



First St. John Journal



Volume 39 Issue 6 & 7

June / July 2026

Here is some interesting observations I came across last week while preparing the Sermon that I thought you might enjoy, too.

In Yakima, Washington, sometime back a dying man made a strange request. On his deathbed, Grant Flory said to his family: "Get me to the Mustangs' playoffs. No matter what." He was referring to his old high school team, The Prosser Mustangs. So in early December, when the Mustangs played in Seattle's Kingdome, Flory's cremated remains were in attendance. His son Dwight approached the stadium gate wearing a camera bag that contained his father's urn. He was stopped by a guard who asked what was in the bag.

"It's my dad," the dutifully son replied.

The guard looked puzzled but allowed the ashes inside. Family members said anyone who knew Grant Flory wouldn't be surprised by his request. He was a real football fan.

It is the dream of every pastor to have a congregation filled with people who are that determined to be in worship every Sunday. I need not even say to you that there are church members who are much more dedicated to their favorite sports team than they are to God. They give more money to their team. They know more about the players on the roster than they ever will about the heroes of the Bible. And I will not live to see the days when people in the average congregation will sit in a cold, miserable rain to worship God like many will do to cheer on their favorite team. Perhaps that's because we don't understand the essential nature of the church. I believe if we could see the church as Christ sees the church, we would not take attendance as casually as we do. Jesus, in his prayer for the church recorded in John's gospel, helps us see the church as he means for it to be.

FIRST OF ALL, JESUS PRAYS FOR OUR UNITY. He prays "that they all may be

one." (RSV) Christ desires his church to be a close-knit family! He desires us to be unified. I suspect many of us underestimate how much we need one another, how much we crave contact, how much we hunger for true Christian fellowship.

HIS SECOND PRAYER IS FOR OUR UNITY WITH GOD. He prays to the Father "that they may also be in us...." There is more than a horizontal plane to the church. There is also a vertical plane. That's what separates us from the average social club. We are here to get in touch with each other, but we are also here to get in touch with God.

An illustration may help: During a frightful storm in the Georgian Bay of Canada years ago, a ship was wrecked. Many perished. The mate, with six strong men and one timid girl, escaped in a boat, but the waves were high and the craft turned over and over until, one by one the strong men lost their hold and disappeared beneath the angry billows.

The mate, however, lashed the girl to the boat, and thus she drifted to the shore where she was found, safe and unharmed. When the stalwart men went down with shrieks of despair, she alone was saved. She didn't escape by her skill or wisdom. She escaped because she was fastened firmly to that which would not sink.

Here in this house of worship we fasten ourselves firmly to that which will not sink. We find it in our unity with one another, but even more so, in our unity with God.

To this I offer my own affirmation and pastoral guidance. Amen and blessing to everyone.

-Pastor Rayl



SUMMER SCHEDULE REMINDER

Beginning on May 24th we returned to our summer schedule of one service at 9:00 am, running through September 13th. Both Sunday School and Adult Bible Study are dismissed for summer. We'll have communion each Sunday unless there is a fifth Sunday in the month.

MEMORIALS

As of May 25, 2026

CURRENT FUND

In memory of **Eileen Young** by Carlene Trost, Chuck & Betty Hyre, Tom & Janet Eppard, Louise Diersch, Jerry & Ginny Nissen, Julie Moritz, Thaude Gerhardt, Gloria Ross, Paul & Kathy Ackerman, Deborah Lofquist, Mike Winslow, Marge Bollinger, Larry & Darlene Paul, Russ & Chris Hunsaker, Elaine Gladieux, Janet Morrison, Leona Wagner, Dick & Sandy Zellner.

PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY

In memory of **Eileen Young** by Terry & Jane Schuetz, Donna Koester.

ALTAR GUILD

In memory of **Eileen Young** by Sandra Stahl.

QUILTERS

In memory of **Eileen Young** by Cindy & Eric Johnson.

SPECIAL MUSIC

In memory of **Karen Bless** by Joan Probasco.

**SUMMER DAY SCHOOL
REGISTRATION**

Registration for our summer camp is filling up quickly! Camp runs from June 1st through August 6th and is for kids ages 3 through 10 (Must be potty trained). Camp is from 9:00 am to noon for preschool ages and 9:00 am to 3:00 pm for school age children. Extended care also is available from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm for \$7.10 per hour. Each week has a special focus:

- June 1-5: Gettin' Dirty
- June 8-12: Moovin' and Groovin'
- June 15-19: Mad Science
- June 22-26: Birds of a Feather
- June 29-July 3: Wild Wild West
- July 6-10: Cold Blooded Crew (reptiles & amphibians)
- July 13-17: Survivor Week
- July 20-24: Summerween (Halloween in July)
- July 27-31: Seussical Summer
- August 3-7: Tropical Paradise

A one-time registration fee of \$50 is needed. Cost is \$106/week for children ages 3-5, and \$210/week for ages 5-10 (this does not include after care hours which is paid separately). The cost includes meals, fees, supplies, and activities.

Please call **Andrea Buckley** at 419-691-6480 with questions. Registration is available online at firststjohndayschool.org.



ALTAR GUILD

Altar Guild will not meet this Summer. Our next meeting will be in the fall.

REMINDER!

There will be NO Chapel Communion this Summer.





ELDERS SCHEDULE

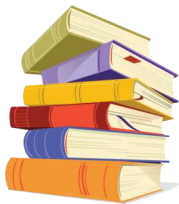
Remember, we only have one service at 9:00 am in the summer.

JUNE ELDERS

- 7th Ted Hagedorn, Jeff Smith
- 14th Sherrie Haar, Bob Haar
- 21st John Roth, Bob Haar
- 28th Bill Nelson, Matt Miller

JULY ELDERS

- 5th Kevin Ruedy, Mike Winslow
- 12th Ted Hagedorn, Jeff Smith
- 19th Sherrie Haar, Bob Haar
- 26th John Roth, Bob Haar



SUMMER READING NEEDS?

Did you know we have a 'free-to-you' resource of Christian reading material in our church lounge? This includes fiction, non-fiction, devotionals, and even movies. We currently are in the process of refreshing our library located in the church lounge. We have a wealth of books available for you to borrow and we have recently added some new titles! Our library uses a card checkout system, and the instructions for borrowing are located on the shelf, along with the new titles available for ease of viewing. Once you sign a book out, we just ask that you return it within one month (or preferably two weeks) so others may enjoy it as well. If you have any questions or comments, please reach out to Emily Kruse (419-654-2842).

BORROWING TABLES AND CHAIRS

We offer the use of the tables and chairs in the parsonage garage (not from the gym, please) as needed for summer events. Please call Jessica in the church office at 419-691-7222 ahead of time to reserve them. Thank you.

WELCA NEWS

The Board met on Monday, May 18th at The Old Bag of Nails. Six members were present.

We would like to thank everyone for supporting the flower sale. When we receive the total amount of sale, that amount will be posted in the bulletin.

Mark your calendar for these upcoming events:

August 7th - Red Robin Fundraiser

October 3rd (4-6pm) - Spaghetti Dinner

December 6th (following late Service) - Family Christmas Party. We will have our Annual Basket Auction again, more information coming in October newsletter.

The board will not be meeting in the Summer. Our next meeting will be August 17th in the lounge. All women of First St. John are invited to come to give their input or ideas you may have.

Have a great Summer! Be safe and may our Lord guide you in everything you and your family will do.

Have a great Summer!

~ President, Sue Ann Rogers

COMMUNION CARDS

HOLY COMMUNION RECORD	
Envelope no. _____	Date _____
Name _____	
Address _____	
Desire pastor to call <input type="checkbox"/>	I am a visitor <input type="checkbox"/>
Home congregation _____	
Address _____	
<small>Please return this card as a record of your Communion</small>	

Each year we file a report with the ELCA, and there's a question about the number of active members we have. One requirement for active membership is communion attendance, so that's why we ask you to fill out communion cards. Please consider signing a communion card if you have not done so in the past so we can report more accurately to the synod. You can write confirmed members of an entire family on one card. No address or envelope number is needed unless you've changed your address recently. Thank you!

Share-a-Ride Church Ministry

The Share-a-Ride to Church Ministry is a simple volunteer program in which church members provide occasional rides to worship services and church events for people who otherwise could not attend due to lack of transportation. The ministry is intended to: Help members and visitors attend church regularly, support elderly, disabled, or temporarily unable-to-drive individuals, and encourage fellowship and caring within the congregation.

Volunteer drivers serve as they are available, usually no more than once or twice a month, and rides are coordinated informally through the church office. The ministry reflects the church's commitment to Christian care, hospitality, and helping neighbors stay connected to the life of the congregation.

If you feel God is telling you to volunteer to drive someone or you are in need of a ride, please let Bob Kinsey (734-716-2365) or Jessica Miller (419-691-7222) know, so we can arrange it.

SUMMER MEETINGS FOR CIRCLE MEMBERS

RUTH CIRCLE will meet on Tuesday, June 2nd at 11:30 am at Ralphie's.

REBECCA CIRCLE will meet on Saturday, June 6th at 11:30 am in the lounge.

MIRIAM CIRCLE will meet on Wednesday, June 3rd at 9:30 am..

HANNAH CIRCLE

Will not meet in the Summer. See everyone again in the Fall!

CHILDREN'S
Sunday School

JAM SUNDAY SCHOOL IS DISMISSED FOR THE SUMMER!

Enjoy your summer and we look forward to being back with you soon! If you use Facebook, now you can keep up with the latest news for our JAM Sunday School. In your Facebook search bar, key in @FSJJesusAndMe Remember to both "Follow" and "Like" the page.

WEEKLY BULLETIN DEADLINE

News

As a reminder, please try to submit all weekly bulletin announcements no later than **Wednesday** each week for the upcoming Sunday.



FALL REGISTRATION

Another school year has come and gone. We are so blessed to be a part of our student's lives and hope that the love they have for Jesus and the love they get from the staff follows them throughout their lives. Right after Memorial Day we are heading right into the summer program. Some of our classes are full, but there are still some spaces depending on the week.

Registration for the 2026/2027 school year is going well. We are looking forward to another great year. If you know anyone who is interested, registration is still open but some of the classes are beginning to fill up.

Forms can be found on the school's website at www.firststjohndayschool.org Children must be at least 3 years old and potty-trained. Our classes are from 9:00 am to noon, with extended care available from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm. If you have questions, please call Andrea Buckley at 419-691-6480.

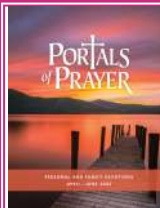
ORDERING ALTAR FLOWERS



If you would like to place flowers on the altar to honor or remember a loved one, you can use the red sign up book under the main bulletin board in the Narthex (lobby). Just find the Sunday you'd like and jot down the needed information.

Flower vases are \$15 each; you can use an envelope out of the book for payment. Either place it in the small box on the wall next to the bulletin board, drop it in the offering plate, or mail it to the church office. We need at least two vases each week. If no one signs up, the Altar Guild has to buy the flowers themselves and, unfortunately, they have limited funds. Thanks for your help!

PORTALS OF PRAYER



The Portals of Prayer devotional booklets for July through September will be ready for pick up in mid- June. You can find them in the lounge, the Narthex (lobby), the caddy outside the choir loft, or in the church office.



**GRADUATE
RECOGNITION
SUNDAY
June 14, 2026**

We will publicly acknowledge all our graduates from high school and college at our worship service on Sunday, June 14th. Please plan on having your graduate attend this service as all graduates will be recognized. If you know of a graduate, please complete this form and drop it in the offering plate, mail it to the church office, or email this page to office@firststjohn.com by Monday, June 8th.

NAME OF GRADUATE _____

GRADUATED FROM _____

DEGREE EARNED _____

NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FUTURE PLANS (SCHOOL, WORK, ETC.)

YES, WE PLAN TO BE AT THE SERVICE _____

**DAVID WINSLOW
MEMORIAL
GOLF TOURNAMENT**



This four-man scrambles will be held on Saturday, August 1st at the Eagles Landing Golf Club with a shotgun start at 8am. The cost will be \$85 or \$340 for a foursome which includes a bucket of balls for practice, hot dog/drink at the turn and luncheon. Get your team signed up today! We are also in need of \$100 hole sponsors. Call Mike Winslow at 419-691-8430 or the church office, 419-691-7222.

All proceeds go to the Winslow Scholarship Fund Scholarships for graduates of First St. John.



**MEMORIAL DAY
CELEBRATION**

A Memorial Day ceremony took place on Monday, May 25th at 9:00 am. Veterans and the Veterans Auxiliary conducted the service. There were 18 in attendance to help honor the 106 service men and women in our cemetery. Thank you to all who attended, and also all who helped place flags in the cemetery earlier in the week!

FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

On Saturday, June 13th at 8:30 am you are invited to meet at the American Table Restaurant on Wheeling St in Oregon for breakfast and fellowship! There is room for more so please plan to join us! In July, we will meet on July 11th at 8:30 am at American Table as well. Hope to see everyone there!

**AUGUST NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE — JULY 20th**

SUMMER EVENTS AND INFO!

As this is a combined newsletter for June and July for the summer, if you have new events or info that need to be shared, please send Jessica an email in the office (office@firststjohn.com) so they can be included in the weekly announcements or emailed to members!



PRAYER CHAIN CHANGES
(As of 5/29/26)



Crisis Prayer List

For those individuals who need our prayers in urgent matters such as upcoming surgery, emergency medical care (ICU), etc. Individuals will be moved to the chronic list after one month unless a prayer chain contact is notified:

- Family of Jerry Nissen
- Family of Adelaide Miller
- Family of Jill Cousino
- Pam Chronberger
- Sue Goorman
- Karyl Antoine
- Vickie Berrier

Ongoing Concerns Prayer List

For those individuals who need our prayers for ongoing serious situations such as cancer treatments, medical struggles and recovery and/or personal situations. Individuals will be moved off after three months unless a prayer chain contact has been notified:

- Peggy Burke
- Marjorie Counterman
- Olivia & Delaney Dawkins
- Bob Hecklinger
- Gary Henningsen
- Diane Gerkenmeyer
- Danielle Riegle
- Rita Riegle
- Diana McGovern
- Mary Ellen Miller
- Raetta Zeisler
- Ron Robeson
- Karen & Tony Herrera
- Owen Baker
- John Rowley
- Connie Singlar
- Steve Welling

Check the list and let a prayer chain contact know if someone can be moved off the list.

Prayer Chain Contacts

Carol Abbey 419-351-9795 or
cabbeyrn@aol.com

Darlene Lorenzen 419-351-6293
Gloria Ross 419-836-7166
Church Office 419-691-7222

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

A finance meeting will held on June 9th and July 14th. The finance committee will be meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 6:30 pm in the finance room. This will give us a week to review prior month financial report and discuss any pending and future expenses prior to Council meeting.



TUESDAY @ 1 P.M. CONCERT SERIES

The following concerts will be presented this summer at First St. John Lutheran Church.

The first Mid-day Concert will take place on **Tuesday, June 2nd** FSJ Musician, **Dr. Anthony Pattin** will perform a solo piano recital. The program features music by the “3 B’s of classical music”. Other concert favorites will be featured as well as pieces with unusual titles.

On **June 30th** Toledo Symphony Orchestra Violinist, **David Dyer** will present a program of music for the violin as well as music for various recorders from the Baroque period. David has a Master’s in Violin Performance (University of Michigan) and a Master’s in Recorder from Oberlin Conservatory. He teaches Suzuki and Traditional, all levels, ages 3 to 80+! He will be assisted by Dr. Tony.

On **July 28th** Baritone and First St. John favorite, **Bradley Baker** will present the final concert of the summer. An internationally acclaimed Opera and Musical Theatre performer, he will present a diverse selection of audience favorites: hymns, gospel, spirituals, love songs and more. A prominent feature of this program will be a segment of his highly acclaimed “painting with Bradley” presentation. He is a well-known Artist/Performer, as well as a teacher of students striving to be performing artists. He is a soloist and choir member at Trinity Episcopal Church in downtown Toledo. He will be assisted by Dr. Tony. These recitals are free and open to the public. Please make plans to attend!

MEMBER UPDATES

Births

Baptisms

5-24-26 Ella Mae Whitney,
*Born to Courtney (Vollmer)
Whitney.*

Marriages

None.

Deaths

5-27-26 Jerry Nissen

Transfers to/from First St. John

None.

SUPPORT US THROUGH



KROGER COMMUNITY REWARD PROGRAM

Did you know you can support First St. John just by shopping at Kroger!

This past quarter we earned \$59.14 in rewards donated to the church!

This program makes fundraising easy by donating to local organizations based on the shopping you do every day. Once you link your Kroger Card to an organization, all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe or enter your Shopper's Card. Here's how it works:

1. Create or sign into your online rewards account on Kroger.com
2. Make sure your Kroger Reward Card account is attached to your online account.
3. Under the Kroger Community Rewards Screen, search for First St. John Lutheran, or enter the NPO # WM368.
4. Select the organization and click 'Save'. You are all set! The selected organization will now show on the Kroger Community Reward Page!



PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY FOCUS - JUNE & JULY

June's focus items are laundry soap and fabric softener. For July, it will be body lotion. You can deposit items in either the bright green bin in the lounge or the left pull-out drawer next to the Feed Your Neighbor bins in the Narthex under the main bulletin board.

MONTHLY MINISTRY OUTREACH

The ministry outreach for June/July will be the **Lutheran Disaster Response** which shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. Special green envelopes will be in the pews for you to donate.



YOUTH & FAMILY NEWS

Vacation Bible School: July 20th—July 23th from 6:00 to 8:30 each night, a light dinner is available at 5:15 pm. We will be in need of volunteers each night to help run stations and other activities. Great for teens and adults who want to serve! If you are interested, please contact Jessica at 419-691-7222.



PLANNING MEETINGS WILL BE ON JUNE 9TH AND JUNE 23RD AT 6:00 PM IN THE LOUNGE. PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND.

REMINDER

Church Council will not meet in June or July. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, August 18th.