



PASTORS' SERMONS

Please extend an invitation to your unchurched family members and friends to attend services with you. Many people say that they did not attend a church service "Because nobody invited me". So invite your friends to

hear God's Word and to become a member of God's Family. Your pastor's sermons are designed to be contemporary and aimed for bringing God's Word to bear on our most significant struggles and challenges of life. Because of Jesus we have hope for tomorrow, confidence in the future, light in our darkness, victory in each trial, rest when we are weary and love for a life time — for Jesus is the Light of the world. Our worship services focus on God's story and how it can still impact lives with stronger faith today and with hope for tomorrow.

PASTOR LUHRING'S SERMON THEMES

- Sat/Sun May 26/27 How To Have Real Faith James 1:19-21
- Sat/Sun June 2/3 How To Treat People Right James 2:1-13
- Sat/Sun June 9/10 How To Be Wise With Wealth James 5:1-6
- Sat/Sun June 16/17 How To Relate Wisely To Others James 3:1-4
- Sat/Sun June 23/24 How To Manage Your Tongue James 3:2-10
- Sat/Sun 30/July 1 How To Avoid Arguments James 4:1-4
- Sat/Sun July 7/8 How To Pray About Your Problems James 4:6
- Sat/Sun July 14/15 How To Face Your Future James 4:13-17
- Sat/Sun July 21/22 Your Guilt/God's Love James 2:10
- Sat/Sun July 28/29 Your Failure/God's Love James 3:2

THE FRIDAYS' IRON MEN BIBLE STUDY

Iron Men's Bible Study meets every Friday morning from 6:30AM 7:30AM in Adult Ed Room A. Topic for a couple weeks

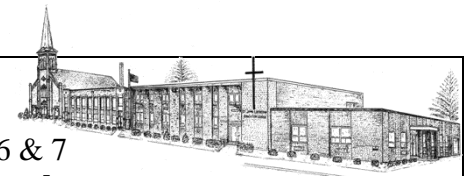
Topic: Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School-Matthew and Mark's Gospels with Bruce Wurdeman: The four hundred-year period of transition between the Old and New Testaments witnessed significant changes in Israel's History. In Palestine groups like the Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots, Essenes, and others filled the stage. Superpowers like the Persians, Greeks, and Romans were the dominant geopolitical players. Into this milieu comes Jesus, and the Word Incarnate along with His disciples would change the world forever. Come join this Friday morning Iron Men's Bible study with Pastor Luhring, Rich Baldwin, Bob Heyman, Walt Smith, Jim Schatz, Jim Sunderman, Tom Koppenhofer, Steve Zachrich, Charlie Koch, Dr. VanVlerah, Bob Dawson.

The Epistle

June July 2018 Vol. 76-77 #6 & 7

St. John Lutheran Church and
Christian Day School

655 Wayne Avenue, Defiance, OH 43512



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Rev. Matthew P. Schiemann
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PURPOSE STATEMENT

- Worshipping God's Name...
- Teaching God's Word...
- Living with Christian Values...
- Caring with God's Love

FROM PASTOR LUHRING

What is your potential for growth? Are you going to read any books in the next year, or during the summer? Are you going to any seminars? Are you planning to grow? Are you going to develop any skills? Are you going to learn any relationship skills? Or, are you just going to be the same 10 years from today as you are right now?

Capacity is your potential for growth! It is important because people who increase in competence are given greater responsibility in their work. Leaders are learners. The moment you stop learning, you stop leading. Growing businesses require growing people. The moment you stop growing, the business cannot grow. Staff members who serve many years at an organization have the ability to keep growing and learning and not get stuck in the mundane.

Look at Genesis 39:4-5, "Potiphar...made Joseph his personal attendant. He put him in charge of his master's household and everything he owned. From the day Joseph was put in charge of his master's household and property, the Lord began to bless Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake." When Joseph was taken to Egypt as a slave, he was not able to handle all that stuff. He had to learn how to manage livestock and a household. He had to learn and grow as he was given more responsibility. If you stop learning, you limit your capacity. But if you keep learning, you will keep growing and God will keep blessing!

Is your church growing because you are learning and gaining skills and knowledge?



**Stephen Leaders
and
Ministers**

STEPHEN LEADERS

Pastor Donald Luhring
419-782-5766

Penny Mueller - 419-784-3299

Dr. Jeff Pruitt - 419-395-1875

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STEPHEN MINISTERS

Dolena Bergman

Brenda Gary

Karen Haaser

Linda Hageman

Deb Hastedt

Sharon Lynn

Kathy Reynolds

Mary Ann Hurst



**St. John
Staff Directory**

Pastor

Rev. Donald Luhring
419-782-5766

Pastor

Rev. Matthew Schiemann
419-782-5766

Christian Day School

Principal

Shellie Kosmerchock
419-782-1751

Youth Leader

Angie Morris
419-782-5766

Senior Choir Director

Darci Van Vlerah
419-395-2460

MAY FOOD PANTRY STATS



Through May 22, 2018

67 families served; 239 people served
350 bags of food given
Approximately \$3,500. worth of food given

*“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you invited me in.” Matthew 25:35*

PASTORAL ACTS

Baptisms:

Cassiel Phillip Hicks May 13, 2018
Xylas Wayne Maas May 13, 2018
Amara June Homier May 20, 2018
Mila Faith Wichman May 20, 2018

Confirmands:

Hayden Winston Dales **Andrew William-Alpha Kiessler**
Bernie Jack Friedericksen **Tisha Ann Yocom-Martinez**
Derek Michael Froelich **Levi Japheth Miller**
Daija Laree Heller **Alyson Kaeli Saul**
Seth Matthew Tuckerman

Deaths:

Nettie Johnston passed away May 16, 2018
Funeral was May 21, 2018
Jim Swary passed away October 19, 2017
Memorial service was held on May 5, 2018

BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Lunchroom —Phil Rohlf
 Lunchroom—Faye Luhring
 Fellowship Room—Jeff Rohlf
 Fellowship Room—Sandy Gyurnek
Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. Moms in Touch—Faye Luhring
 (2nd and 4th Wed. of the month)
Friday: 6:30 a.m. Iron Man Study – Pastor Luhring

LADIES AID

Ladies Aid wants to thank all who had a part in making the "Girls' Night Out" a success. Church family and friends enjoyed great food, fun, fellowship, and entertainment.

Mark your calendars! **June 28th at 2:00 PM** is our next meeting in Fellowship Hall. Suggested item for donation to the FOOD PANTRY is deodorant. The program will be given by "The Ladies Fine Arts League ", consisting of our very own talented St. John women! Please join us!

There will be no July meeting. We will begin again August 30.

The Ohio District of our Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

Will be meeting in convention in June, Thursday and Friday, June 28-29 at Concordia University in Ann Arbor. St. John Lutheran, Defiance has one pastor and one lay delegate attending. Pastor Luhring, this year, and Richard Bonin, Chm of the Board of Elders will be representing St. John Congregation. Upon the retirement of Pres Terry Cripe there will be five candidates agreeing that their names be placed on the ballot and willingly to serve as president if elected by the delegates at the convention. There will be elections of four vice-presidents and a secretary and treasurer for the district.

The names of the five candidates for District President are:

1. **Rev. Peter Marcis, Senior Pastor** at St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Napoleon, Ohio.
2. **Rev. Michael Saylor**, Pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Convoy, Ohio.
3. **Rev. Dr. Kevin Wilson**, Ohio District Executive, Director of Missions and Ministry.
4. **Rev. Jack Davidson**, Pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Ohio.
5. **Rev. Dean Kavouras**, Pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Cleveland, Ohio.

FROM PASTOR MATT

Why Every Christian Should Sing in Worship

Most people will tap, clap, or sing along to a favorite song when it comes on the radio... At least if they are by themselves in the car or at home alone. My wife loves to sing; it's been part of her life for as long as she can remember. I've been somewhere in the middle. When it's a song I know or a band I love, I will belt out a tune whether or not it's in key or to the appropriate tune. I learned my love for singing in the countless concerts I went to through my teen years and early college days. There's nothing quite like being at a concert where the band can stop mid-song and hundreds if not thousands carry the chorus belting out the familiar lines as they ring through the makeshift cathedral of the venue singing out an anthem to life's experience.

But then again, maybe you've never been a singer. When you show up on Sunday morning you sit silently in the pew simply trying to make it through another song... Gritting your teeth, realizing this is what the church does... Patiently enduring multiple hymns, anthems, and sung responses. If that's where you are, Martin Luther wants to have a few words with you. Luther loved congregational music and considered music next to theology in importance. He also had no problem saying what was on his mind. In a foreword to a collection of songs arranged for multiple voice parts, he wrote the following:

When man's natural ability is whetted and polished to the extent that it becomes an art, then do we note with great surprise the great and perfect wisdom of God in music, which is, after all, His product and His gift; we marvel when we hear music in which one voice sings a simple melody, while three, four, or five other voices play and trip lustily around the voice that sings its simple melody and adorn this simple melody wonderfully with artistic musical effects, thus reminding us of a heavenly dance where all meet in a spirit of friendliness, caress, and embrace. . . . A person who gives this some thought and yet does not regard it [music] as a marvelous creation of God, must be a clodhopper indeed and does not deserve to be called a human being; he should be permitted to hear nothing but the braying of asses and the grunting of hogs. (Luther, "Preface to Georg Rhau's Symphoniae iucundae,")

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that may seem a bit intense, but there is an important part of our faith that is activated, engaged, and stoked by not only hearing music but joining in singing God's praises.

Now I know not everyone has the same skill in singing. But I can tell you from experience we grow and get better by using our voices. God doesn't demand we are perfect and in tune as we sing, but rather that we are so enamoured with our love for Him that all other insecurities and inhibitions fade away. Yet on a deeper level singing in worship has a powerful effect on us. It is easy to think it doesn't really matter if we are listening and meditating on the words of hymns and songs, but the following are a few reasons why singing and adding our voice to the chorus of God's praise is something every Christian ought to do.

First when we sing, we are obeying God. *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”* (Colossians 3:16)

“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart...” (Ephesians 5:18-19)

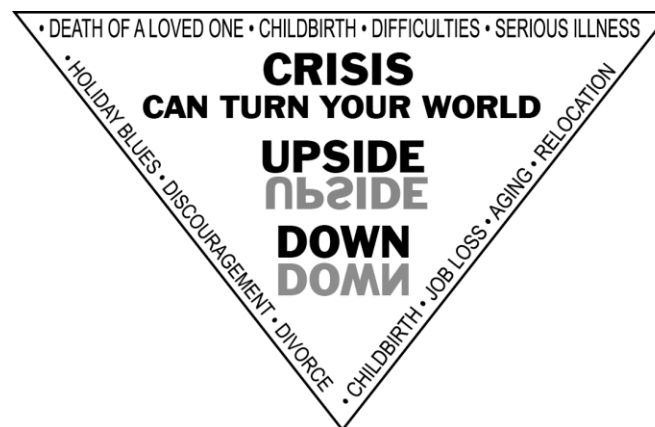
When we sing we are doing what God has commanded us to do, not only here in these New Testament passages but throughout the Old Testament and particular in the Psalms we are commanded to lift up praises to God with all of creation.

Second, singing creates deep roots in the Word of God. We all know the words to children's songs we learned in school or the theme song to our favorite TV shows. Music and Hymns are written around scripture and focus on God's character. In our Hymnal, at the bottom of each page, for nearly every song there is list of the Biblical passages that are used as the basis for the song. If then you are singing these hymns on a regular basis, you are immersing yourself in God's word. Hymns are written to catchy melodies and rhythms and so they become a simple way to take God's Word with you out of the pew and into your daily lives. You may forget the sermon by the time you've left the church but if you sing and become familiar with the hymns they can come into your mind throughout the week drawing you back to the truth of God.

(Continued page 5)



- Make a commitment which includes 50 hours of training, ongoing supervisory meetings, and an average of one 1-hour visit per week with the person receiving their care.
- Are names after St. Stephen, one of the first deacons in the early Christian church, commissioned by the apostles to care for the needs of people in the Christian community.
- Recognize this as a confidential ministry in which continuous effort is expended to maintain the body of trust between the person receiving care and the caregiver.





“Christ Caring for People through People”
Crisis Can Turn Your World Upside Down

When an event shakes up your world, you can either let it hurt you or help you. If you would like help in turning a life crisis into an opportunity of growth and faith, a **STEPHEN MINISTER** is ready to help you.

A Stephen Minister is:

- A trained lay volunteer
- A good listener
- Trained in confidentiality
- Supervised for quality care
- Ready to offer God’s love through a Christian relationship on a one-to-one basis

To get help or for more information contact the church office at **419-782-5766**. Stephen Leaders: Pastor Luhring, Penny Mueller, Kristina Phipps

Stephen Ministry is a confidential ministry: the identity of those receiving care and what takes place in each caring relationship remains private.

Stephen Ministers:

- Are lay Christians selected, trained and supervised by Stephen Leaders to provide effective Christian care.

Third, singing builds up one another. In Ephesians 5:19 that it says: *“Addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs...”* When we do what the Bible says and sing together as a church family, we hear one another’s confession of faith. We are hearing hundreds join with us and singing praises to God and about God as we build one another up.

Fourth, singing transforms our laments into praises. There are many times in the Psalms where the hymn writers are feeling abandoned, distressed, broken, forsaken. They begin by voicing their circumstances to God, but by the end nearly every Psalm of lament, the complaint is changed into praise by reflecting on God’s glory. Singing draws us back into praise for who God is rather than being so focused on our own circumstances.

Fifth, singing strengthens you through the trials. This builds on the last point, but our faith is deepened when we sing hymns and songs that have been born from the furnace flame. If you look at many of the hymns that we love and that have such deep meaning they have come from deep brokenness. When Paul and Silas were in prison in Acts 16:25 they sang hymns of praise to God. When our focus is put upon what God has done for us, we learn to patiently endure. Even Jesus at the end of the Last Supper, as it says in Matthew and Mark, “sang a hymn and went out,” and Jesus was nearing His suffering and death, but He sang praises to God.

Sixth, when we sing we glorify God. We put His praise and glory front and center in our lives. We are acknowledging Him as Lord and King who deserves our worship and praise. Just read Psalm 47:5-7, *“God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets. Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise.”*

When we are God’s people being formed into His likeness we join in the chorus with all the saints before us in singing praises to God. For how can we keep from singing when we know all He has done for us? So lift your voice, join the chorus, and fill the cathedral with God’s praise.

SCOUTING NEWS



Scouting News June/July 2018

Scouts from Cub Pack 75 (ages 5-11) and Boy Scout Troop 75 (ages 12-18) continue to look forward to new opportunities and challenges each month.

The end of the school year found Cub Scouts and their parents enjoy an overnight camping experience at Camp Lakota on May 18 and 19. Highlights included a special campfire program that focused on rank advancement, outdoor cooking, a visit to and presentation by Ranger Pat Bohn at the Shook Nature Center, and fishing in Lake Glengary. What a fun and memorable event!

Although there will be no weekly meetings during the summer, the Pack will remain active in June by traveling to Fallen Timbers, site of Anthony Wayne's defeat of the Native Americans, and then on to Fort Meigs to learn of its role in the War of 1812. July will bring the Rain Gutter Regatta, to be held at Diehl Park, where sailboats made by the Cubs will be moved down rain gutters by blowing on the sails through straws. A swimming party with a potluck will be held in August. In addition, there will be numerous opportunities at the District and Council levels for outdoor adventures, including overnight camping options.

The Troop will be attending a week-long Black Swamp Area Council Summer Camp session at Camp Lakota. Working on various merit badges, swimming, canoeing, kayaking and having fun at the water slides on Lake Glengary, climbing the tower, exploring God's creation at the nature center, enjoying evening campfires as well as participating in numerous other fun activities will provide unforgettable encounters.

Both the Pack and Troop provided flag-bearers for the St. John church services on Memorial Day weekend. In addition, both units participated in the Memorial Day Ceremony at the Defiance Community Auditorium to honor those who sacrificed so much for our nation.

The Boy Scout Troop has for many years recycled newspapers as a conservation project. Anyone wishing to recycle newspapers can place them in the garage on the east side of the south parking lot. Money made from their sale is used to help pay for Scouts to attend summer camp.

Youth and adults are always welcome to attend pack and troop events to learn more about the program. Questions at any time can be addressed to Mike Saxton, Chartered Organization Representative, at 419-439-2079.



Annual Congregational Meeting

The annual Congregational meeting will be Sunday, June 10th at 2:00 P.M. in the Lunch Room. The Budget Committee has prepared a "July, 2018 – June 2019 budget" to be voted upon. The president of the congregation, the treasurer, and board chairmen will be available to explain the reasons for the figures being voted upon. All members of the congregation are invited to attend. Copies of the budget are available at the church office.