should tie in with the 250th birthday of America.
- If anyone is planning to attend the Ohio Mission Region Convocation the deadline for registration is April 17.

- Movie Night is going fairly well. Hoping to have another one about post resurrection from the book of Acts.
- Pastor will be going on vacation June, but will return for VBS to help with that.
- Have started practicing for the youth service with everything completely done by the youth including the sermon for Mother's Day, May 10 at the 10 a.m. service. All the Confirmands are involved with that. Megan is planning to have the younger kids have special music also.

9. Other Reports:

WOTC - given by Brenda Athy, WOTC president.

- \$1200 was collected for Blanket Sunday Month. Mary Bates took it with her after she spoke at the 10 a.m. service. An additional \$1000 was sent with her from the WOTC account.
- April 25 will be a working event in Caldwell, Ohio, NALC Disaster Response warehouse. They are looking for volunteers who can help. There are facilities for volunteers to stay overnight there.

10. Approve All Reports: Motion to approve all reports made by Matt and seconded by Al. Motion approved.

11. Half-Time Prayer: Given by Pastor Marc.

12. Old Business:

- President Ryan spoke with Dale about the Building Project and the engineer is working on paperwork.
- President Ryan stated the new Building Committee will be the following people: Ryan Burt, Matt Sloan, Dale Gearhart, and Andy Carlson.
- Matthew gave a Mutual Ministry Committee update and the elders will be reaching out to those on the list.
- No one has volunteered for the Worship and Music Committees except Wanda Henry, Jeanne, and of course, Pastor Marc.

- Jeanne asked the trustees about the 10 items on a list she gave them last year and wondered if anyone had been asked to do them. Matt replied they will follow up about that.
- Kati inquired about the directory. Kati will ask McCrae Kidston about it.

13. New Business:

- President Ryan spoke about the next council meeting.
- Matt asked council members to consider having less monthly council meetings and suggested meeting quarterly with the individual boards meeting more often. Much discussion was held. A meeting can always be called in between times. Motion to approve to hold council meetings quarterly at the church while individual board groups will still meet at least monthly made by Matt and seconded by Lisa. Motion approved.
- The quarterly meetings would be the second Sunday of January, April, July, and October.
- Pastor Marc shared he and Mary will be going on vacation June 10 to June 30. Since Parish Ed. requested Pastor Marc be involved during VBS June 22 – 26, he will come back for that, but then go back on vacation till the 30th. He will be away on Sundays, June 14 and the 28. The VBS program will be the sermon for the 10 a.m. service on the 28th, but will need people to be contacted to fill in for the 8 a.m. services and June 14th at 10 a.m. Jeanne stated she will contact people to fill in. Motion to approve Pastor Marc’s vacation for June 10 – 30th made by Al and seconded by Joey. Motion approved.

14. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Al and seconded by Matt. Motion approved.

15. Lord’s Prayer: The meeting ended with the Lord’s Prayer. Next meeting is July 12, 2026 at 11:30 a.m.