

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

August 2026 NEWSLETTER

Distracted Driving . . . or Walking.

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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

Anyone who gets out at all has noticed that in recent years smart phones have become a fixture in people's hands. Not that it is bad, entirely. This new technology has brought tremendous and powerful improvements and convenience to our lives. We can look up information, make purchases, get driving instructions, and stay in touch with people all over the world in a device that fits in a pocket.

But for all of the convenience, phones can also be rather . . . distracting. Whenever there is a pause in a given activity or even a line in which to wait, you can see people drop their eyes to their phone to pass the time, check their texts, whatever it is they do.

Is this a good thing? I don't know. If you are stuck in an airport it can be a lifesaver. If you were in the middle of a conversation it can be rude. And if you are walking or driving a car it can be positively dangerous!

I suspect that this resonates pretty broadly. We have all seen (or possibly been) people who do a poor job of driving, watching their kids, or conversing because they are distracted by their phone. It is difficult to not be offended when a person is only giving you a part of their attention.

But distractions are nothing new, of course. Cell phones are only the latest way to fall into an age old trap. It is at least as old as the ministry of Jesus. Remember the Bible story of Mary and Martha? Jesus came to their home and Mary left the work undone in order to sit at His feet while she could. Martha, however, did not have time to listen to Jesus until the work was done. "I just have to do this first, and then I will listen."

Is that eerily familiar? Of course I want to have my devotions, prayer time, worship, witness. I want to have Jesus in my life for sure. I'll get to it as soon as I . . .

It's an age old trap with different baits for every occasion. "As soon as I . . ." is a phrase that puts something before Jesus--a clear failure of the first commandment. Just as Jesus told Martha--gently and kindly, I might add--"You are worried and anxious about many things, but only one thing is truly needed."

Her concerns were legitimate. That's how life is. It's so easy for us to take our eyes off of Jesus. So easy to glance at the phone screen of life, without realizing that we are in fact no longer giving Him our attention. But you can't be a follower of Jesus if you are distracted. If you follow Jesus with your eyes "on your phone," you could fall into a pit. You could lose Him entirely. You will surely miss out on the fullness of what He desires to show you.

So here is a question that is perfect for reflection on a summer day: What is keeping *you* from giving Jesus your full attention?

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."

Congregational Meetings

September 27

Voter's Communication Meeting at 2pm

November 22

Communication Meeting at 2pm

LYDIA GUILD

The officers of this SJL Women's Group met recently to discuss and plan great programs for the 2026-27 year of Lydia Guild. Plan to join us at our first meeting on Monday, September 28, 2026, beginning at 6:30 pm!

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. The final meet up will be August 12.

Summer Trip Recap

It's been a big summer for our SJL Youth! Eleven students attended the MI District Youth Gathering on Mackinac Island and four travelled to Asheville for the Appalachian Servant Event. Join us during Bible study hour on Sunday, August 16 to hear the students recap their experiences!

Parent Teacher Society – PTS

Back to School is upon us! As we prepare to send our children back to the structure of routine, class schedules and early mornings the PTS is planning a Spirit Wear Swap! If you have any unwanted or unused SJL spirit wear – we would love to have it. Let's see how vintage we can get!

Keep an eye out for more details to come.

Text Christine Perry @ (734) 430-2923

The PTS will also have a table set up at the Back-to-School event on August 20th. Stop by and say hello and check out all the volunteer opportunities for the school year!

Young Adult Summer Meetups

We're excited to offer monthly events for mid-20s to mid-30s young adults this summer. Please join us to catch a Loons game on August 29th. Please consider those in your life who might be blessed by this event 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. The next game night is **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!

LWML News

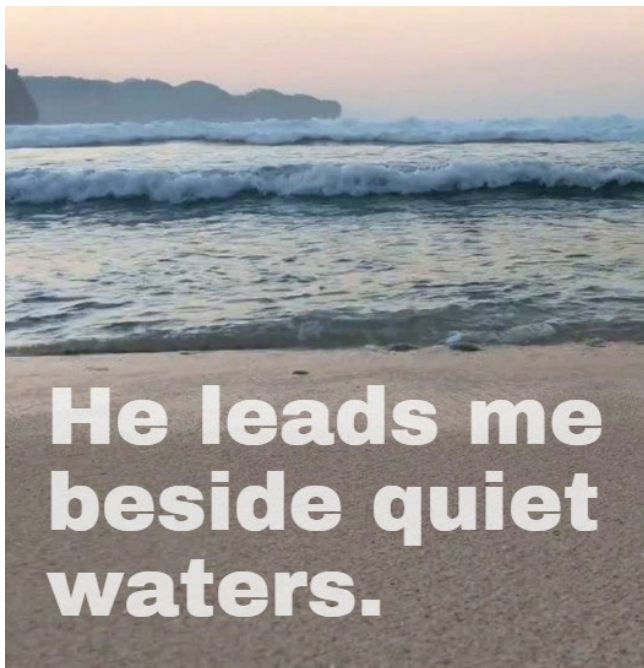
The Lutheran Women's Missionary League will host a Fall Rally October 17 at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Clare. One of the Servant Events taking place that day will be preparing used plastic pill bottles for shipment of medical supplies to developing countries. They will be sent to Matthew 25: Ministries, an international humanitarian aid and disaster relief organization based in Cincinnati, Ohio. They help more than 30 million people annually by rescuing and redistributing corporate overstock, manufacturing essential supplies and deploying emergency relief to areas struck by natural disasters. How you can help? Save your used pill bottles including prescription and over the counter pill bottles for the next couple months. There will be a collection box at the entrance to the lounge to receive these bottles. Questions? Call Karen Schultz 989 832-2168. Thank you.

Women of St John's

The first Women of St. John's meeting will be held on Monday, September 14th at 12:30pm in Room 2. The agenda will be Advent and Harvest Dinners and Seminary student support.

Our summer project has been deep cleaning in the kitchen. We took advantage of the new floor to move things for better accessibility. This has not been done since 2011, so if you cannot find something, please contact one of the Women of St. John's officers. The cabinets and drawers have been labeled, but items have been moved around as we work in the kitchen preparing for the Harvest Dinner. There will be a list of locations available by the time school starts.

The Women of St. John's also sponsored the Food Service Manager certification for 3 members. Some of the things that we learned during our training included how bacteria and viruses cause foodborne illnesses, the most common food allergens, and why the acronym FAT TOM is important. While the St. John's kitchen and kitchenette are not used daily, we are a licensed kitchen and are considered a restaurant by the Midland County Health Department. This requires us to follow a higher standard for food safety. The Food Service Manager is also trained in the kitchen equipment operation and location of the items that are available for use for those using the kitchen. By having Food Service Managers, we can be sure that all equipment is used appropriately to prevent injuries or damage, while also minimizing potential costs for the congregation.



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.

Food Safety Workshop

Tara Hovis, NDRT, Food Safety Expert with MSU Extension, will present a food safety workshop for anyone who volunteers to prepare meals at St. John's or any other community nonprofit.

The workshop will cover the importance of food safety in our licensed kitchen, including the kitchenette, and how to prevent foodborne illness. It also supports the new kitchen use guidelines being developed by the Board of Operations and the Women of St. John's and provides an overview of ServSafe Food Service Manager certification topics. If your group prepares, cooks, or serves food for any event held at St. John's, at least one member should attend.

Workshop: Thursday, August 27, at 6:00 p.m.

For questions, contact Cynthia Benner at 989-600-9463 or midbkwrn@hotmail.com.

Visual Faith
Stand Alone Bible Studies
Women of the Gospels
Sept. 21st, Oct. 19th & Nov. 15th
6:30 to 8 pm

**Read Scripture In
Community Using VF
Practices**

**Creative Hands-On
Projects**
*That provide time to
linger in God's Word
and pray.*

**Listen To VF
Author's Takeaways**
*Hear their
perspective and
items that connected
to their own life story.*

Reflection Questions
*Make connections to
your life.*

REGISTER NOW

Sign up sheet is on the bulletin
board outside of the office OR
E-mail llsmb@chartermi.net

HARVEST DINNER

COMING SOON!

OCTOBER 15, 2026

Our annual Harvest Dinner will be here before we know it and will follow the same format as last year.

- **Take-Out Only:** Meals can be picked up in the St. John's lounge from 4:30–6:30 p.m.
- **Menu:** Turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, dressing, squash, green beans, dinner roll, cranberries, and assorted pie. No substitutions.
- **Cost:** \$14 per meal. No child or family tickets.

Tickets

We encourage purchasing tickets in advance. A limited number will be available at the door.

Tickets will be sold:

- After Saturday evening and Sunday morning services beginning September 12
- In the church office (9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.), phone 989-835-5861
- At Cleveland Manor, Riverside, and Washington Woods on October 1

Homebound members will receive a letter in September with delivery information. Requests for meal delivery must be made by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 9.

Food donation and volunteer sign-up sheets will be available by the end of August.

The Harvest Dinner Committee appreciates everyone's support. Please consider volunteering when sign-up sheets are posted. If you have questions, contact Joyce Battjes at 989-430-7166 or jbattjes@sbcglobal.net. We need you all and are so appreciative of your time and prayers to help us.

Watermelon, Berries, and Strawberries Oh My!

In Michigan we can usually get all kinds of fresh fruit year around, but the sweet taste of fresh fruit from the garden can't be beat. However, you may be surprised how beneficial they are health-wise, so make sure that you add them to your grocery list.

- **Watermelon is our top pick.** It's not only a symbol of summer, and fun food for barbeques and get togethers, but it is also low in calories and sodium, it keeps you hydrated, and it provides many nutrients that help maintain good health, including being rich in vitamin A, C, and B6 which supports your immune system that fights infections and promotes wound healing. **Watermelon is rich in antioxidants, protecting against chronic illnesses.** It has more lycopene (which gives it the red color) than any other fruit or vegetable, including tomatoes. **Lycopene is a powerful antioxidant** that helps neutralize harmful free radicals in the body, potentially reducing the risk of chronic diseases. It's also a great source of cucurbitacin E. Cucurbitacin E is a highly oxidated steroid consisting of a tetracyclic triterpene (which is known for its potential anti-cancer, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant properties). Due to the antioxidants, they help protect your body from oxidative stress, meaning they prevent or slow cell damage.



Watermelon supports eye health. The antioxidants in watermelons may help prevent or delay the formation of cataracts, and may even reduce your odds of developing age-related macular degeneration, a condition that can cause blindness. The vitamin A in watermelon also supports the health of your corneas.

There may be one side effect. Most of the time, you can eat watermelon without experiencing any side effects. But you may want to limit or avoid watermelon if you are prone to migraine headaches because watermelon contains high levels of tyramine (an amino acid that triggers migraines), or if you are allergic to certain pollen, such as grass or ragweed, or if you have digestive issues like irritable bowel syndrome.

- **Blueberries are the second amazing fruit!** These precious little gems are also full of antioxidants that help fight cell damage and boost body functions. This summer, there is nothing quite like digging into a bowl of fresh, juicy blueberries. For such a little berry, this fruit packs a healthy wallop. For only one cup of blueberries, it only provides 96 calories, and is high in vitamin C, a small amount of vitamin K for blood clotting, and the trace-mineral manganese.



Manganese is an important trace mineral. It is needed in small amounts for the normal functioning of your brain, nervous system, metabolism, and promotes bone and muscle health. It assists with the function of various enzymes, and manganese also plays a role in the production of thyroxine, the hormone essential for normal functioning of the thyroid gland. Manganese can't be made in the body, so it is beneficial for it to be stored in the kidneys, liver and pancreas. Besides blueberries, you can get this trace-mineral from pecans, pineapple, oats, and in potatoes.

- **Strawberries are the third fruit recognized for their health benefits.** Most of the health benefits associated with strawberries are due to these being rich in anti-inflammatory antioxidants, called flavonoids. These antioxidants have anti-aging properties and may help reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as cancer, metabolic syndrome, and cardiovascular disease.



Strawberries offer many health benefits. They are a natural source of vitamins, fiber, and polyphenols (a plant compound with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties that may help with blood sugar, blood pressure, and heart disease risk). Strawberries reduce excessive inflammation by inhibiting free radicals. Inflammation weakens the immune system and contributes to several health problems. Strawberries contain no sodium, fat, or cholesterol, but are a good source of manganese, vitamin C, and potassium. One serving (about eight strawberries) provides more vitamin C than one orange!

These are just a few fruits that are a great for your health. Some of the best nutrition advice out there is to eat a variety of natural, colorful foods. Red watermelon and strawberries, purple plums, blueberries. You get the picture.

For more information: <https://mayowellness.com/manganese/> <https://mayowellness.com/strawberry/>
<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/polyphenols>

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 9am Visit with Pastor 5pm Worship
2 8am Worship 9am Fair Missions Team Meeting 9:30am Bible Study 10:45am Joyful Praise	3 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6pm PTS 6:30pm Board of Operations Meeting	4 10am Worship on MCTV(Ch.191) 12pm Prayer Warriors 7pm Board of Christian Day School	5 9am Quilters 12pm Archives 6pm WSJ Meeting 6pm 4 th -6 th Grade Game Night	6 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	7	8 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
9 8am Worship 9am Fair Missions Team Meeting 9:30am Bible Study 10:45am Joyful Praise	10 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191)	11 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 12pm Prayer Warriors 7pm Board of Elders	12 9am Quilters 10am Family Fun Meetup 12pm Archives 6:30pm FORGE Discipleship Group	13 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	14	15 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
16 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study 10:45am Joyful Praise Midland County Fair	17 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191)	18 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 12pm Prayer Warriors 6:30pm Leadership Team Meeting	19 9am Quilters 12pm Archives	20 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	21	22 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
23 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study 10:45am Joyful Praise	24 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) Newsletter Submissions Due	25 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 12pm Prayer Warriors FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL 9:00am Chapel 11:30am Dismissal	26 9am Quilters 10am Family Fun Meetup 12pm Archives 6:30pm FORGE Discipleship Group	27 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal 6:00pm Food Safety Training	28	29 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship 6pm Lutheran Young Adult Event
30 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study 10:45am Joyful Praise	31 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191)					