



And the one who was seated
on the throne said,

*"See, I am making
all things new."*

Revelation 21:5

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Church Membership: What Does It Mean?

By Pastor Karen Natterstad, Interim Pastor

"Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another."

- Hebrews 10:24-25

There can be both benefits and responsibilities that come with joining a local congregation.

Have you thought about why you joined

St. John's? Or, why might you want to become a member? Here might be some reasons:

My faith can burn brighter when surrounded by others who share the same hope and trust in Christ. When I commit to weekly worship and engage in informal conversations with others, I know I'm helping to build a community that celebrates joys and mutually supports each other through life's challenges.

My faith can grow through interacting with all generations. A church community is one of the few places where I can make friends with those older and younger than me. I know I'm helping to build a community that honors the wisdom of our elders and invests in building up the faith of our youth.

I can serve others as Christ taught us. Within my Church community I can find a place for

serving. I have partners to share responsibilities. And, I can be a part of doing something bigger that impacts the well-being of others. I know my contributions matter.

I love my Church because I love

Jesus. I believe Christ dwells in the body of believers. Christ promised to live in us and with us. And, for the sake of the world, Christ works

through us. I know there are no perfect churches, just as there are no perfect people. But God can accomplish more than we can ask or imagine.

Whether you've thought about these things or not, or just felt them in your heart, membership in a local congregation is a privilege and a responsibility all Christians will want to consider.

This month, I'll be hosting a new member orientation class. In two sessions, I'd like to explore these reasons (and more) for making a commitment to join the St. John's Church community. If you've recently joined or want to explore what membership might mean for you, please join this conversation.

On the journey with you,
Pastor Karen, Interim

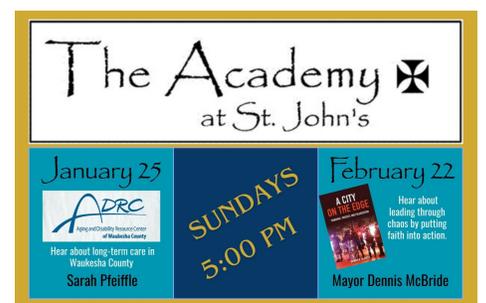


Don't miss it!

New Member Orientation Class
(2 sessions) -

Sundays, Jan 11 & 18, 9:40-10:40am in Fellowship Hall; Led by Pastor Karen

God has given us the gift of Christian community. It provides for two of our most basic needs. The church can be a place to belong and a place to grow spiritually. If you have joined St. John's in the past year or so, but would like to learn more about this congregation and its ministry, this two session class is for you. Or, have had an opportunity to worship with us and would like to learn more about membership, this class is also for you. RSVP at: pastorkaren@stjohnsbrookfield.org



MET Small Group Discussions

Thank you to the 105 congregation members who completed the MET survey in November! We appreciate your time, your transparency, and your trust. You've given us a lot of great information to work with! And that means we are ready to move to the next stage of our work – small group discussions.

We will be hosting 10-15 small group discussions with the intention of creating space for groups of 5-7 people to dig a bit deeper into the themes we gathered from the surveys. Each small group discussion is scheduled for 60 minutes and will be facilitated by members of the MET team. Small group meetings are scheduled between the end of January and February.

Small Group Meeting Schedule

Tuesday	January 20	6:30p-7:30p
Saturday	January 24	11:00a-12:00p
Monday	January 26	6:30p-7:30p
Tuesday	January 27	6:30p-7:30p
Wednesday	January 28	6:30p-7:30p
Friday	January 30	12:00p-1:00p
Monday	February 2	6:30p-7:30p
Tuesday	February 3	6:30p-7:30p
Sunday	February 8	9:30a-10:30a
Tuesday	February 10	6:30p-7:30p



RSVP online via the QR code or the Sign Up Genius button on the website.



Congregation members are invited to use the [SignUp Genius link](#) on the [website](#) to sign up to attend one small group meeting. All small group meetings will be held at church. You will receive a confirmation email approximately one week before your scheduled session. Additional dates will be added as necessary. If you are interested in hosting an event at your home, please reach out to Pastor Karen to discuss options.

<p>MET Small Groups</p>	<p>space is limited</p> <p>5-7 people per session</p>	<p>January and February options</p>
	<p>Sign-up Here</p> <p>or online</p>	<p>60 minute sessions</p>

Children, Youth & Families

Preschool

On December 18, decked out in their holiday finest, our Two, Three and Four year olds sang favorite Preschool songs and Christmas songs.

Mrs. Wagner read God Bless Our Christmas. As all the animals share their favorite part of Christmas, the Snow Leopard tell us, "Joy fills the air at Christmastime. I feel so very blessed. It's great to see gifts by the tree, but God's Gift is the best."

Then it was the grownup's time to sing lots of Christmas favorites in the Family Sing Along. The program ended with We Wish You a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Many thanks to Barb Lange, our Music Teacher, for a wonderful program. We ended our evening with cookies and hot cocoa in the Fellowship Hall.



Animal Encounters

Join us August 3-6 for Animal Encounters VBS this summer at St. John's as we meet and greet animals from the Bible!

Registration opens February 1.

Animal Encounters VBS

2026 VBS

August 3-6, 2026
9:00am-12:00pm

St. John's Lutheran Church
Brookfield, WI

SAVE THE DATE

Registration: Opens Feb. 1, 2026
www.makedisciples.org

Who: VBS is open to all kids ages 4 through entering 6th grade

Cost: \$35/child before June 1
\$100 Family maximum



Children, Youth & Families

Sunday Evening Education at St. John's

Middle Schoolers! Can you believe we are halfway through the year?!? If you haven't connected with us yet this year, jump on in! We are excited to offer programming for our Middle Schoolers on Sunday evenings from 4:30-6:00 p.m.

January 11 and 25

4:30-5:00

Dinner

5:00-6:00

5th- 6th grade Connect Class

7th-8th grade Confirmation Class

9th-12th grade Youth Group

Middle School Events

Hope Center Meal

6th-8th graders – Join us on **January 10** at 6:00 to go Rock Climbing at Adventure Rock! Cost is \$5.00 per student.

[Sign Up Here](#)

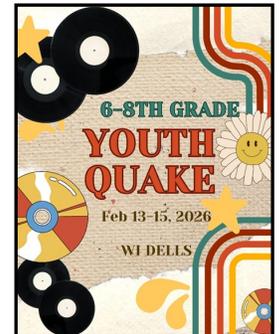


Not Too Late for Youth Quake!

And it is not too late to sign up for Youth Quake! Open to 6th-8th graders, Youth Quake is a weekend of worship, learning, service, and some water park fun in the Dells!

February 13-15, 2026.

Cost is \$100 per student.



Contact Joanna with Toddler to 8th Grade Questions

jsalinas@stjohnsbrookfield.org

Sunday School

Join us on Sundays at 9:45am for Sunday School in January as we continue to learn our origin stories. We are kicking off the month on January 4 with an Epiphany Party!

Sunday School programming is for ages 2-5th grade. Students in 6th – 8th grade are invited to join the Youth Leadership Team which meets on Sundays in the Paul Room. Questions? Contact Joanna at jsalinas@stjohnsbrookfield.org.



Thanks For the Help!

A huge thank you to Michelle Sternkopf, Sandra Wicklund, and Jane Olinger for their help with our Instant Christmas Pageant, "And Mary Said Yes"! The unrehearsed pageant was a great way to tell the story of Jesus' birth.



Stewardship

School is starting in El Salvador, so this month we are collecting for our scholarship students.

And a HUGE thank you to everyone who contributed in November and December! We were able to donate a car full of items through the Waukesha County Christmas Clearing Council and help their families have a great Christmas!

Baptism

Interested in Baptism for yourself, your child or grandchild? Please reach out to Pastor Karen at pastorkaren@stjohnsbrookfield.org.



Children, Youth & Families

Boundary Waters Trip

Sign Up by February 1!

Registration is open for our summer trip to the **Boundary Waters!** This unforgettable experience offers students the chance to unplug, grow in independence, build strong friendships, and experience faith and community while canoeing and camping in one of the most beautiful wilderness areas in the country.

 **Registration deadline: February 1**

\$ \$50 Deposit required to reserve a spot

Spots are limited and will not be held without a deposit. If your student is interested—or you have questions—please reach out soon. We'd love to have them join us!

HIGH SCHOOL CALENDAR

DATE	ACTIVITY	TIME
Jan 11	Youth group	4:30 pm— 6:00 pm
Jan 18	HS leads Service Project— Just One More Ministry	Between services
Jan 18	9th Grade Confirmation Topic: Judaism	4:30 pm— 6:00 pm
Jan 25	Youth group	4:30 pm— 6:00 pm
Jan 30	9th Grade Confirmation Trip to Jewish Synagogue	5:00 pm— 8:30 pm



Contact Stephanie
with questions about
high school and
young adult ministry
at St. John's

sbroussard@stjohnsbrookfield.org

or 262-453-9201

Super Bowl Sub & Pizza Fundraiser

It's almost time for our annual **Super Bowl Sub & Pizza Fundraiser!** We will be **taking orders January 11–25**, with all subs and pizzas **made fresh and ready for pickup on Super Bowl Sunday, February 8.**

Perfect for game day gatherings, family meals, or cheering on your favorite team during the **Super Bowl** — and every order helps support our high school youth.

 **Order window: January 11–25**

  **Pickup: Super Bowl Sunday, February 8**

Fresh, made-to-order subs & pizzas!



Congregation Service Project

Join us **Sunday, January 18, between services** for a hands-on, all-ages service project as we repackage bulk food for **Just One More Ministry.**

This is a great opportunity to serve together as a church family — **there will be something for everyone to do**, no matter your age or ability. Come for a few minutes or stay the whole time and help make a meaningful impact in our local community.

 **When:** January 18 -
between services

 **Where:** Youth Room



Who: All are welcome!



JUSTONEMORE
Rescuing Food, Helping Souls

A Time to Pray



Pray Without Ceasing

Led by Pastor Jim Holmberg

Tuesday, January 13

5:00 p.m.

In the Conference Room

All are welcome to join in prayer.

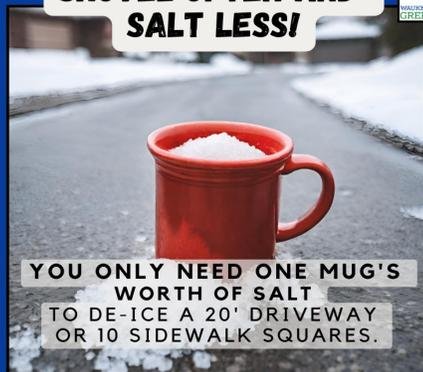
Creation Corner

Limit your use of Outdoor Salt

In WI, road salt is synonymous with winter. But did you know? Road salts are toxic to children, pets, birds and wildlife. They can damage vegetation and destroy the organisms in soil. And just one teaspoon of salt can permanently pollute five gallons of water!

Limit your use of road salt around your home and business. Try a natural alternatives and avoid oversalting. Identify the critical areas where ice builds up and then shovel often and early.

SHOVEL OFTEN AND SALT LESS!



St. John's Academy

This winter, four academy events will welcome guest presenters for a Sunday late afternoon conversation, 5:00-6:00 p.m. (All are invited to share a fellowship meal at 4:30.)

Sunday, January 25

ADRC with Sarah Pfeiffle, Outreach Coordinator

The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Waukesha County (ADRC) is a single access point for publicly funded long-term care in Waukesha County. The ADRC provides information, assistance, benefits counseling and supportive services for adults aged 60+; caregivers; adults with physical or developmental disabilities; and adults with mental health or substance use concerns.

Sunday, February 22,

Mayor Dennis McBride, Wauwatosa WI

In 2020, Mayor McBride was elected to lead the midsize suburb of Wauwatosa bordered by Milwaukee, the year of crisis: the pandemic, economic downturn, police shootings, and protests. Wauwatosa became a microcosm of a troubled America. In his newly released book, *A City on the Edge*, Mayor McBride tells both his personal story and that of other community leaders who were leading through the chaos that overwhelmed our nation and cities. Mayor McBride is an ELCA Lutheran, member of St. Matthew's Church in Wauwatosa, where he sings tenor in the choir. He's a friend of Pastor Karen, who says, "Here is a civic leader whose faith is seen in his actions."

Future Dates

Sunday, March 22 TBA

Sunday, April 19 TBA

The Academy at St. John's

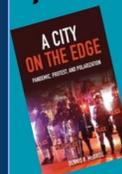
January 25



Hear about long-term care in Waukesha County
Sarah Pfeiffle

**SUNDAYS
5:00 PM**

February 22



Hear about leading through chaos by putting faith into action.

Mayor Dennis McBride

Advent and Christmas Recap



A heart felt thank you to all of the choirs and musicians who blessed us with music in Advent and Christmas, you are truly a blessing!

So much fun was had by all during Advent! A huge thank you to our Middle School students, Eli, Evan, AJ, and Benjamin, who helped put on the "Jesse Tree" skit during Advent Fest and to our High School students for inviting us to Christmas Card Making extravaganza.

Serving the World

Quilting Block Party

Back by popular demand, the quilt block party! Please join us on **Saturday, January 3** and/or Friday, January 9 from 12:30-3:00 downstairs in the quilting room. We will be joining together blocks into quilt tops. Come be creative--only requirement is being able to sew 1/4" seam. We also can make more cut/stack blocks: all materials are provided. Please let Jennifer or Klaudia know if you'll need a sewing machine.

We also have our regularly scheduled 1st Tuesday evening quilting from 6-8pm where we layer/pin/sew the quilt tops/batting/backs into the finished product. **January 6.**

Card Ministry Transition

A big "thank you" to all who have collected cards for this ministry for 26 years. So far this year, we have collected 1045 new cards - a combination of thank you, Christmas, birthday, sympathy, and all occasion cards.

There is a time for everything, and the time has come to disband this ministry at the end of the year. However, if you still would like to give new cards with their envelopes, you may place them in the Hope Center bin. The blue bins are located in the donation location in the Fellowship Hall. Please contact Kathy Hoepfner at 262 786-0412 or tkhoepfner2@gmail.com if you have any questions.

January Outreach Focus

January Outreach Offering: Undies and Socks for the Hope Center

Do you wear underwear?
Do you wear socks?

These are luxuries that some in our community do not have - but you can help! During January, our outreach offering focus will be socks and undies for Hope Center.

The greatest needs are for:

ankle socks (all sizes) and **underwear:**

kids (all sizes), ladies (sizes 5-8), and men (S-XL sizes.)

Contact Brian Cranfill at 262-786-2619 with questions.



January Birthdays



1	Sue Hamman	12	Andrew Zick	18	David Seamonson	27	Dave Beyer
2	John Beukema	13	Patti Baeten	19	Ellen Bertrand	27	Malachi Beyerlein
4	Hadley Brooks	13	Natalie Mathes	20	Ellie Fuchs	27	Marc Delzer
4	Bill Sattler	14	Jeff Gubbins	21	Connor Hutchinson	27	Jacki Hale
6	Jeff DuChateau	14	Kathy Hoepfner	21	Angela Sidebottom	27	Jeremy Hale
7	Gary Grunau	15	Austin Klemm	22	Karen Wolfmeyer	27	Jim Johnson
7	Matt Wafle	15	Liam Sadowski	23	Kyle Weyer	27	Valy Keierleber
8	Owen Pavlichek	16	Callum Morrell	23	Dan Wimmer	27	Drake Wafle
8	Jason Rateike	16	Dawn Vogelsang	25	Teresa DuChateau	30	Jim Morgan
8	Henry Sidebottom	17	Lola Koscielniak	25	Ryan Jerins-Boll	30	Jim Truax
11	Liam Brooks	17	Joseph Sidebottom	25	Eli Zach	31	Justin Belli
12	Anja Logan	18	Mark Latus	26	Tony Madrigal	31	Spencer Dominguez

Council Communications

The meeting was held on Monday, December 15, 2025.

Finances: Offerings for November were 7% under the budgeted amount. Part of this was due to having to cancel worship services on the last Sunday in November due to the snowstorm. Year-to-date offerings are 5% over the budgeted amount, a continuing positive trend.

Expenses for the month were 4% over budget.

The Finance Committee's proposed 2026 church budget was discussed. Finance will present the final version of the proposed 2026 budget, along with a report on 2025 giving, to the council for approval at its January meeting.

Listening sessions where the proposed budget will be shared with members will be held on January 22 and January 25. The annual congregational budget meeting will be held on Sunday, February 1.

Pastor's Report: The Mission Exploration Team (MET) has received over 100 survey reports from members. They are meeting on Wednesday, December 17 and are going to set up a series of small group meetings with members to discuss the results of the congregational survey.

Pastor Karen is planning to hold a mini-retreat with the members of the church council and paid staff to discuss the MET surveys, the roles of these groups and the pastor and how to improve how

they work together. The retreat will also be an opportunity to look ahead to 2026.

The preschool has qualified for a two-year grant from the State of Wisconsin called "Get Kids Ready".

President's Report: Paul Bulgerin and Brittany Larson met with Heidi Bischmann to discuss updating the church's Facility Use document. Heidi is sharing the results of this meeting with the church staff and will present a draft of the document to the council for approval in January.

Property Committee: Mark Latus filled the council in on the roof leak in the Gathering Space following the heavy snow on November 30 and the work that will be needed to repair it.

"Pave the Way" (PTW) Campaign: Design work continues on the outdoor church sign. The cost of this is fully funded from PTW. A \$15,000 deposit for the sign has already been paid. This was done in order to "lock in" the final price.

Interiors is meeting with a designer to discuss replacing the brown chairs in the Gathering Space. Some of these are ripped.

About \$113,700 remains unspent from PTW. The sign will take about \$45-50,000 of this amount. The church council will develop a plan, to present to the congregation, on what to do with any unspent funds. The big reason why we will have unspent funds is due to the much lower than anticipated cost of work on the circular drive.

New Business: Church bookkeeper Rebecca Mitchell has submitted her resignation effective January 7, 2026. The council thanks her for her excellent work these past years. The Human Resources Committee met on December 10 to discuss plans to advertise and recruit for a new bookkeeper.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paul Bulgerin
Church Council President

**NEXT COUNCIL MEETING:
JANUARY 19 AT 6:30 P.M.**

*Greetings from the
St. John's staff!*



Back row: Joanna Salinas, Stephanie Broussard, Heidi Bischmann, Laura Rickinger, Pam Klink, Becky Whelpley,

Front row: Pastor Karen Natterstad, Lana DeCoto

Not pictured: Bill Stace, Mary Wagner, LaBree Paukner, Kenn Anderson, Lisa Weiss-Cornelius, Debra Holifield, and Ethan Sitterly.

Calendar of events for January 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
*worship service/event is live streamed	Coming Soon: 2/1 Annual Meeting 2/18 Ash Wednesday	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px;"> <p>To request space for your small group or ministry to meet in the building, please complete the Facility Use Form on the St. John's website. It is under the Resources tab - Documents and Forms. Contact Heidi with questions.</p> </div>		1 6:30p Al-Anon 7:00p AA	2 <i>office closed</i> 6:15a virtual men's group 1:30p Tai Chi	3 8:30a men's group 12:30p quilting block party
4 8:30a worship* 9:30a education and fellowship 10:45a worship	5 <i>Food Pantry Pick Up</i> 9:45a yoga 11:00a staff mtg 11:30a Hope Center meal 6:30p Al-Anon 8:00p Women's AA	6 8:30a property team 6:00p quilters 6:30p handbell rehearsal	7 8:30a retired men's b-fast 5:15p Kids of the Kingdom 6:00p AA 6:00p TOPS 6:30p choir rehearsal	8 5:00p Kathak dance 6:00p Faith Alive Group 6:30p Al-Anon 7:00p AA	9 <i>office closed</i> 6:15a virtual men's group 10:00a prayer shawl group 1:30p Tai Chi 6:30p Chinese Christian Church	10 8:30a men's group
11 8:30a worship* 9:30a ed and fellowship 9:40a New Member Class 1 10:45a worship 4:30p youth programming	12 9:45a yoga 11:00a staff mtg 11:30a Hope Center meal 6:30p Al-Anon 8:00p Women's AA	13 8:30a property team 5:00p Pray without Ceasing 6:30p HR Team Zoom mtg 6:30p handbell rehearsal 6:30p scouts	14 9:30a Morning Circle 5:15p Kids of the Kingdom 6:00p AA 6:00p TOPS 6:30p choir rehearsal	15 4:30p Finance Team mtg 5:00p Kathak dance 6:30p Al-Anon 7:00p AA	16 <i>office closed</i> 6:15a virtual men's group 1:30p Tai Chi 6:30p Chinese Christian Church	17 8:30a men's group 9:30a Women of Faith
18 8:30a worship* 9:30a ed and fellowship 9:40a New Member Class 2 9:45a service project 10:45a worship 4:30p youth programming	19 9:45a yoga 11:00a staff mtg 11:30a Hope Center meal 1:00p women's Bible study 6:30p council meeting 6:30p Al-Anon 8:00p Women's AA	20 8:30a property team 1:00p book club 6:30p handbell rehearsal 6:30p MET small group 6:30p scouts	21 12:00p Retired Men's lunch 5:15p Kids of the Kingdom 6:00p AA 6:00p TOPS 6:30p choir rehearsal	22 5:00p Kathak dance 6:00p Faith Alive Group 6:30p Al-Anon 7:00p AA	23 <i>office closed</i> 6:15a virtual men's group 1:30p Tai Chi 6:30p Chinese Christian Church	24 8:30a men's group 11:00a MET small group
25 8:30a worship* 9:30a ed and fellowship 10:45a worship 4:30p youth programming	26 9:45a yoga 11:00a staff mtg 11:30a Hope Center meal 6:30p MET small group 6:30p Al-Anon 8:00p Women's AA	27 8:30a property team 6:30p handbell rehearsal 6:30p MET small group 6:30p scouts	28 5:15p Kids of the Kingdom 6:00p AA 6:00p TOPS 6:30p choir rehearsal 6:30p MET small group	29 5:00p Kathak dance 6:30p Al-Anon 7:00p AA	30 <i>office closed</i> 6:15a virtual men's group 12:00p MET small group 1:30p Tai Chi 6:30p Chinese Christian Church	31 8:30a men's group

Contact Us

Office Hours

The St. John's phone is answered and doors are monitored for entry 9:00-Noon, Monday to Thursday.

Church

phone: 262-786-6887

email: to email a staff member, please click on the link by their photo on the website under Staff.

Preschool

phone: 262-786-4298

lrickinger@stjohnsbrookfield.org

About Us

Welcome Statement

At St. John's we align with Paul's words in Romans 15:7 "Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." We welcome one another all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race, age or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to physical or mental health, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in our commitment to the ways, grace and love of Christ.

Core Values of St. John's:

- Serving our world, locally and globally;
- Inspiring worship and music that honor God;
- Nurturing relationships with one another as Jesus walks with us;
- Growing in God's grace through education and discipleship;
- Engaging children and youth in the life of the church.

Praying for ...

We pray for those who are battling illness, are healing, or are needing extra prayers:

Marion S	Connor
Carol M	Doris K
Dylan H	Mark A
Terry H	Judy K
Sonja B	Bev W

To help us to stay connected, we will be sharing the list with you monthly. Prayers may be for thanksgiving, hope and/or healing. The requests may be immediate, short or long term.

Prayer requests may be submitted at the bottom of the website www.makedisciples.com.

Council Contacts

St. John's Council

President

Paul Bulgerin 262-352-9050

Vice-president

Brittany Larson 262-527-2404

Secretary

Josh Werner 262-271-0639

Treasurer

Pauline Shoemaker 262-784-1638

At Large

Gregg Everts 414-640-9988

Mark Latus 262-784-1183

Liz Roth 847-533-4806

Patrice Krimpelbein 262-389-0014

Jack Shaffer 262-212-4240



St. John's
LUTHERAN ELCA
Brookfield, Wisconsin

TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT MINISTRIES AT
ST. JOHN'S, CLICK OR
SCAN THIS QR CODE.

makedisciples.com



Staff Phone Extensions

St. John's Phone Number: 262-786-6887

Extensions:

- 100 Heidi Bischmann, Office Coordinator
- 101 Pastor Karen Natterstad, Interim Pastor
- 102 Pam Klink, Communications Coordinator
- 103 Bill Stace, Building Supervisor
- 104 Joanna Salinas, Children's Ministry
- 105 Stephanie Broussard, Youth Ministry
- 106 Open, Bookkeeper
- 107 Becky Whelpley, Music Director
- 200 Laura Rickinger, Preschool



**Attention
Facebook Users**

Evangelize with our posts, be sure to: **LIKE
COMMENT
SHARE**