

St. John's Lutheran Church
505 E. Carpenter St.
Midland, Michigan 48640

JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER

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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

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

How busy is too busy?

It was the last day of VBS and I was standing at the door, thanking families for coming. As I was standing there, a couple in their 70s came up and said, "do you remember us?" I paused for a moment. They looked familiar but I couldn't quite place them. After I guessed incorrectly, they reminded me that they were my neighbors from when I was 4 or 5 years old. They lived just down the street and had a daughter, Becky, who was my age. We used to play together. They showed me her picture. The girl I vaguely remembered had become a 50-year-old woman with grey hair. How fast the time goes, we marveled. "It feels like my 30s and 40s didn't even happen," I said. Agreeing with me the husband replied, before you know it you'll be 75! Yikes, let's not go there quite yet. Can't I just enjoy my 50s? Time is a funny thing, isn't it? How is it that the days can seem so long but the years so short?

Time really seemed to speed up, for me, when I got out of college. Since then, I've been racing from one thing to the next overtaken, as it were, by the busyness of my schedule, my family, my commitments. It's easy to feel like you're never in the moment, always looking ahead at the next thing you have to do, the next place you have to go. Can you relate? Here's a question, is it possible to be so busy that, even as a Christian, you miss Jesus? As a Pastor, I know this to be true, even in my own life. Jesus can get lost in the middle of all the things we "have" to get done.

Remember Martha? She was so busy hosting Jesus, and she got no help from her sister Mary who left her to do the work all by herself, all so that Mary could just sit at the Lord's feet and listen to what He said. To the casual observer, Martha was such a hard worker, so productive... And Mary, was she just trying to get out of the work? But maybe Mary was on to something. Of course we recall that, between the two sisters, Jesus said that Mary had chosen what was better. The point is, it's possible for us, even in the church, to be so distracted, worried, and upset about so many different things that we miss the Lord. In our serving of Jesus, certain things can seem so important to us that, in our zeal to serve, we can even become upset with the people around us, because they're not working hard to accomplish all those things that we feel are necessary. We become frustrated, relationships become strained and, in the midst of the busyness, we miss the blessing, the joy, of just sitting with Jesus, hearing from Him, learning from Him. As we ease into summer, before it slips away, let's make it a point to learn from the example of Mary, to leave the distraction and worry and just sit at Jesus' feet, listening to His Word. We'll be so glad we did!

Pastor Josh

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."

Congregational Meetings

- July 26 Voter's Communication Meeting at 2pm

Bible Studies

Bible Studies will resume in the Fall.

Food Safety for Volunteers

This session has been scheduled for August 27 at 6pm. This will be a great session for those who volunteer to help with food events at St. John's (or elsewhere). We have a food safety educator from the MSU Extension office who will present a session on the how and why we need to handle food that we are serving to large groups. This is **not** going to be a food server certification class but will give you similar information. Put the date on your calendar and watch for more information in August.

Family Fun Meetups

Join us this summer at St. John's playground for Family Fun Meetups! Drop in anytime between 10:00 AM and 12:00 PM for a morning of play, connection, and community. This open-house style event invites caregivers and children to enjoy time together, build relationships, and end the morning with a short devotional. We'll meet on July 1, 15, 29, and August 12.

Summer Youth Trips

After months of planning and preparation, the time has finally come for the MI District Youth Gathering on Mackinac Island and the Appalachian Servant Event in Asheville, North Carolina! Please keep our students and leaders in your prayers while they're away.

- MI District Youth Gathering- June 28- July 1
 - Students- Adalena Allen, Kylie Allen, Addison Butcher, Ashley Brown, Lily Brown, Kelly Derusha, Abbygail Kader, Brianna Launstein, Gabe Martin, Regan Martin, Eli Trombley
 - Leaders- Joshua Burkhard, Barbara Butcher, Anna Kruger
- Appalachian Servant Event- July 10-22
 - Students- Eliana Burkhard, Addison Butcher, Kelly Derusha, Abbygail Kader
 - Leaders- Joshua Burkhard, Kage Butcher, Anna Kruger

Young Adult Summer Meetups

We're excited to offer monthly events for mid-20s to mid-30s young adults this summer. Please join us in July and enjoy live music on Main St in downtown Midland, 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!

4th - 6th Grade Game Nights

Join us this summer for 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!

Taking Jesus Here, There, and Everywhere

Explore the book of Acts as a family and see how its story continues today. Packed with devotionals, activities, and challenges for all ages, this resource is available at the Family Life table in the lounge. Be sure to pick one up!

Vacation Bible School

Thank you for your support of this year's VBS program whether in prayer, donations, or volunteering! We had a wonderful week "shining a light on Who Jesus REALLY is" at *Illumination Station*.

- 43 St. John's members made up our volunteer team, serving in various roles from music to meals, recreation to decorations, and everything in between!
- 62 total kids registered, 17 of those were not connected to St. John's as church members or school students
- Around 100 people attended daily pre-VBS family dinners

Women of St John's

The kitchen floor has been installed and is ready for use. We will begin cleaning the kitchen on July 14 and 15. We need to wash down every surface in the kitchen (walls and cabinets). Everything that has been stored in the back hallway needs to be washed before returning to the cabinets. We are not sure that we will be able to get everything put away, but we will give it a good try. If you are available on one or both days we would appreciate the help. We will start at 9am and break for lunch (provided by Women of St John's) at about 12:30pm. We plan to finish up for the day finish about 4pm.

As we have said before, the current food safety recommendations are much stricter than we have had in the past. The dishwasher and 3-compartment sink area will be the only place where cleaners will be stored. This is also where all dishes are to be washed, sanitizing buckets will be filled and emptied, and basically any non-food related work. The food safety guidelines are clear that we need to keep these items separate from food preparation so that chemical cross-contamination is minimized.

The 3 handwash sinks are to be used **only** for handwashing. We should not use the sinks as a quick rinse station or for any kind of food/beverage. Again, this is per the food safety guidelines that we all should be following.

Lastly, the area with the stove, tables and two compartment sinks will be considered food prep. This is where we will work solely with food that will be served. The counters and sinks will need to be sanitized before you begin preparing food. The area will need to be sanitized before starting food preparation, after working with raw meat, and when food preparation is complete.

SCRIP

What is SCRIP?

The SCRIP Program are gift cards may be purchased at face value and a small rebate will be given to our school. Rebates can be given to the school, the scholarship program, a student's tuition, Stem Program or for 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.

Melissa Brown will be the new SCRIP Coordinator. You may call/text Melissa at (989) 980-7465.

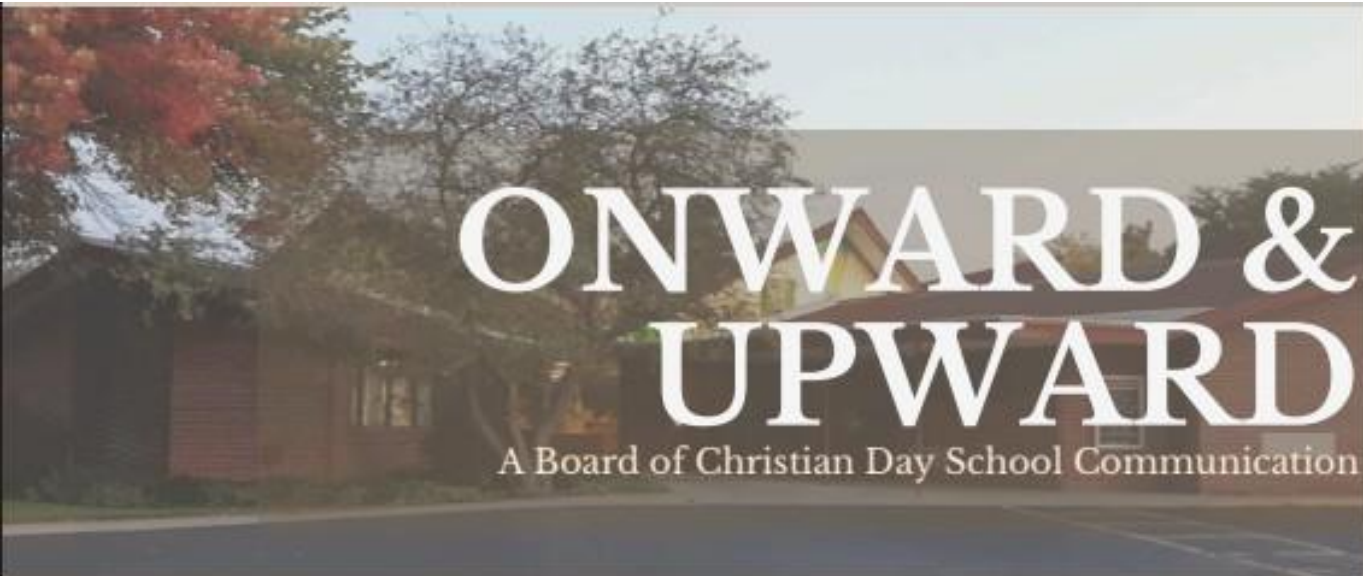
Cards are sold on Wednesday mornings during the school year following Chapel or on the 2nd and 4th Sunday between Church services.

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.

Lydia Guild is seeking to fill "secretary" position

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.

The organizational charter requires minutes be recorded for each of the eight annual meetings and distributed to members for review (can be electronic via email or in paper format at the following meeting); this is the main task for the person in the "Secretary" position. Additional leadership positions include Darlene Jones, President; Jan Sleight, Vice President, and Lynn Bennett, Treasurer. Each of the officers are elected for a 2-year term. Anyone who feels called to help serve in this position should email Darlene at darlene141516@gmail.com.



ONWARD & UPWARD

A Board of Christian Day School Communication

Dear St. John's Parents & Families,

As we come to the close of another school year, we reflect with gratitude on what has truly been a successful and rewarding time for our students, families, and staff. It has been a privilege to serve this community, and we are deeply thankful for the trust you place in us each day.

Your continued support—through prayers, involvement, and encouragement—has strengthened our mission and enriched the experience of every child in our care. Together, we have cultivated a nurturing and faith-filled environment where students can grow and thrive. As summer approaches, we pray that each of you is blessed with rest, renewal, and safe travels. May this season bring joy to your families and prepare us all for another year of learning and growth ahead.

CELEBRATING OUR OUTSTANDING TEACHERS

At the heart of our school's success are the remarkable teachers who serve far beyond the boundaries of the classroom. Their work is not simply a profession—it is a calling lived out daily with dedication, compassion, and extraordinary talent.

Our teachers invest deeply in the lives of our children, nurturing not only their academic achievement but also their faith, character, and purpose. They inspire curiosity, encourage perseverance, and guide each child to grow in both knowledge and Christ-centered values. Their influence reaches into the hearts of students in ways that last well beyond a single school year.

We are profoundly grateful for teachers who care so deeply, who serve so faithfully, and who reflect Christ's love in all they do.

*² May my teaching drop as the rain,
my speech distill as the dew,
like gentle rain upon the tender grass,
and like showers upon the herb.
³ For I will proclaim the name of the LORD;
ascribe greatness to our God.*

Deuteronomy 32:2-3 | ESV

ONWARD & UPWARD

A Board of Christian Day School Communication

THE ST. JOHN'S DIFFERENCE

The strength of our teaching ministry is grounded in both heartfelt calling and thorough preparation. Every teacher at St. John's Lutheran is fully licensed in the State of Michigan and has completed the Lutheran teaching degree program, equipping them to integrate faith and learning with excellence and purpose.

Becoming a licensed teacher in Michigan requires a rigorous and comprehensive process. Each educator holds a bachelor's degree, typically in the subject area they teach, and has completed a state-approved teacher preparation program that includes extensive coursework and hands-on student teaching experience. They have successfully passed the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) in their respective content areas, as well as professional knowledge assessments when required. In addition, our earlier in career teaching staff are also subject to completing ongoing continuing education course credits.

In addition, all teachers complete background checks, maintain valid CPR and First Aid certification, and apply for their Standard Teaching Certificate through the Michigan Online Educator Certification System (MOECS).

This level of preparation reflects a commitment not only to academic excellence but also to the safety and well-being of every child.

More importantly, it is paired with a deep dedication to teaching through a Christ-centered perspective.

As we conclude this year, we encourage our families and congregation to take a moment to thank our teachers for their unwavering service and impact. Their work is a blessing to our entire community.

Together, we remain committed to our shared mission and to keeping **Christ in the Center** of all we do.

With gratitude and blessings,
The Board of Christian Day School

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL

Alyssa Nett - Board Chair

Abbie McGuire - Secretary

Darlene Jones

Steve Keinath

Kristin Martin

Harry Smith

Amy Browning - Ex Officio

The Tick Population Is Rising This Year

We all know that ticks are out there in our wooded, brushy, and grassy areas. There are over 900 species of ticks in the world, but only a few species in our area, and most notably is the Blacklegged Deer Tick. Ticks are typically most active during the warmer months, and their size can be as small as a black poppy seed or a sesame seed, looking like a mole that moves. Because they can be so small, only 25% of patients with Lyme disease ever recall getting a tick bite. These 8-legged bugs use their two front legs near their head to continuously reach out to hang onto something, including a pant leg, a shoelace, hair, or a shirt.



The Blacklegged Deer Tick is the most common tick in our area. It is most easily identified by its reddish-orange body, black shield and black legs. It is known to transmit Lyme disease and Babesiosis. Babesiosis is a disease that's caused by microscopic parasites that infect the red blood cells. These lead to various odd symptoms, (e.g., kidney infection, hemolytic anemia, breathing difficulty, and jaundice) that can be confused with other illnesses, making it difficult to diagnose. Each year there are over 2,000 cases of Babesiosis and 300,000 cases of Lyme Disease.

How does the tick give Lyme disease? These creatures burrow into the skin, drink the blood, and regurgitate it into the bite site, injecting the Lyme bacteria. Once the bacteria get into your body, Lyme can start to wreak havoc. Early Lyme disease is usually characterized by flu-like symptoms. Over time, it can cause problems in your joints, heart, and nervous system. The good news is that it's generally easy to treat. If you know what symptoms to look for, you can get help early on, and the treatment is straightforward. The bullseye rash is a common symptom of Lyme disease, appearing in about 70 to 80 percent of infected individuals. This rash typically starts at the site of a tick bite and gradually expands, often resembling a target with a clear center.



Do a daily check if you have been outdoors in a grassy area as soon as possible. Look everywhere! They can hide anywhere and like warm concealed places, so they can be in your hair, behind the ears, between the toes, behind knees, on the back and chest, in the armpits, under the breast, and around the groin area. Unfortunately, tick bites are hard to identify since they often look like other bug bites and the symptoms vary from person to person. Ideally, you want to spot it while the tick is still attached to you. In this case, the head will likely be inside of your skin, and its body will engorge the longer it stays attached.

How to remove a tick. (Per directions from the CDC):

1. **Wash the bite with soap and water.**
2. **Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible with a tweezer, your fingers, or needle-nosed pliers.**
3. **Gently pull the tick straight up until it's out of your skin, without jerking or twisting it.** Take a photo of the tick for future identification. Dispose of the tick by flushing it in the toilet or by putting it in a plastic bag and throwing it away.
4. **If parts of the tick are left inside your skin, try to remove them with the tweezer.** If you're not able to, it is OK. Simply allow your skin to heal. Your body will naturally push out the remains of the tick over time.
5. **Re-wash the bite area. Wipe the area with alcohol to prevent any chance of infection.**



Tick removal methods to avoid. If you search online, you may find some very interesting ideas on how to remove a tick. Don't be tempted to try them. They don't work well and may increase infection risk.

When to see a doctor after a bite. For about two weeks, monitor the bite site. If you experience symptoms like fever, body aches, joint pain, headache, fatigue, or a rash shaped like a bullseye, see your doctor. Before you worry too much, know this: While illnesses like Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and others are a concern after a tick bite, the odds of infection are low.

Strategies to avoid getting tick bites. Be aware of your surroundings in high grass or leaf litter. Walk in the center of a trail path when possible. Wear light-colored protective clothing like long sleeve shirts, pants, and long socks, tucking the pants inside the socks, and use a tick repellent or treat your clothing and gear with permethrin-based product.

For more information: What Is Babesiosis? Rare Tick-Borne Illness, Explained by Experts Anemia - Hemolytic Anemia | NHLBI, NIH What Is Lyme Disease? Symptoms, Causes, Treatments & Complications How to Remove a Tick Correctly - Tick Removal Tips & Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/signs-symptoms/lyme-disease-rashes.html> <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/how-to-remove-a-tick>

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

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