

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, ELCA
5304 North 44th Avenue
Wausau, WI 54401

Telephone: (715-675-6950)

THE MESSENGER

September 2025



From Pastor Maggie

Beloved Community,

I hope you all had a joy filled summer, found time to rest, and time to connect with God. As we look towards fall, as the air begins to cool, and as the leaves turn shades of gold, pink, orange, and crimson, we are reminded yet again of the steady rhythm of God's creation.

Fall is a season of both change and abundance—fields are harvested, families gather, and we prepare our hearts for the season ahead. In the midst of change, God's promises remain constant, abundant, and for us.

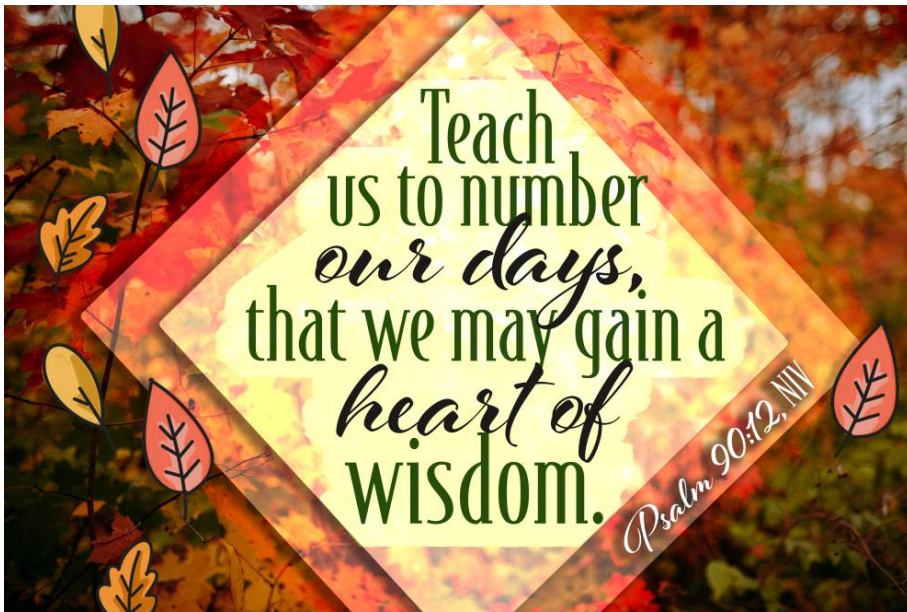
This September, we look towards many joy-filled events: our **Rally Sunday Kickoff** with our annual **Blessing of the Backpacks**. A time to ask God to surround all this school year (students, parents, guardians, teachers, and staff) with kindness, courage, wisdom, and growth. We look towards the start of **Confirmation & Sunday School**, a fun-filled **fall extravaganza day at Wilke's** with all our youth, and our annual **Chili Dinner & Raffle** (sign-up is in the Narthex for chili donations needed). We are also in need of raffle donations. ***All donations must be to St. John by September 13. Ticket sales will start Sunday, September 14*** (Rally Sunday).

This fall also brings us into a new chapter as a congregation. I am filled with gratitude and excitement to continue in our merger discussions with **Immanuel Lutheran Church**. This merger is not the end of one story and the beginning of another, but rather a weaving together of gifts, histories, and ministries into something stronger and more vibrant. We give thanks for the ways God is leading us to be church together—sharing in worship, service, fellowship, and outreach.

As we move into this season of change, I invite each of you to consider how you might bring your gifts to this new chapter. Just as fall reminds us of the harvest, our church is ready to gather in the fruits of our faith, the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Together, we can be a living witness of these gifts in our community.

May the beauty of autumn remind us of God's abundance, and may the Spirit continue to guide us as we grow into one body in Christ.

*With Love & Gratitude,
Pastor Maggie Westaby*



“Council Corner”
Greg Grudznske - Education

When it comes to religious education, St. John is a very busy place and is about to get even busier as fall begins. First, let's have a recap of summer activities.

St. John sent five confirmation students to Pine Lake Camp, an ELCA Lutheran camp from June 15 - June 20! We had five days of VBS bliss all wrapped up in four days, as one day had stormy weather. We had a very nice turnout every day. In fact, 31 kids attended! We had 12 Jr. High/High School kids volunteer and help out! We also had 14 adult leaders!

The curriculum used was TRUE NORTH and the theme was Trusting Jesus in a Wild World. I definitely had the words “trust Jesus” screamed into my ear many, many times. My eardrums are almost recovered. More importantly, I'm pretty sure the kids got the point that through many different circumstances we can always “trust Jesus”.

Each day explored some different circumstances such as: when we wonder, when we feel alone, when we feel powerless, when we need hope, and when we need help...we can “trust Jesus”. Through reading, interactive activities, dance, play, questions and answers, the very excellent teachers we are lucky to have here at


St. John wove scripture and story to hammer home the point that we can all “trust Jesus”.

The kids did miss out on throwing water balloons at group leaders because of lightning and thunder... awww. However, they will get a chance anyway on Rally Sunday which is September 14th. Sunday school is right around the corner in September. Trusting Jesus in a Wild World will be the theme of Sunday school! Please register your child if you haven't yet.


Confirmation classes will begin again soon with an introductory meeting Wednesday, September 10th at 6:30 PM. On September 21st all St. John youth are invited to Wilkes Corn Maze at 1 PM. Something else to look forward to, on October 5th, at 1:30 PM, is pizza and bowling for first and second-year students and the graduating class!

Adult Bible study sessions will begin again soon starting with a look into the Gospel of Luke. Please join us for a very interesting discussion! If you ever wanted to take a “deep dive” into the Bible and Lutheran theology, please consider checking out the Lay School which will begin classes again in September at St. Andrew's in Rib Mountain. See me if you have questions on that. As you can see, there are a lot of opportunities to plug into. Hope you enjoyed your summer and let's continue to “trust Jesus”!

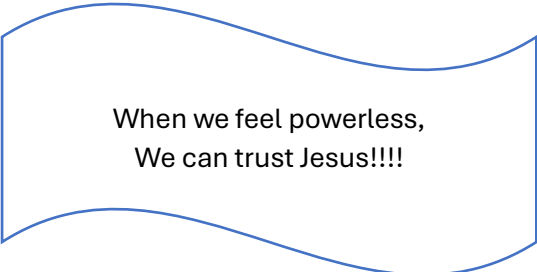
Greg Grudznske



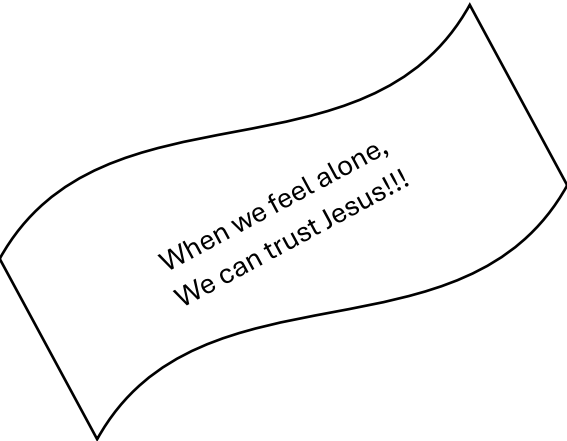
“When we need help,
We can trust Jesus!!!



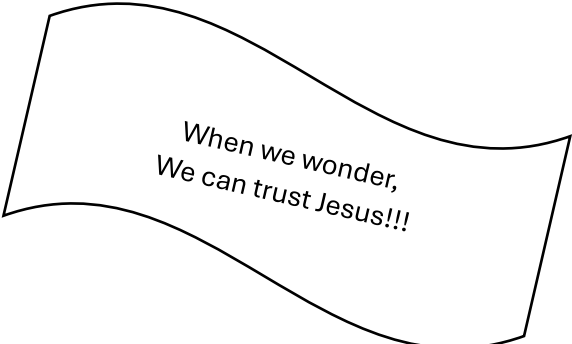
When we need hope,
We can trust Jesus!!!!



When we feel powerless,
We can trust Jesus!!!!



When we feel alone,
We can trust Jesus!!!



When we wonder,
We can trust Jesus!!!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Confirmation Registration is now open! See our website for details!

<https://stjohnwausau.org/education/confirmation-classes/>

Sunday School Registration is now open! See our website for details!

<https://stjohnwausau.org/education/sunday-school/>

Sunday, September 7th will be Immanuel's last Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. We encourage St. John members to attend Immanuel's service in support of them and our merger. **To accommodate Immanuel, St. John's Worship Service will be at 8:30 a.m. *This will be a shortened service without communion.***

Wednesday, September 10th at 6:30 p.m. Confirmation Orientation! All first and second year students are required to attend this informative meeting with one parent.

Sunday, September 14th Rally Sunday, Blessing of the Backpacks, Revenge of the Water Balloons & Potluck! Join us this year on Rally Sunday for a fun filled Worship Service & Fellowship. Bring a favorite dish to pass! Sign-up in the Narthex!

Sunday, September 21st at 1:00 p.m. St. John Youth Outing at Wilke's!
(All youth – Sunday School through High School)

Sunday, September 28th WORSHIP IS @ 10 AM! Chili Dinner & Raffle to follow. Sign-up in the Narthex for chili donations needed. We are also in need of raffle donations. ***All donations must be to St. John by September 13th Ticket sales will start Sunday, September 14 (Rally Sunday).***

Monday, September 29th at 6:30 The Book Club will discuss *The Busybody Book Club* by Freya Sampson.

Sunday, October 5th at 1:30 p.m. Confirmation Students & High School Students Bowling at Days-Bowl-A-Dome! Join us for pizza, bowling, soda, and fun! Please RSVP to Pastor Maggie for proper reservations.

St. John is an Event Partner for 2025 Highland MobilePack!

St. John will be sending volunteers to help pack meals on **Saturday, November 15th 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.** Sign-up in the Narthex. **Deadline to sign-up is Sunday, September 21st** St. John will be sponsoring each volunteer at **\$60/volunteer.** If you would like to donate directly to this, please let Ann know! This is a wonderful opportunity to provide food for those in need! Meals will be sent to schools, orphanages, refugee centers, and job training programs in over 70 countries. 100% of funds go directly to meal ingredients.



Council Members. Here is a list of Council members. Please contact them with any concerns or issues you may have. Council meets once a month and welcomes input from the congregation.

President: Jennifer Schwede – 715-432-6079; jenniferschwede@aol.com

Vice President: Karen Ohrmundt – 715-370-0645; tkohrmundt@frontier.com

Treasurer: Perry Kufahl – 715-675-1383; 715-409-0524; pnskufahl@outlook.com

Secretary: Rick Nevers – 715-574-0288; rlnevers57@gmail.com

Trustees: Scott Oestreich – 715-675-4360; scottsmachinellc@gmail.com

Ryan Landwehr – 715-212-3540; ryanlandwehr@aol.com

Evangelism: Connie Nowak – 715-675-1577; bcdenowak@gmail.com

Fellowship: Jeanne Klinger – 715-675-9939

Education: Greg Grudznske – 715-212-6529; gregorylinda@gmail.com

Worship: Randy Knapp – 715-581-5558; rknappeoj@gmail.com

Council Meeting Minutes. Copies of the minutes from the most recently held Council meeting are by the mailboxes. Please feel free to pick up a copy. If more are needed, please contact the church office.

Live Streaming and Photography Notice. When you enter a St. John Church service or event, you will be entering an area where photography, video and audio recording or live streaming may occur. If you prefer not to be recognized on camera, the back row inside the church is not within viewing distance of a camera and communion will typically be only on a wide shot where it may be difficult to recognize congregants. Parents, please note our children's sermons are being recorded and live streamed. If you do not want your child to be recognized on camera, please refrain from having them participate.



Attendance Report

	2025	2024
Average Weekly/June	67	62
Average Weekly/July	67	58
Average Weekly/August	76	56
Average Weekly/Year-To-Date	87.4	94

Homebound Parishioners. The following parishioners are no longer able to consistently attend worship services. Pastor Maggie visits them to remind them that they are loved by God and loved by their community of faith, St. John. Sometimes it is helpful to hear those reminders from someone.

Carol Fitzke
237227 N. 120th Ave.
Wausau, WI 54401

Marlene Opichka
Renaissance Sr. Living
4602 Barbican Ave. #105
Weston, WI 54476

Harley Goetsch
Rennes Health/Rehab Ctr.
4810 Barbican Avenue
Weston, WI 54476

Jim & Barbara Leffin
214 N. 12th Avenue
Wausau, WI 54401

Fritz Poeske
Waterfall Health of Wausau
1010 E. Wausau Ave.
Wausau, WI 54403

Mary Anne Klinker
Renaissance Sr. Living
4810 Barbican Ave #301
Weston, WI 54476

Alene Howe
Acorn Hill Apartment
430 Orbiting Dr. #19
Mosinee, WI 54455

Dorothy Westfall
4205 Fleet Dr.
Wausau, WI 54401

Marlene Bahr
238456 N 84th Ave.
Wausau, WI 54401



September Birthdays

09/02 Nancy Frostman
09/02 Sue Harris
09/02 Sam Young
09/03 Taylen Augustine
09/03 Tyler Bunge
09/03 Timothy Mielki
09/04 Mindy Arndt
09/04 Croy Sala
09/06 Easton Voigt
09/07 Greg Grunenwald
09/10 Marla Harris
09/12 Brian Nowak
09/12 Tre Swemke
09/13 Colter Grueneberg
09/13 Carter Grueneberg
09/14 Addilynn VanDerGeest
09/15 Greg Melander
09/16 Patricia Luce
09/16 Jackson Mueller
09/16 Chad Walter
09/18 Michael Preisig
09/20 Eleanor Grueneberg
09/20 Pete Hirn
09/21 Jessica Switlick
09/22 Heather Gilles
09/22 Karla Schuett
09/23 Roger Knight
09/23 Mitch Lubecke
09/23 Frederick Poeske
09/23 Kelsi Seubert
09/24 Douglas Doede
09/24 Douglas Luce
09/25 Mandy Herning
09/27 Hunter Landrath
09/29 Dale Nass
09/29 Zachary Voelker
09/30 Sharon Kilinski

September Anniversaries

09/05 John & Susan Rakow
09/08 Eugene & Kelly Dehnel
09/08 Mike & Sharon Kilinski
09/14 Tim & Ann Ohrmundt
09/18 Jerome & Debbie Klug
09/19 Jason & Ashley Borrero
09/19 Joshua & Brooke Howe
09/20 Michael & Tara Pasholk
09/21 Jacob & Jessica Pierschalla
09/23 Dan & Mindy Arndt
09/26 Bill & Jennifer Schwede
09/28 Roger & Susan Knight
09/29 Brec & Rachel Ohrmundt
09/30 Josh & Ciera Grueneberg



**SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS
& ANNIVERSARIES**

Sunday School / Confirmation Schedule

2025 – 2026



September 2025

Sunday School

- 9/14 Rally Sunday / Blessing of the Backpacks
- 9/21 Creation
- 9/28 (No Sunday School) Chili Luncheon

Confirmation Schedule

- 9/10 Introduction Meeting/Orientation
- 9/14 Rally Sunday, Blessing of the Backpacks & Potluck
(Opportunity to get Community service for helping at the potluck)
- 9/17 Class
- 9/21 Wilkies Corn Maze @1:00 pm



Worship Schedule

Sunday Mornings

9:00 a.m.

Sunday School

10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Mission Statement: "We are called to serve God; serve each other; serve the community; serve the wider church."



Pastor Maggie Westaby

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Web Address: stjohnwausau.org