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

NOVEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Be a Reformation Lutheran!

It is too bad that Lutherans seem to be the only ones who celebrate Reformation Day anymore. Not only that, but our celebrations also tend to be constrained by general politeness–as though Reformation is a bragging or celebration that "our side" is better. After all, there are no "Baptist Birthday" or "Methodist Month" celebrations I know of. Isn't there enough division in the Church without drawing attention to our differences?

That would indeed be a profound misunderstanding of the Reformation. The gospel is not something that belongs exclusively to Lutherans, nor did we invent it. The Gospel has been the power of God to save from the time Jesus sent the Apostles, and the good news is for absolutely anyone who will receive it.

The Reformation is something that God did within the Church for which we are humbly grateful. God used people and circumstances to stir up a movement within the Church (for there is only one Church) that was (and still is) dedicated to a simplified focus on the core tenets of Christianity. These are:

1-The Authority of Scripture. If you take a step back, you see that Lutherans are by no means the only Church body that has embraced this emphasis. All Churches that stand on the authority of Scripture Alone should celebrate the Reformation!

2-Grace Alone. A clear look at the Scripture makes it undeniable that salvation is not in any degree due to our own works or righteousness, but is the gift of God given freely because of Jesus. Forgiveness is offered freely for any who will receive it! Again, while this is certainly central to the identity of Lutherans, it is by no means unique to us. All who embrace the pure preaching of the gospel should be thankful for the Reformation!

3-The Priority of Mission. The Great Commission is not a story from the past, but a mandate for the present. Our living Lord sends His people to share His love and truth, and make disciples wherever possible. From the moment Martin Luther risked his life before the Emperor to proclaim the good news of the Scripture, the Reformation movement has seen a fiery commitment in many churches to bring the good news of Jesus to the ends of the earth.

So you see, it is not about our "church" or our traditions. It is about a confidence in the gospel of Jesus, and a willingness to share, whatever the cost. If that is no longer the case in our church or church body, then we are the ones who need to be "reformed," regardless of our name as "Lutheran."

See you in Church!

-Pastor Kempin

Contact Us

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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

Congregational Meetings

November 22nd
Communication Meeting at 2pm

From the Chairman of the Board of Operations

Getting to Know Your Leadership Team

Dear Members of St. John's,

I would like to take this opportunity to share a little about my role as Chairman of the Board of Operations at St. John's and how this board supports the life and ministry of our congregation. I've been blessed to serve in this capacity for several years and work alongside a very talented group of board members; Derek Brown, Chuck Rozewski, Al Paulsen and Jake Perry.

The Board of Operations plays an important role in helping ensure that our church operates effectively and that the facilities, resources, and day-to-day needs of the congregation are properly managed. While much of this work takes place behind the scenes, it helps provide a welcoming, safe, and well-maintained environment for worship, fellowship, and ministry.

As a member of the Board of Operations, my goal is to help ensure that our church's operational needs are addressed responsibly, that resources are used wisely, and that we make thoughtful decisions that serve both our congregation today and the generations who will follow us.

This work is a shared effort. It involves listening to the needs of our congregation, working collaboratively with church leadership and other volunteers, identifying priorities, and helping develop practical solutions to the challenges and opportunities before us.

Ultimately, our efforts are about more than maintaining a building or managing resources. They are about good stewardship of the gifts God has entrusted to us, and supporting the mission of St. John's Lutheran Church.

I look forward to continuing this work alongside my fellow board members and the many dedicated people who make our congregation such a special community.

Thank you for your continued support, involvement, and commitment to St. John's.

In Christ's service,

Dan Murphy
Chairman - Board of Operations
St. John's Lutheran Church
Midland, Michigan

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."

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



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 **NOVEMBER MEETING** of LYDIA GUILD is on Monday, November 30th at 6:30 pm in the lounge. Our presentation is from a local non-profit called "Ten-16 Recovery Network"; they will be sharing what this organization does for the community. Refreshments, Christian fellowship, and a brief business meeting with follow the presentation. Please plan to join us!



This November, St. John's Lutheran Church and School will, again, be participating in the Sharing Tree program. The Salvation Army in cooperation with United Way of Midland County invites our congregation to help fill holiday wishes by serving as a host for a Sharing Tree this season. Tags will be available throughout the month of November.

Keep an eye on the bulletin and entrance monitors – more information to come!

Midland Community Christmas Dinner

The Midland Community Christmas Dinner is seeking 3 volunteers. There is an open secretarial position to fill with the most competent, willing, and dedicated candidate - eager to learn and immerse themselves in the role. This role requires full commitment with the Christmas dinner; light duties from January to mid-summer. Then the level of involvement increases, ramping up to a high point a few days before the actual dinner is served. After the event we assess the activity that occurred, if it went well or not. Sometime during the month of January the fun starts over and that cycle perpetuates, on and on and on and on... Serving our Lord Jesus Christ never ends!

An opportunity to serve as a media specialist is also available. This volunteer position would be an as-needed service opportunity to update and maintain the Midland Christmas Community Dinner website, as well as push advertising and promotions of the event online and through social media. The current struggle of the organization is an outdated website in need of enhancement and professionalism.

There is also an exciting opportunity to fill the newly created role of Volunteer Coordinator. This volunteer position primarily acquires people for different jobs to help the MCCD reach its objectives. This position will be part of the MCCD board and have full voting rights, helping make decisions that impact how our board functions and how we work as a team, reaching into the community with Jesus' love to all. If you are interested in more information on any of these volunteer positions, please contact one of these board members: Mike Stark @ 989-941-7695.
Deb Stark @989-631-0163, Noah Stark @989-859-9452.

Help us keep Christ in Christmas by sharing your time and talents! The Midland Community Christmas Dinner, hosted at St. John's on Christmas Day from **11 a.m.–3 p.m.**, provides a free meal to those in our community. Beginning **Saturday, November 14**, sign-up sheets will be available in **Alcove C (C is for Christmas!)**. Volunteers are needed on **December 23 and 25**, and food donations such as turkeys, potatoes, and salads are greatly appreciated. Last year, God provided 400 guests to share in this special meal. Will you help us answer the call to serve and share Christ's love with our community?

SJL Youth

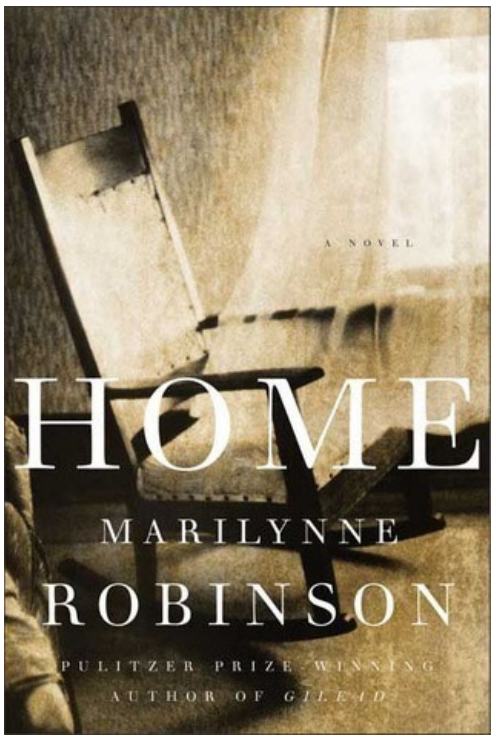
October was a great month for our SJL Youth! Confirmation students were introduced to their prayer mentors at a pizza party and senior high students enjoyed weekly Youth Nights where they studied the Gospel of Luke and had some fun with gaga ball, a pancake art challenge, and an offsite bonfire. Youth families also supplied concessions for this year's Fall Fest event as a fundraiser– thank you for your support!

This month we're looking forward to…

- A Youth Night guest speaker series called "Share Your Story" where congregation members will "...tell of all God's wondrous works!" (1 Chron. 16:9) in their lives
- Youth Sunday on November 22nd

Book Club

Monday, November 9th, 6:30-8:00pm in Room 3.



Advent Wreath Workshop

Mark your calendars and plan to join us for an advent wreath workshop on Sunday, November 22nd! Families of all ages and stages will work together to create a wreath for their home to be used during family devotions (provided) throughout the season.



Women of St John's – November 2026

Another **Harvest Dinner** is in the books. Thank you to all of the members who donated items or their time to make the dinner successful. Our congregation donated over 350 items to help prepare the dinner. You helped us fill over 100 jobs taking between 1 hour and 4 hours. Whatever your contribution, know that you helped make this dinner a success. We delivered over 165 meals to the senior centers and shut ins. More than 370 meals were picked up in person. On Thursday, there was someone in the building working from 5am until 8pm. The money raised this year will be used to fund ministries both at St. John's and in the community. Some of the community ministries we support each year include Aaron's Gifts from Home, Caregiving Network, Disability Network, Life Clinic, Camp Fish Tales, and Shelter House. A big thank you to Joyce Battjes, Cynthia Benner and Joy Miller for their leadership this year. Planning for the dinner began in May with the review of the 2025 dinner. Each month there were tasks to be completed with October being the most intensive. Again, with your help and God's blessings the dinner was a success. And yes, we have already started planning for next year.

Advent Dinners will begin on Wednesday, December 2. Dinners are served from 5pm – 6:30pm. Lydia Guild will host the dinner on December 2, Youth Group will host on December 9 and Women of St. John's will host on December 16. Watch the bulletin and next month's newsletter for more information.

Friend to Friend Ministry is a meal ministry for those who are experiencing life events that make providing healthy meals a challenge. The ministry will help provide a healthy dinner for 2-3 weeks for families experiencing health issues, birth of a child, or other temporary life changes. While we are not able to provide long-term assistance, we can help you get over the first hurdles. Dennis and Anne Hitzman are heading this important ministry. If you, or someone you know, need assistance please contact the church office.

The next meeting of the Women of St. John's will be held on November 9 at 12:30pm in Room 2. All women (and men) of the congregation are invited to attend. Please join us as we plan our future projects.

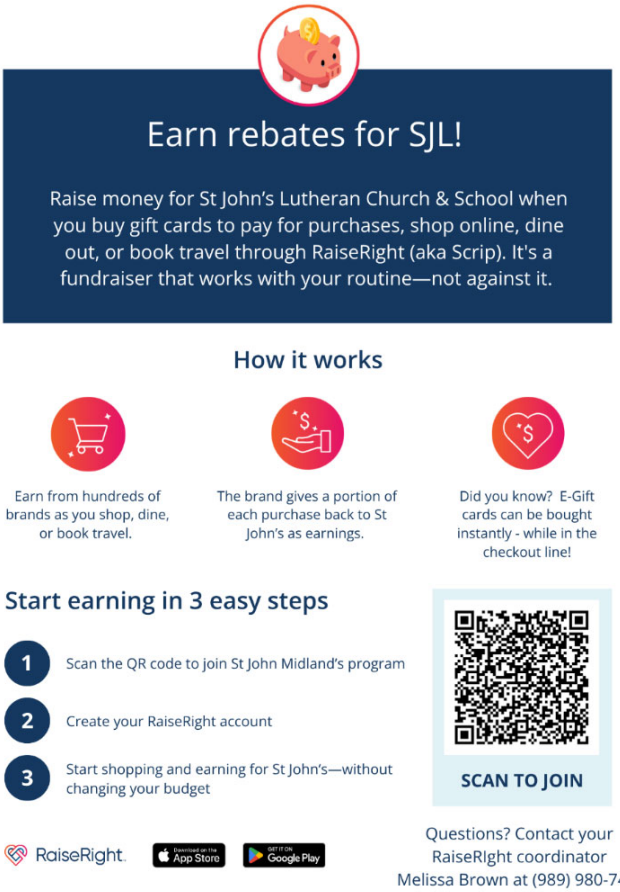
November Prayer Shawl Update

As we draw near Thanksgiving and Christmas, I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that this can be a very lonely time of year for people that have recently lost a loved one or are encountering health issues. The gift of a Prayer Shawl may go a long way in giving comfort, showing empathy, and reminding loved ones that they haven't been forgotten. There is a supply of Prayer Shawls in Closet 3C.

A huge "Thank You!" goes out to a small group of knitters and crocheters that have blessed us with a good supply of Prayer Shawls. So do not hesitate to give them away to anyone that you think could use a hug from God! Like God's love, these shawls only work when they are given away to those in need.

I give thanks to God for the people that are blessing us with the shawls. Their gifts of love make this ministry possible. If you would like to provide a shawl, you may use whatever pattern you would like or you may pick up a pattern from the Church Office or in Closet 3C.

Marvin Tegen



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MIDLAND

2026 THEME: BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY

What does community mean to you?



••• VOTE FOR THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD! •••

NOVEMBER 4-7, 2026

MIDLAND MALL - DURING MALL HOURS

St. John's Middle School will be participating in Canstruction, a charitable competition where students design and build artistic structures made of canned food using STEAM principles such as engineering, mathematics, artistic and architectural design, 3D modeling and problem solving, to help support our local Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network.

2026 SJL TURKEY TROT FUNDRAISER

LAST YEAR

Thanks to the generosity of our school families, friends, and St. John's congregation, we raised

$30,322.77,

exceeding our $25,000 goal!

SHARING OUR BLESSINGS

Using $3000 from last year's surplus, students will participate in a service project on Turkey Trot day assembling kits for **Home to Stay**, **The Bridge**, and **Midland Shelterhouse**.

Thank you

for your continued support and prayers!

-SJL Parent Teacher Society (PTS)

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

Music Program:
Our goal is to purchase school-owned instruments, cases, and storage equipment to help proactively prepare our music program for upcoming class growth.

Playground Shade:
Adding new seating and shade structures to gathering areas will provide relief from the sun while our students play, learn, and enjoy time outdoors.

INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING?

Our fundraising goal is once again

$25,000

- $12,500 - raised by St. John's Lutheran School families
- $12,500 - match by St. John's Lutheran Church

If you wish to provide additional support for our music program or playground shade through this year's fundraiser, cash or check donations will be accepted through November 16th. Additional details can be found in Alcove C.

IMPORTANT DATES

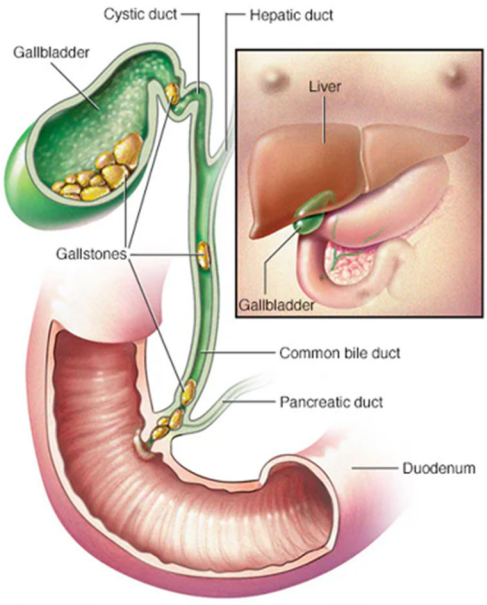
Fundraising Campaign: Oct. 26 - Nov. 20

Cash/Check Envelopes Due: Nov. 16

Turkey Trot/ Final Day for Online Donations: Nov. 20

Gallstones and Bile Duct Stones (Part 2 of 2)

Gallstones are often too small to cause a problem (but larger stones, sometimes as large as a golf ball) and can block the bile duct and cause painful attacks that can lead to infection and the need for surgery. You should get medical help immediately if you have sudden and severe pain that lasts for a few hours. This can be a sign that a gallstone(s) is stuck in the bile duct, a tiny canal that allows bile to flow out of the liver or out of the gallbladder to the small intestine. Blockages in the bile duct can slow or stop the flow of the bile to back up and collect in the liver. The result can feel pain and pose serious health risks without treatment.



When to See Your Doctor Again After Gallbladder Surgery

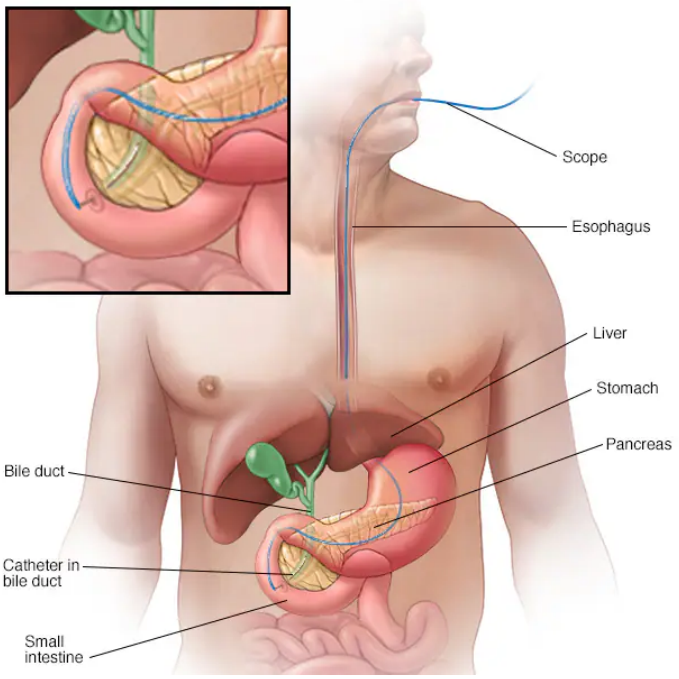
For most people, a cholecystectomy will prevent gallstones from ever occurring again, but there is a chance that a gallstone(s) may be in the bile duct causing epigastric tenderness or pain. Call your doctor right away if you have any symptoms of:

- Nausea, vomiting, feeling of fullness and lack of appetite, or abdominal pain.
- Jaundice, because the bile backs up and will enter your bloodstream. Also, your urine will be a darker color.
- Fever and chills, due to severe inflammation in your biliary system, or a sign of infection.

Bile Duct Stones or Blockage of the Bile Duct

Approximately 5 in 1,000 people will develop gallstones leading to an obstruction of bile going into your intestine. Stones in the bile duct can start from the gallbladder and migrate into the bile duct or they can form in the bile duct itself.

An ultrasound or MRI will be ordered, along with a blood test of your liver chemistry to see if there are any stones lodged in the bile duct. Most often, stones can pass naturally out of the bile duct on their own if they are not too large. However, when a gallstone gets stuck in the bile duct, the flow of bile is blocked, compromising your entire biliary system, which is the network of organs (pancreas, liver, and vessels) that bile travels through. Medical intervention is necessary, otherwise inflammation, infection, and life-threatening complications can occur.



Surgical Removing the Bile Duct Stones

If there are stones in the bile duct, an experienced gastroenterologist doctor will provide a minimally invasive treatment to extract the bile duct stones. The procedure is called an endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP). During the ERCP procedure, under anesthesia, the doctor will use a flexible small scope about the thickness of a finger. The doctor passes the scope from the mouth, down the esophagus, into the stomach, and into the duodenum. The doctor may inject a contrast dye into the bile duct, which can then see the stones on x-ray. Special tools will be guided through the scope to remove the bile duct stones. Patients can typically go home the same day. Even if you've had your gallbladder removed, five percent of people may still develop new stones in the bile ducts within 10 to 20 years.

For more information:
https://www.webmd.com/digestive-disorders/ss/slideshow-gallbladder-surgery-what-to-expect
https://www.uofmhealth.org/our-care/specialties-services/bile-duct-stones

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study/ Sunday School 10:45am Joyful Praise 6pm Sr. High Youth Group **TIME CHANGE**	2 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30pm Board of Operations	3 10am Worship on MCTV(Ch.191) 10:30am Oasis Bible Study 12pm Prayer Warriors 1pm Colonial Villa Worship 7pm Board of Christian Day School **ELECTION DAY**	4 8:15am Chapel 9am Quilters 9:30 Backpack Buddies 10am LifeLight 12pm Archives 3pm Girls Small Group 5:30pm Confirmation 6pm Handbell Choir Practice	5 10am Bickford Bible Study 2pm Brittany Manor Worship 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	6	7 8am Men's Bible Study 9am Visit with Pastor **9am SJL Bazaar** 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
8 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study/ Sunday School 10:45am Joyful Praise 1pm Young Adult Event – Nord Social 6pm Sr. High Youth Group	9 12:30pm Women of St. John's 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30 Book Club 6:30pm P.T.S. Meeting	10 10am Worship on MCTV(Ch.191) 10:30am Oasis Bible Study 10:30am Cascades Bible Study 12pm Prayer Warriors 7pm Board of Elders	11 8:15am Chapel 9am Quilters 10am LifeLight 10am Stratford Pines Worship 12pm Archives 3pm Girls Small Group 5:30pm Confirmation 6pm Handbell Choir Practice	12 10am Bickford Bible Study 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	13	14 8am Men's Bible Study 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
15 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study/ Sunday School 10:45am Joyful Praise 6pm Sr. High Youth Group	16 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30pm Visual Faith **Newsletter Submission Due**	17 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 10:30am Oasis Bible Study 12pm Prayer Warriors 6:30pm Leadership Team	18 8:15am Chapel 9am Quilters 9:30 Backpack Buddies 10am LifeLight 10:30am Washington Wood Worship 12pm Archives 1:30pm Kings Daughters Worship 2pm Meridian Acres Worship 3pm Girls Small Group 5:30pm Confirmation 6pm Handbells	19 10am Bickford Bible Study 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	20 12pm Turkey Trot Fundraiser	21 8am Men's Bible Study 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
22 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study/ Sunday School 10:45am Joyful Praise 12pm Family Advent Wreath Workshop 2pm Communications Meeting 6pm Sr. High Youth Group	23 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191)	24 8:15 Toddler Bible Time 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 10:30am Oasis Bible Study 10:30am Cascades Bible Study 12pm Prayer Warriors 6:30pm Missions Board	25 **NO SCHOOL** 10am LifeLight 12pm Archives 1:30pm Story Point Worship 7:00pm Worship Service	26 **Church Office Closed** **NO SCHOOL** **HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**	27 **Church Office Closed** **NO SCHOOL**	28 9am Visit with Pastor 9am Decorate the Church 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
29 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study/ Sunday School 10:45am Joyful Praise	30 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30 Lydia Guild					