

**MOUNTAIN**

**OR**

**CROSS**

**MARK 9:2-9**



February 13-14, 2021

## IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Bible teaches that along with the bread and wine of Holy Communion we also receive the true body and blood of our Savior. Jesus' own words, "this is my body" and "this is my blood for the forgiveness of sins" reveal His Real Presence in the sacrament (Luke 22, 1 Cor. 10:15-16). The Bible also teaches (1 Cor. 11:23-32) the Lord's Supper, properly received brings great blessings, but improperly received without understanding can actually incur God's judgment. If you are a baptized Christian who has been instructed in the Biblical teaching of communion, please feel free to commune today. However, if you have any questions, please first speak to a pastor.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### OLD TESTAMENT READING: 2 Kings 2:1-12

When the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; the Lord has sent me to Bethel." But Elisha said, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. The company of the prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha and asked, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you today?" "Yes, I know," Elisha replied, "so be quiet." Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, Elisha; the Lord has sent me to Jericho." And he replied, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went to Jericho. The company of the prophets at Jericho went up to Elisha and asked him, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you today?" "Yes, I know," he replied, "so be quiet." Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; the Lord has sent me to the Jordan." And he replied, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So the two of them walked on. Fifty men from the company of the prophets went and stood at a distance, facing the place where Elijah and Elisha had stopped at the Jordan. Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it. The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?" "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied. "You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah said, "yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise, it will not." As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw this and cried out, "My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!" And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his garment and tore it in two.

### EPISTLE READING: 2 Corinthians 3:12-13; 4:1-6

Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

### HOLY GOSPEL: Mark 9:2-9

After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.) Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him! Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

# THE WEEKLY CONNECTION

ONE IN JESUS... REACHING MANY!

Week of February 14, 2021

## WORSHIP CELEBRATION



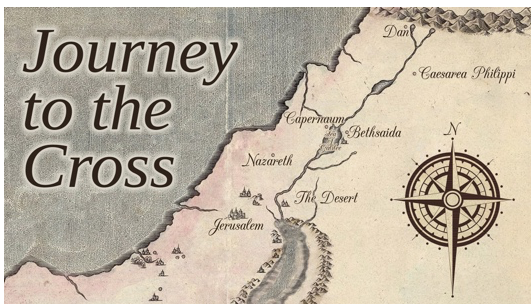
Some of the hardest conversations we have are with people who are the closest to us. For Jesus, time and time again He had to correct, rebuke, or silence His own close group of disciples when they wanted glory in His Kingdom and not the message of the cross and His suffering. In the Transfiguration this weekend we see (as John would write) “His glory” on the mountain, but the conversation between Elijah and Moses would be about “His cross”. As His followers in this generation, what is

our focus? Join us this weekend in worship for an in-depth discussion of these two choices along with the implications for each.



### ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP: February 17 @ 7:00 PM

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the 40 days preceding Holy Week called Lent. It is a time to turn toward God in repentant openness toward His will in transforming us into His likeness. In addition to the Lord’s Supper, our contemplative Ash Wednesday services will feature the “imposition of Ashes” (all following safe protocols) as a reminder of our mortality apart from Christ. This time of worship will also be available online via Facebook and Vimeo.



### LENTEN WORSHIP SERIES BEGINS NEXT WEEKEND

Maybe you’ve heard it said that a road trip isn’t simply about arriving at the destination, but just as importantly, experiencing the journey to get there. While our Savior Jesus had our eternal salvation in mind as His ultimate destination on a lonely hill outside Jerusalem, the route He mapped to get there was filled with many historic points of interest that gave even greater understanding and significance to those who made the journey with Him. Join us in

worship online or onsite throughout the Lenten season as we travel that same road together and experience the sights, sounds, and often unexpected scenery that give even greater context to where we are today.



**JOURNEY TO THE CROSS JOURNAL** - As part of our Lenten journey we are also providing a booklet of readings and notes to journal your thoughts of our journey to the cross. It includes daily readings for the Lenten season that go along with our series. In the booklet we also have a place to get a stamp print for kids (of all ages) to mark when they complete the week. Pick up your booklet today, or if you are doing everything remotely, a PDF copy is available on our website.

**LENTEN SEASON WORSHIP SCHEDULE** continues with many options, both onsite and online. We invite you to find the option that works best for your family in these days and join in worshipping and growing closer to your Savior Jesus.

#### **LENTEN WORSHIP SCHEDULE:**

##### **Modern Praise** (gymnasium)

**Onsite:** Saturday @ 5:00 PM | Sunday @ 10:45 AM

**Online:** Facebook Live or Vimeo @ 10:45 AM. A recording of this service is also added to the *Online Worship Resources* page as soon as available.

##### **Traditional Praise** (sanctuary)

**Onsite:** Sunday @ 8:00 AM | 9:30 AM | 11:00 AM

**Online:** Facebook Live & Vimeo @ 8:00 AM. A recording of this service is also added to the *Online Worship Resources* page as soon as available.

##### **Traditional Lenten Midweek** (sanctuary)

These 30 minute services of spiritual reflection are not a repeat of the weekend, but rather are a wonderful way to add an extra spiritual pause to augment the week.

**Onsite:** Wednesdays @ 7:00PM

**Online:** Facebook Live or Vimeo

#### **IMPORTANT ONSITE NOTE**

In keeping with the CDC COVID-19 safeguards, face masks will continue to be worn and social distancing followed at worship services. For more information, visit [www.stjohnrochester.org/regathering-guidelines](http://www.stjohnrochester.org/regathering-guidelines) before attending worship onsite, as we work together to stop the spread of COVID-19.

## **BIBLICAL DISCOVERY**

#### **REOPENING TO ONSITE BIBLE CLASSES AND SMALL GROUP GATHERINGS**

As verbally announced last weekend, after consulting further with local Rochester and Oakland County health officials in regard to in-person gathering ordinances, we have been given the go-ahead to begin regathering on our campus for onsite Bible classes and St. John ministry-related meetings with full protective protocols in place. Be watching for more information as classes and groups begin to meet once again! Praise the Lord!

**OFFICE CLOSED FEBRUARY 15** – Please note that Monday is President’s Day and our church & school office will be closed for the day.

### *Healing Hearts*



**NEW SUPPORT GROUP – HEALING HEARTS STARTS MARCH 1** Have you recently or are you currently experiencing a broken heart in your marriage? Have you gone through or are you going through an unwanted divorce? If so, Healing Hearts might be for you. Healing Hearts is a new support group for those who have or are experiencing heart break in their marriage or have gone through an unwanted divorce. This can be a lonely and isolating time; we are here to listen and encourage. God has a plan for your life, and you can enjoy His

plan and His blessings when you are the best version of yourself. This group is a safe place to share your hurts and disappointments, but it is also a place for encouragement to heal and grow.

Healing Hearts will meet the first Monday of the month, starting March 1. For more information email Suzanne at [suzannep1227@gmail.com](mailto:suzannep1227@gmail.com).

## CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** This year, Sunday School is being provided as an online weekly video. For more information, contact Steve Wilson, Child & Family Ministry Director, [swilson@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:swilson@stjohnrochester.org).



### **SAVE THE DATE FOR EASTER EGG-STRAVAGANZA | A**

**Journey to the Cross:** Families are invited to attend this year’s Easter Egg-stravaganza, a Journey to the Cross, on **Saturday March 27, 1:00 – 3:00 PM**. The event will be held primarily outdoors, with some child-friendly drama presentations to help share about the life of Jesus, a petting zoo, crafts, and an opportunity for each child to hunt for eggs. The experience will be about 30-45 minutes and sign-up for a specific timeslot will be required. Sign-

up information will be shared in next week’s Connection.

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2021** - is tentatively being planned to take place on our campus **June 21-25** from 9am-noon. The details are still being worked on but please add the dates to your calendar, so you and your children don’t miss out.

**GROUP MISSION TRIP** – Now is the time to register for the **July 25-31, 2021** Group Mission trip for 6-12 graders. Steve Wilson has created a video presentation for those students or families interested in attending this summer. To view the video and get more information, please see our website, [stjohnrochester.org](http://stjohnrochester.org).

**FIRST COMMUNION CLASS** - The sacrament of communion is an important part of a Christian’s walk with Jesus. First Communion class is offered for those families interested in having their child (6th grade



and older) take communion. Parents will need to attend class sessions with their child and work together to decide if their child is ready to receive the sacrament. For more information, please contact Director of Child and Family Ministry Steve Wilson at [swilson@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:swilson@stjohnrochester.org) or 248-402-8006. Please sign up for the class at [www.stjohnrochester.org/discover/middle-school](http://www.stjohnrochester.org/discover/middle-school). Classes are scheduled for March 7, 14, 21, 28 at 9:30-10:30 AM in the Youth Room.

### ST. JOHN LUTHERAN SCHOOL NEWS

**Basketball is underway!** We give thanks that our girls' and boys' basketball teams for 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades have been able to resume, following all required protocols. Thank you to our volunteer coaches for helping make the season possible!

**Future City Competition:** Our St. John team submitted their entry *virtually* for the Michigan Regional Future City Competition last Friday, February 5. Results will be shared with teams on February 25. God's blessings to the team, especially to the presenters Hannah, Emerson and Brendan, and to the team's alternate, Grant. Thank you to the program's engineer educator, Dr. Linda Gerhardt and to the teacher sponsor, Mr. Grothaus.

The Michigan Regional Competition is sponsored by the Engineer Society of Detroit. St. John been a part of this outstanding program, with highly successful results, for more than 20 years. For more information visit:

<https://www.esd.org/programs/futurecity/>



**School Open Enrollment is now underway!** Some sessions are at capacity or with waitlists. For more information about our excellent, Christ-centered program, or to schedule a personal tour, please visit [stjohnrochester.org/school](http://stjohnrochester.org/school) or contact our Director of School Admissions at 248-402-8012 or [bdameron@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:bdameron@stjohnrochester.org).

## ST. JOHN LUTHERAN SCHOOL

# NOW ENROLLING

Preschool to 8th Grade



### LIGHTHOUSE – MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY GRADES 6-8

No meeting Sunday, February 14 (this weekend). We look forward to gathering next week, Feb. 21! For more information, contact Steve Wilson, Child & Family Ministry Director, [swilson@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:swilson@stjohnrochester.org).

### HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

**This SUNDAY/Today – Sledding Day!** We will meet at Brandon Township Community Park, 1414 Hadley Rd, at 2:00 PM.

**Feb. 21 - Super Smash Bros Tournament** from 6:00-8:00 PM in the gym. Email Mrs. Hammett to receive the link for sign-up.

The **creation museum trip is CANCELLED** as there was not enough interest.



## FINANCIAL UPDATES

As in all things we need to continue praying, “Lord, what would you have us do” and “cheerfully” respond. (2 Corinthians 9:6-7) Thank you beyond words for doing so in amazing ways, St. John family through your ongoing giving!

### GENERAL MISSION & MINISTRY OFFERINGS (as of 2/7/21)

Offerings for week ending February 7.....	\$65,642.33
As of 2/7/21 Y.T.D. Budgeted Offerings:	\$ 1,551,125.00
As of 2/7/21 Y.T.D. Actual Offerings:	\$ 1,495,867.59
As of 2/7/21 Y.T.D. Variance to Budget:	\$ (55,257.41)
<i>(St. John's fiscal year is 7/1/20 through 6/30/21.)</i>	
Budget to Actual (Week of February 7) =	120.2%
Year-to-Date Offering Budget to Actual =	96.4%

### ONE LEGACY INITIATIVE

The final stretch of the three-year pledge period of our capital improvement initiative has been extended through to February 21—in alignment with the culmination of our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. That said, ONE Legacy initiative gifts will continue to be received as we continue to work together in paying down the work that has been accomplished so far, and prepare for launching into future phases of our campus master plan expansion in God’s timing. Please continue to pray for the Lord’s leading in all of this as we seek to be wise and responsible with the financial blessings of God and respond boldly as ONE, in an ongoing legacy of faith as we build spiritual foundations for the future.

As of 2/7/21 Amount pledged.....	\$ 3,526,723
As of 2/7/21 Amount received.....	\$ 2,914,171

### THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING WITH YOUR GIFTS!

Your continued financial support and partnership is appreciated now more than ever in the present new reality we all face together. The opportunities to share the eternal love of Jesus through ongoing ministry within our community are only increasing in these days. We know times are difficult for some, but if you are prayerfully able to step forward for those who can't, please do so. For details and further information on the various ways to give, visit our website at <https://www.stjohnrochester.org/celebrate/giving-options/>.







## HELP FOR SOUTH AFRICA

In recent weeks, we have been lifting up our dear friend Bishop Pastor Mandla Khumalo along with our other brothers and sisters of the Confessional Lutheran Church of South Africa in our ongoing prayers. As has been shared they have been hit particularly hard by the COVID 19 pandemic. The ongoing shutdowns have paralyzed the local economy and church and school ministry finances extremely hard. In recent meetings with our district president, David Maier, and other US partner congregations through *Christian Outreach For Africa (COFA)*, a goal of raising \$120,000 in support has been identified. Two other congregations have responded so far with \$25,000 and \$10,000 gifts. Our Missions Mobilization Advisory team met this week and have prayerfully given the go ahead to add \$25,000 of our available ONE Legacy mission tithe support immediately to this important support. If you

would like to personally add further blessings to this COVID Emergency Fund amount, we invite you give a tax deductible gift directly through COFA by visiting <https://africaoutreach.org> . Please continue to keep our South African friends in prayer.

## COMPASSIONATE SERVICE



**WE PRAISE THE LORD FOR OUR MISSION PARTNER – FAMILY OF GOD!** Family of God Lutheran Mission in Detroit was featured on Fox 2 news this week, sharing the wonderful outreach they do. They shared testimony from those who take refuge and receive help and hope from Pastor Jim and Pastor Tyler. Pastor Tyler also shared current needs and to God be the Glory as a great outpouring from many came rushing in that met the need and beyond. We praise the

Lord with this dear partner in mission and recipient of our ongoing congregational tithe. St. John family we are so very thankful for your faithful support to Family of God with the provision of monthly meals, bagged lunches, and your sacrificial generosity as part of your ongoing gifts to St. John that bless all of these efforts of being the hands of Jesus to the homeless and addicted of inner-city Detroit.

## RELATIONAL WITNESS

**CLICK TO SHARE THE ETERNAL LOVE OF JESUS!** Did you know it's actually really easy to pass along sermon messages to family, friends, neighbors and coworkers? Simply visit our St. John website and visit the sermon message archive. From there, click to share video or audio of any message via email, Facebook, Messenger, etc.

## CONSTANT PRAYER

**WE WOULD LOVE TO PRAY FOR WHATEVER IS ON YOUR HEART.** To submit a prayer request, please text or email it to [prayer@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:prayer@stjohnrochester.org) at any time or click on one of the prayer request links on our Online Worship Resources webpage. These requests are received by our pastors and are passed along when requested to be included in the weekly prayer list that is sent out to our prayer warriors and included in weekend worship.



### **THIS WEEK:**

**Healing & Peace:** Mariana Barron / Gwen Bell (Donna Brown's younger sister) - congested heart failure / Jody Simms – beginning chemo treatments after recovering from surgery / Pastor Ron Irsch – hospice care at home with Bettie / Stepfather of Kathy Toss – in a coma from a recent stroke / Kyle Bartley – thanksgiving for clear medical tests / Colin Jones – new diagnosis of cancer found / Sarah – improving health / Elsie Quitmeyer / Greg Johnson – surgery & recovery / Michael Zyrek - brain aneurysm

**Bereavement:** – *“for the family & friends of:”* Marjorie Meissner / Vernetta Wendler / Henry Lind / Londa Youngblood (Donna Brown's sister) /

**Thanksgiving:** Birth of Kaylee Bartley (granddaughter of Chuck and Candy Bartley)

### **LAST WEEK:**

**Healing & Peace:** Jerry Bantin – recovery and rehab from foot amputation / Marian Grothaus / Debra and Victor Kearns – COVID / Debra & Ryan Jankovich – ongoing illness / Jim Evans – cancer / Devin Mong

**Bereavement:** – *“for the family & friends of:”* David Smith Sr. (grandfather of Becky Shosey) / Henry Lind / Vernetta Wendler / Marjorie Meissner / Londa Youngblood (Donna Brown's sister)

**Thanksgiving:** Our Lord's continued blessings in the future as we conclude a celebration of 100 years!

**Community – Nation – World:** For our sister congregation St. Peter's Middleburg South Africa as their entire ministry suffers from the COVID pandemic

### **PRIOR WEEK:**

**Healing & Peace:** Raegan (13y old) - brain tumor / Joan Kunze – suffering from RA / Tom Rowe - recovery from shoulder surgery / Ryan (infant son of Laura & Kyle) - unexpected surgery

**Bereavement:** – *“for the family & friends of:”* Rev. Dr. Roy Schroeder (family currently attends St. John)

**Thanksgiving:** Week-long celebration of our school & National Lutheran Schools week

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN

### OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK

Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

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#### **Sunday**

8:00 AM

Traditional Praise Worship – Church Sanctuary

9:30 AM

Traditional Praise Worship – Church Sanctuary

9:30 AM

Confirmation Class

10:45 AM

Modern Praise Worship – Gymnasium

11:00 AM

Traditional Praise Worship – Church Sanctuary

6:00 PM

High School Youth Group – Youth Room

#### **Monday**

**FACILITY IS CLOSED / NO SCHOOL**

7:00 PM

St. John Foundation Meeting – Room 101

7:00 PM

Vestry Meeting – Luther Hall

#### **Tuesday**

#### **Wednesday**

8:45 AM

School Chapel – Facebook Live

7:00 PM

Ash Wednesday Worship – Church Sanctuary

#### **Thursday**

#### **Friday**

#### **Saturday**

5:00 PM

Modern Praise Worship - Gymnasium



### Worship Celebration Schedule

**Traditional Praise:** Sundays @ 8:00 AM (ALSO LIVE STREAMED AND POSTED ONLINE),  
9:30 AM & 11:00 AM

**Modern Praise:** Saturdays @ 5:00 PM | Sundays @ 10:45 AM (ALSO LIVE STREAMED AND POSTED ONLINE)

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