

A Parable on Evangelism

This is something I have shared before, but given the conversation I have started about habitual witnessing, I thought it would be worth considering:

Once there was a farmer who owned a beautiful apple orchard. Needing to leave for the season, the farmer put it in the care of his children. Theirs would be the responsibility to bring in the fall harvest. Being ordinary children, they were not eager to work when they could be doing other things, but they loved their father and took the responsibility seriously, even if each of them secretly hoped the majority of the work would be done by the other siblings.

Later that day the oldest of the children went to the orchard, and came back with a dire prediction that there would not be much of a harvest this year. He searched the whole orchard and could not find any apples (though it was still very early summer). Discouraged, he remained in the house. If he did check for fruit, he did so by looking out the window without expecting to see anything.

The next oldest child became concerned by this dire report. Sure enough, when he visited the orchard, he found a tree that was sick and dying. He spent the rest of the summer researching what could be wrong with it, and diligently tried any remedy he heard of to bring the dying tree to life.

The other two children mostly left the worrying to their older siblings and spent the summer enjoying themselves, but when they felt the fall weather, they knew it was time for the harvest. The oldest sibling was still in the house, convinced there was no harvest, and the next oldest was too busy trying to restore the dying tree (though it didn't look like he was having much luck,) so the youngest two headed out to the orchard with their picking baskets.

At the first tree, they spied an apple high in the branches. It looked bright red and beautiful, but was far too high to reach. The third child spent the morning trying unsuccessfully to climb the tree, carried a ladder to the tree that turned out to be too short, and finally left to see if he could rent a lift truck so as to get the single apple.

Left to herself, the youngest child wandered back into the orchard. Though it was now late in the day, she saw that many of the trees had fine ripe apples in easy reach for picking. She called to her siblings for help, but they were too far to hear, and it was too late to go back for them. Taking up her basket, she began to pick.

There are many points of reflection. I will leave you with this one: We are not called to change the world, change lives, or change people's minds. We are called to be willing if GOD puts an opportunity in front of us that is in easy reach. There really are those in your life who would love an offer of prayer or an invitation to church. There are those who might like a word of encouragement or a testimony that God is faithful in difficult times. God, not you, is the one working in their lives. You just have a small part to play.

Take a step. Pick the low hanging fruit. Leave the rest to God.

See you in Church,

-Pastor Kempin

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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](https://www.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

Congregational Meetings

- July 26 Voter's Communication Meeting at 2pm

Bible Studies

Final Meeting of the LifeLight Bible Study will be Wednesday, June 3.

Bible Studies will resume in the Fall.

What is Lydia Guild? Lydia Guild is a women's organization designed to foster individual **spiritual growth**, provide **fellowship** with other women, to **serve** the church in allegiance with Jesus Christ, and to support the Lutheran Women in Mission organization (LWML) by providing opportunities to learn about and serve charitable groups. Lydia Guild is open to all ladies at St. Johns.

Summer Operations Plans

St. John's Congregation, I wanted to make you aware of some projects that will be happening over this coming summer. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions. During the week of June 22nd, we will be having the kitchen floor resurfaced with a textured epoxy. I'm very excited to see this done for safety and aesthetics. The Women of St. John's have been instrumental in many of the decisions for this and I believe it's going to turn out great!

At some point, you might notice some digging in front of the exterior storage rooms, next to the loading dock door. This is to run new, smaller diameter, different material Water Pipes to supply our building. This should improve the clarity/quality of the water in the building. This project was in the making before I joined and has been orchestrated and approved by the Operations Committee.

Thirdly, I reached out to two different Roofing Companies, and we now have quotes to re-roof the building. This will encompass the school area, including the Gym, and will stop shy of the sanctuary. Thank you for your support and for welcoming me into your Church Family.

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."

Prayer Team

Prayer shawls are available in Closet (3C) if you know of anyone in need. People can receive the shawls for various reasons, including loneliness, illnesses, death of a loved one or they just need prayers in their life.

Please also consider knitting or crocheting a shawl or two for this ministry. You may use your own pattern or take a copy of the pattern from the Ministry closet.

The Prayer Ministry has also partnered with other Midland churches to provide prayer shawls to the Midland Cancer Services at the Midland Hospital for people undergoing cancer treatments.



4th - 6th Grade Game Nights

Join us this summer for 4th & 5th Grade Game Nights in the St. John's gym! These evenings are open to students entering 4th through 6th grade for the 2026-2027 school year. Come enjoy a night of games, fun, fellowship, and pizza. Game Nights will take place on **July 1 and August 5 from 6:00-7:30 PM**. We hope to see you there!

If you are comfortable receiving the church newsletter digitally and no longer need a printed copy, we invite you to contact the church office at office@sjlmidland.org or call 989-835-5861.

SCRIP

What is a SCRIP? 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 Wednesday mornings during the school year 8:00a-10:00a. Also Sunday mornings following both church services on the 2nd & 4th Sundays, or by appointment.

Vacation Bible School

Join us for VBS at St. John's Monday, June 15 through Thursday, June 18! 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! 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. Join us for our upcoming meetings...

- Saturday, June 13 at 9:00am - Decorating/Set Up
- Monday, June 15 - Thursday, June 18 - VBS

Women of St. John's

Some of you can remember the summer of 2011. That was the year that we renovated the kitchen. We had a few volunteers who became certified as Food Handler through ServeSafe. Women of St John's also hosted a *Cooking for a Crowd* session. We learned about basic food safety and how we could make it better for those who were attending dinners at the church. There were some major changes that year but we all coped. We even managed to get used to the changes. Whether we like it or not, some more changes will be coming to the kitchen again this summer.

In the last 15 years there have been updates in food service as well as increased attention to food borne illnesses. Women of St John's continues to support a few volunteers who are certified Food Handlers. A new floor will be installed in the kitchen over the summer. Once the floor is completed and the kitchen is put back together, we will be moving some items to comply with food safety regulations. There will be defined areas for food prep and cleaning/sanitizing of equipment/utensils that have been used. We will also be identifying areas that we can streamline so that as volunteers we stay within the food safety regulations.

One of the first rules we are putting into place is the use of single-serve plastics. We appreciate everyone who has brought in their butter bowls, take-out containers and other plastics. Unfortunately, these cannot be used for food that will be taken to other agencies or for food storage in the refrigerator/freezer. Women of St. John's is exploring what we need to have on hand to facilitate the leftovers from our various functions. In the meantime, we ask that you put those single-serve plastics into your recycle bin.

Young Adult Summer Meet Ups

We're excited to offer monthly events for mid-20s to mid-30s young adults this summer. We'll host a game night here at church in June, enjoy live music downtown Midland in July, and catch a Loons game in August. Please consider those in your life who might be blessed by these events and share an invite with them!

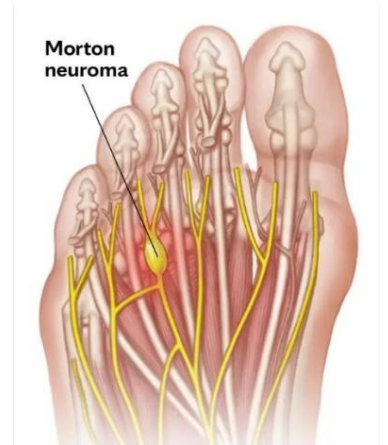
Morton's Neuroma

A Morton's neuroma is the inflammation of one of the nerves in your feet. It is an enlarged nerve bundle that causes pain on the bottom of the forefoot, usually in the metatarsal (long bones of the foot) area behind the third and fourth toes. The word "neuroma" in Morton's neuroma is noncancerous (benign). The tissue around your nerve swells and thickens. Morton's neuromas are common. Experts estimate that around one in three people have a Morton's neuroma at some point in their life.

What are the symptoms? Morton's neuroma causes pain in the ball of the foot. Usually, the pain is in the area behind and between the third and fourth toes, and relieved with rest or removing shoes.

The pain is often described as:

- Stabbing, shooting, or burning pain in the ball of the foot, with the pain increasing with activity.
- Feeling as if walking on a stone, or your sock is bunched up in your shoe.
- Having a 'pins and needles' feeling, tingling, or numbness in the two nearby toes.
- Morton's neuroma symptoms usually get worse over time if untreated.



Factors that worsen the symptoms of Morton's neuroma.

- **High-heeled or narrow shoes.** High-heeled shoes or shoes with narrow toe boxes can put extra pressure on the toes and the ball of the foot.
- **Certain activities.** Walking, running, jogging, or other activities that put pressure on the ball of the foot may worsen or trigger pain.
- **Foot deformities.** People who have bunions, hammertoes, high arches, or flat feet are at a higher risk.

What causes Morton's neuroma? Morton's neuromas form when a nerve between your toe bones is irritated and swells. Experts aren't always certain what causes the inflammation, but they think it is pressure on your toes, the nerves between them, and the ball of your foot.

What is the treatment? Your healthcare provider will suggest treatments that relieve your symptoms and reduce the inflammation in your affected nerve. Many times, it is possible to manage symptoms with at home treatments.

The most common Morton's neuroma treatments include:

- **Footwear changes:** Switching to shoes with wide, deep toe boxes can take pressure off the affected nerve.
- **Shoe pads or orthotic devices:** Over the counter (OTC) shoe pads to cushion the area around the nerve to relieve pressure.
- **Pain relievers:** Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) reduce pain and swelling. However, do not take NSAIDs for more than 10 days in a row without talking to your healthcare provider.
- **Icing:** Applying ice or cold packs to the affected foot can relieve pain and reduce inflammation. Wrap a cold pack in a thin towel to avoid putting it directly onto your skin.
- **Corticosteroids:** Corticosteroid prescription medications reduce inflammation, as well as cortisone shots.
- **Other treatments:** Surgery to remove the nerve; cryogenic neuro-ablation using extreme cold to destroy the nerve cells and reduce inflammation; or radiofrequency ablation using electrical current to destroy a small portion of the nerve cells.

Getting treatment for Morton's neuroma. Getting treatment is important. Visit a healthcare provider or podiatrist as soon as you notice any new pain or swelling in your feet. Tell your provider when you first noticed symptoms and if any activities or positions make them worse. The neuroma can become larger and cause permanent nerve damage if it's not treated. Morton's neuroma does not go away on its own. Most people with a Morton's neuroma can find a combination of treatments that relieve the symptoms. You should be able to return to all your usual activities pain-free once your affected nerve is less inflamed. Still, Morton's neuroma symptoms can come back.

For more information:

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mortons-neuroma/symptoms-causes/svc-20351935>

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/15118-mortons-neuroma>

June 2026 – St. John’s Lutheran Church & School, 505 E. Carpenter, Midland (989-835-5861)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30pm Board of Operations Meeting	2 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch 191) 12 Prayer Warriors 7pm Board of Christian Day School	3 9am Quilters 10am LifeLight Bible Study 10:45 Day School Closing Chapel 12pm Archives	4 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	5	6 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
7 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study 10:45am Joyful Praise	8 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191)	9 10am Worship on MCTV(Ch.191) 12pm Prayer Warriors 1pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal 7pm Board of Elders	10 9am Quilters 12pm Archives	11 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	12	13 9am Visit with Pastor 9am VBS Set Up/Decorating 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
14 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study 10:45am Joyful Praise 12pm VBS Sanctuary Decorating 12pm Summer Trip Meeting	15 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 5:30 VBS	16 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 12pm Prayer Warriors 1pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal 6:30 Leadership Team 5:30 VBS	17 9am Quilters 12pm Archives 5:30 VBS	18 6:30pm PTS Meeting RM 2 5:30 VBS	19	20 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship 6pm Young Adult Meet Up
21 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study 10:45am Joyful Praise	22 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30pm Bible Study on the History of the Creeds Newsletter Submissions Due Kitchen Floor Project	23 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 12pm Prayer Warriors 6:30pm Bible Study on the History of the Creeds 6:30pm Mission Board Meeting Kitchen Floor Project	24 9am Quilters 12pm Archives Kitchen Floor Project	25 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal Kitchen Floor Project	26 Kitchen Floor Project	27 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
28 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study 10:45am Joyful Praise	29 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191)	30 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 12pm Prayer Warriors				