

St. John's Lutheran Church
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Midland, Michigan 48640

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Newsletter information may be
submitted typed or emailed to
office@sjlmidland.org
by the due date on the
calendar in the newsletter.
Submissions may be edited.

Worship Times

Sunday at 8 & 10:45 am
Bible Study and Sunday
School at 9:30 am

Saturday at 5 pm

Live Stream:
facebook.com/sjlmidland

St. John's Worship
Services on MCTV
Monday at 5:30 pm
Tuesday at 10 am
Channel 191

Church Phone:
(989) 835-5861

www.sjlmidland.org

MAY 2025 NEWSLETTER

On the grammar of Easter . . .

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

This call and response on Easter morning is perhaps the oldest and most universal of Christian traditions. One of the personal hobbies I have developed is asking people who were raised as Christians in another culture how to say this in their heart language. Everyone I have asked so far has an answer. Why? Because it is the joyous and powerful proclamation of Easter that goes back to the angels at the tomb. Christ's resurrection is the pivot point of our hope. God's loving sacrifice would not be sufficient to help us had he not also the power to back it up.

Yet I want to point out a grammatical detail. We do not say, "Christ rose, He rose indeed." To say that would be true, of course. But there would be a subtle difference in the emphasis. "Christ rose" is in the past tense. It is a fact that happened. Facts from the past are true, but they don't necessarily have much bearing on the present. Jesus rose. Lazarus rose. George Washington crossed the Delaware. It rained last week. These are all true facts. They may or may not influence your day today.

But the proclamation of the Church is that He IS Risen. That is a different form of grammar. (Called the perfect tense if you are a nerd.) It refers to something that happened in the past that is STILL TRUE in the present. The quintessential example of this tense is the phrase "It is written." It was written in the past and is still written.

Christ is risen.

This reminds us that unlike the facts of history that drift down the river of time and lose relevance as they go, this fact from the past remains in the *present tense*. Jesus is just as alive, warm blooded, physical, and in control as he was that first Easter morning when he greeted Mary in the garden. This same Lord Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth, and He holds the keys of death and hades. This same Jesus is not only able to forgive, provide for and protect you, but He is able to do miracles without limit. And He sends you as His agent to lead people to Him.

Yes, He really is real and He really is alive today! The grammar of this proclamation is a reminder that we should not treat the resurrection of Jesus like an event to commemorate. It is not an event that happened. It is a new reality in which we now live. Today.

Jesus IS risen. Jesus IS in control. Jesus IS coming soon.

Amen, Come, Lord Jesus!

(But until then, see you in church!)

-Pastor Kempin

Our Mission Statement

"We are here to share the good news of salvation and make disciples of Jesus Christ, in accordance with the Scriptures (Matt. 28:18-20) and with the help of the Holy Spirit. This mission begins with our St. John's family and extends to the Midland Community and the world."



UPCOMING CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

- July 20 – Communications Meeting
- September 21 – Voters' Meeting
- November 23 – Communications Meeting

SCRIP - FREE MONEY FOR OUR SCHOOL

What is a SCRIP Program? You can buy gift cards at their normal price that you would buy them at ANY store, and a small rebate would be given to our school. This rebate could be given to the school for the scholarship program, it can be designated for a student's tuition, OR it could be designated for the STEM Program OR the Kitchen Upkeep account.



We have over 750 cards available through the SCRIP Program including Ace Hardware, Amazon, Applebee's, Arby's, Barnes & Nobles, Bath & Body Works, Bob Evans, Buffalo Wild Wings, Burger King, Cracker Barrel, Dairy Queen, Domino's, Exxon/Mobile, Family Fare, Gordon Food Service, Home Depot, iTunes, Jo-Ann's, Kohl's, Kroger's, Little Caesar's, Lowe's, Marathon, Marshall's, Meijer,

Menards, Michaels, Olive Garden, Panera, Papa John's, Pi's, Pizza Hut, Qdoba, Shell, Speedway, Staples, Starbucks, Subway, Supercuts, Taco Bell, Target, Tim Hortons, Ulta, Walgreens, Walmart / SAMS, Wendy's and many others that can be ordered. We can also order American Express cards, Visa gift cards, and SCRIP Gift Cards.

See the SCRIP display on the table in the lounge or call/text Cheryl Zastrow, St. John's Scrip Coordinator, at 989-239-3919. SCRIP cards are sold on Thursday mornings during the school year 8:00a-10:00a. Also Sunday mornings following both church services on the 2nd & 4th Sundays, or by appointment.

LYDIA GUILD



LYDIA GUILD IS OPEN TO ALL LADIES AT ST. JOHN'S

**Our final meeting before the summer break will
be on Monday, May 19, 2025!**

Please join us at **5:30 pm for a potluck** - bring your favorite salad to share. All table service, drinks, and desserts will be provided. Following the potluck we will hear from Lori Paulsen on the "Gardens around St. John's" with explanations and pictures of the variety of plants! Weather permitting, there will be a tour of the gardens outside the lounge area. After a brief business meeting, we will convene to the sanctuary for a closing service with communion and installation of the new officers for next year.

SJL FALL WOMEN'S RETREAT



SAVE THE DATE for the SJL Fall Women's Retreat

Date: Fri. & Sat., November 21-22, 2025

Title: "A Most Important Relationship"

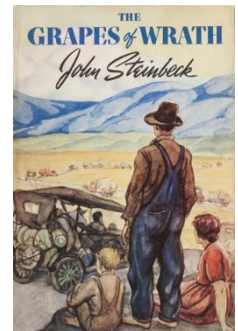
Join us at the DoubleTree by Hilton--Bay City Riverfront to gain insights into the importance and impact of PRAYER in our daily lives as we grow in our Most Important Relationship!

Registration will open in August!

FAMILY LIFE

Book Club

St. John's Book Club meets on Monday, May 12 from 6:30-8:00pm in Room 2 to discuss this month's selection: *Grapes of Wrath* by J. Steinbeck. This will be the final meeting before breaking for the summer. Join us for thoughtful discussion and fellowship!



Vacation Bible School

Join us for VBS at St. John's Monday, June 9 through Thursday, June 12! The fun begins with family meals at 5:30pm followed by the VBS program from 6:00-8:00pm. Children age 3 (must be potty trained) through grade 5 are invited to attend. Share an invite with family, friends, and neighbors- all are welcome! Families can register online at myvbs.org/sjlmidland.

Interested in volunteering? Administration, teaching, music, art, construction, sports, food prep, skits-- there's opportunity for EVERYONE to share their gifts. Contact Anna for more information: akruger@sjlmidland.org OR (989)835-5861 ext. 1204



(continued on pg. 4)

Moms In Prayer

You are invited to the launch of a new prayer ministry called “Moms in Prayer” (MIP). This ministry is a gathering of women who come together to pray over their children, their teachers, and the school where they attend.

- When: Mondays, 7:00-8:00pm
- Where: St. John’s Weller Chapel
- Group Leader: Deb Plaver (St. John’s member, mom, and long-time MIP prayer warrior!)



What’s unique about a Moms in Prayer group?

- We stay focused on prayer and always begin and end on time
- Our prayer format is Biblical and begins with an attribute of God
- We pray our children’s names in Scripture so we know we are praying God’s will

We keep what we pray about confidential

SJL Youth

April was a busy month for SJL Youth! Students served by filling and hiding Easter eggs for the annual egg hunt and preparing the Easter Breakfast. They also made plaques for Confirmation Sunday and hosted a trivia night fundraiser for the National Youth Gathering. Check out the photos below! Thanks for your continued prayers and support for these awesome students.



WOMEN OF ST. JOHN'S

If you were one of the 28 St. John's Lutheran ladies who were able to enjoy the Midland Christian Women's Connection luncheon on April 9 and enjoyed the musical presentation of our own delightful Karen Kempin, we urge you to consider the next luncheon on May 14th at the Midland Country Club. You'll have an opportunity to build new relationships with other Christian women outside of church. Please check the community bulletin board outside the church office for the pink fliers for details or go online to *Midland Christian Women's Connection online*.

Spring is upon us here and we are in a season of transition here as well as in the weather. The Women of St. John's will meet on May 12, 2025 at 12:30 in Room 3. As usual, we will plan upcoming events including the early planning schedule for autumn's Harvest Dinner. The most important item on the agenda is the election of new officers for the next 2-year term. We are always looking for input and participation from the ladies of the congregation and hope you'll become a part of this amazing group.



A big "thank you" goes to Robin and Jon Steinke for coordinating the beautiful Easter Lily display at the pulpit and altar. We appreciate the thoughtful donations in memory of loved ones and praise of our Lord and Savior.

THANK YOU!

Thank You to those groups and organizations (Women of St. Johns, PTS, Youth Group, Men's Bible Study, Board of Operations, and Lydia Guild) who hosted Lenten Suppers and donated their left-over food from their dinners to those residents (women and children) who were residing in the Open-Door Women and Children's Center. Warm-hearted people always seem to find a way to make others feel good and the residents and staff volunteers at the shelter were overwhelmed with the generosity and amazing food donated to them from our organizations and so grateful for it. You all added a spark of joy to the lives of those staying there. The picture below shows one of the weeks that we loaded up the food into my car and took it to them the next morning. Joyce Battjes (Social Ministry at St. John's Lutheran Church)



The WATCHMAN Implant

Last fall we discussed what AFib was all about. Now we turn attention to alternatives, to reducing stroke-risk. Strokes are the most common complication of AFib. One out of three people with AFib will have a stroke in their lifetime. Plus, there is a three to five times higher stroke-risk versus people with a regular heartbeat. Therefore, four out of five people who are taking a blood thinner are willing to try a different way of life to reduce their stroke-risk.

Your heart has an electrical system that controls the rate and rhythm of your heartbeat. In a healthy heart, the electrical signals produce a steady heartbeat and blood pumps normally. In AFib, the electrical signals are disorganized and the top two chambers of the heart, the atria, beat rapidly and irregularly, called fibrillation. Because blood isn't pumped out of the heart normally, it's easier for blood cells to stick together and form clots in an area of the heart called the left atrial appendage (LAA). If a blood clot escapes, it can travel through the bloodstream to the brain and cause a stroke.

Blood thinners are one way to reduce stroke-risk with AFib. These medications are effective at preventing risky blood clots from forming, but can come with bleeding risks and long-term challenges, e.g., complications in surgical procedures, cutting oneself, bruising, head injury, and the high ongoing cost of medication. Subsequently, people with AFib are often willing to have an alternative to using a blood thinner product. That alternative is the WATCHMAN implant.

Over half a million people with Atrial Fibrillation (AFib) are living free from the fear of stroke-risk and side effects of lifelong blood thinners thanks to the WATCHMAN implant. The WATCHMAN implant is a safe, one-time alternative to blood thinners in reducing stroke-risk. The device reduces the risk of stroke by closing off the LAA region in the heart, where more than 90% of stroke-causing clots are formed and enter the bloodstream. The LAA is a small pouch of muscle tissue that sticks out from your left atrium (upper heart chamber). Your heart can keep doing its job with a closed LAA.

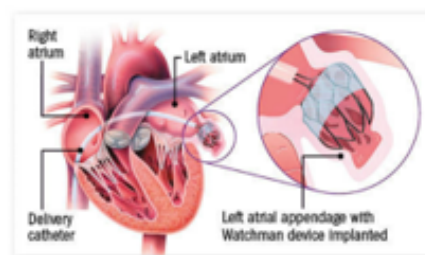
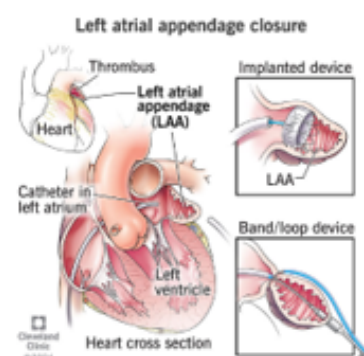
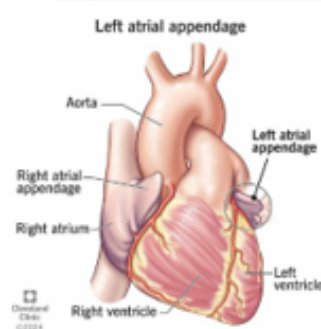
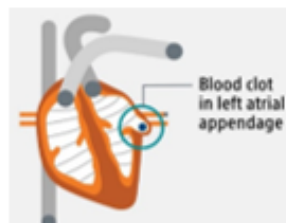
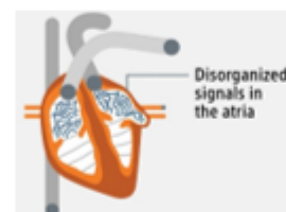
There are a few different types of LAA closure devices. One device is the WATCHMAN that blocks the LAA opening to keep blood clots that form in the LAA from going into your bloodstream. Another device, AtriClip, that clamps the base of the LAA to close it off. Similarly, a third device, Lariat, uses a band or suture loop to close off the LAA.

One item to understand is that the LAA closure reduces stroke-risk associated with Afib, but it doesn't treat Afib itself. And as with any surgery, there may be risks or complications, such as bleeding, infection, stroke, or a problem with the device itself.

To prepare for LAA closure, you will get a transesophageal echocardiogram (TEE) or a cardiac CT to give your physician the dimensions of your LAA. The LAA shape can vary from looking like a chicken wing to a windsock. This procedure will be done under anesthetic, and you may be able to go home the next day.

After getting a WATCHMAN device, you will need to take an anticoagulant (blood thinner) and aspirin for 45 days. This is how long it takes your body's tissue to form around the device so there aren't any gaps around it. You'll have another TEE at a follow-up visit 45 days after your procedure. This helps your physician see if your LAA is fully blocked. If the TEE shows that your left atrial appendage isn't blocked, you'll keep taking the anticoagulant and have another TEE and follow-up visit after another six months. Your doctor may tell you to stop using blood thinner and start using Plavix. Plavix works differently than other blood thinners. It is used to prevent heart attacks and strokes. In a clinical trial, 96% of people were able to stop their blood thinner 45 days after the procedure of getting the WATCHMAN implant. While there's no surefire way to prevent strokes, removing or blocking your LAA reduces your risk significantly.

For more information: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/17167-left-atrial-appendage-closure>
<https://www.watchman.com/en-us/how-watchman-device-works.html>



MAY 2025 – St. John's Lutheran Church & School, 505 E. Carpenter, Midland (989-835-5861)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>But the word of God increased and multiplied. - Acts 12:24</p>			<p>1 National Day of Prayer 5:30-Joyful Praise Rehearsal 6:15-PTS Mtg</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3 8-Men's Bible Study 9-Visit with Pastor, Communion 10-Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5-Worship (c)</p>
<p>4 Confirmation 8-Worship (c) 9:30-Bible Study & Sunday Sch. 10:45-Joyful Praise (c) 6- NYG Youth Night</p>	<p>5 Cinco de Mayo 5:30-Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30-Board of Ops</p>	<p>6 8:30-Joyful Praise Rehearsal 10-Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 10:30-Oasis Bible Study 12-Prayer Warriors 7-Board of Ed.</p>	<p>7 9:30-Backpack Buddies 10-LifeLight 3-Girls Sm. Group 6-Hand Bell Choir</p>	<p>8 5:30-Joyful Praise Rehearsal</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10 8-Men's Bible Study 9-Visit with Pastor, Communion 10-Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5-Worship</p>
<p>11 Mother's Day 8-Worship 9:30-Bible Study & Sunday Sch. 9:30-MomCo Sm. Group 10:45-Joyful Praise</p>	<p>12 12:30-Women of St. John's 5:30-Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30-Book Club</p>	<p>13 8:30-Joyful Praise Rehearsal 10-Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 10:30-Oasis Bible Study 12-Prayer Warriors 7-Board of Elders</p>	<p>14 9-Quilters 10-LifeLight 10-Stratford Pines service 3-Girls Sm. Group 5:30-Spring Music Concert</p>	<p>15 1:30-King's Daughters service 5:30-Joyful Praise Rehearsal 6-8th Grade Dinner</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17 8-Men's Bible Study 9-Visit with Pastor, Communion 10-Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5-Worship (c)</p>
<p>18 8-Worship (c) 9:30-Bible Study & Sunday Sch. 10:45-Joyful Praise (c) 2-Voter's Meeting 6-Sr. High YG</p>	<p>19 5:30-Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191)</p>	<p>20 8:30-Joyful Praise Rehearsal 10-Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 10:30-Oasis Bible Study 12-Prayer Warriors 6:30-Leadership Team</p>	<p>21 9-Quilters 9:30-Backpack Buddies 10-LifeLight 3-Girls Sm. Group</p>	<p>22 Newsletter Submissions Due 1:30-Brittany Manor service 3-Riverside Bible Study 5:30-Joyful Praise Rehearsal</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 9-Visit with Pastor, Communion 5-Worship</p>
<p>25 8-Worship 9:30-Bible Study 10:45-Joyful Praise</p>	<p>26 Memorial Day Church Office & School Closed 5:30-Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191)</p>	<p>27 8:30-Joyful Praise Rehearsal 10-Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 10:30-Oasis Bible Study 12-Prayer Warriors 6:30-Missions Board</p>	<p>28 9-Quilters 10-LifeLight 10:15-Medilodge 1:30-Story Point</p>	<p>29 Ascension Day 12:15-Worship Service 1-Newsletter Assy 5:30-Joyful Praise Rehearsal</p>	<p>30 10:45-Closing Chapel</p>	<p>31 8-Men's Bible Study 9-Visit with Pastor, Communion 10-Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5-Worship (c)</p>

To view the calendar online: <https://sjlmidland.org/calendar>



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