

# The Visitor

July/August 2017

St. John's Lutheran Church ELCA • 2190 Jackson Hwy Chehalis, WA 98532  
360/748-4741 • office@stjohnschehalis.net

## Cleaning the Heart

Psalm 51:10 *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.*



Summer is traditionally a time for rest and relaxation. For those of us with children still at home, kids are out of school and it's a prime time to take family vacations. Summer is God's gift to us to clean our hearts and bring us refreshment.

Rest and relaxation does not mean that everything stops. Ministry is not on a 9-month calendar. It is a 365 24/7 responsibility of Christ's Church.

St John's continues even through the summer months. Worship still happens every Sunday at 9:45am. Planning is beginning for the program year beginning in September. The youth will be traveling to Montana to spend a week with the Blackfeet

Nation. People will still find us on the web and reach out for pastoral care.

So even if you are on vacation, the ministry of St John's continues. In order for that ministry to be there when needed, we need your prayer and financial support. You now don't have to wait to come to church to offer your financial offerings. You can go to our website [stjohnschehalis.net](http://stjohnschehalis.net) and give right there with your credit/debit card or with your checking account. You can even setup a recurring gift to happen at a time of your choosing.

Thank you for being a part of the mission and ministry of St John's Lutheran Church. Enjoy the renewal of your spirit this summer. May Jesus Christ continue to bless you and create in you a clean heart.

*Pastor Matt*

## My St. John's Story (Part 1)

I grew up in rural southwestern Pennsylvania in a traditional lower middle-class family. I was baptized Lutheran when I was one week old and as far back as I can remember, if the church doors were open for a worship service my family was there. I remember learning Bible verses and prayers from a very young age and just assumed that was the way things were in every family. My parents read Bible stories to me when I was young and as I got older I began reading the Bible for myself.

My fifth grade Sunday School teacher, Frank Lacaria had a big impact on myself and my classmates. I remember he gave us the opportunity to ask questions and discuss what was on our young minds even if we were complaining about our parents. Mr. Lacaria was probably 70 years old but he

had a special way of connecting with those of us who were 10 years old. He wasn't "just" our Sunday School teacher, he was more like a grandpa who showed us he really cared about each one of us and shared with us God's love and grace.

Three years of Confirmation classes every Saturday morning was a time spent in learning and memorizing Luther's Small Catechism. It was drudgery at times but it was during this time in my life that I realized how important relationships are. When I stood up and affirmed my Christian beliefs I knew that I was saved by grace through faith but that wasn't all...I realized that Spiritual life comes through a relationship with God.

*(continued on page 2)*

### St. John's Lutheran Church Statement of Mission:

Rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ, we exist to:

- **PROCLAIM** God's unconditional love as an invitation to all,
- **GROW** in discipleship as we follow in Jesus' steps, and
- **SERVE** others as instruments of God's Holy Spirit.

**St. John's  
Lutheran Church, ELCA  
2190 Jackson Hwy  
360/748-4741**

**office@stjohnschehalis.net  
www.stjohnschehalis.net**

**Pastor Matthew March  
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Pat Soderquist  
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**Secretary:  
Linda Lowery  
office@stjohnschehalis.net**

**Custodian/Facility  
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748-6302  
Cell: 360-623-0418**

**Office Hours:  
Monday - Thursday  
8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

**Editor:  
Linda Lowery**

## **Worship Schedule:**

- **8:30 a.m. Worship**
- **9:45 a.m. Sunday  
School and Adult  
Class**
- **11:00 a.m. Worship**

## **Summer Worship Schedule:**

- **One Worship Service  
at 9:45 a.m.**

## **My Story (Part 1) . . .**

*(continued from page 1)*

When I moved to Onalaska, WA, 40 years ago one of the first things I did was seek out a Lutheran Church. The very first time I set foot in St. John's I felt accepted and welcomed. I knew that I had found my church home. It wasn't because of the "Lutheran" in the church name or the church building itself but because of the people who greeted me and shared God's love with me, an outsider. Moving over 2500 miles from my family meant that my church family became the support I needed as a young single school

teacher adjusting to life much different from my Pennsylvania Dutch upbringing. Many of those people who made me feel so welcome have gone on to their great reward or are now in their 80's and 90's. As I paused to reflect and write this, my faith story, I wondered if I am doing God's work as well as my predecessors. It doesn't matter whether one comes to church as an infant or finds Christ later in life, we are all accepted into the family of faith – looking for forgiveness and acceptance. There is a place for YOU at St. John's.

*Joan Jahnsen*

## **My St. John's Story (Part 2)**

When preparing my story for the Visitor, I had to think back on how I found St. John's. It was July of 1987. My son, Jeff Brown was just 3 years of age and attending Mother Hubbard's Daycare operated by the amazing Marion Ruth. Marion sent home permission slips to attend VBS at St. John's that summer. I thought it would be a good experience for Jeff. Jeff was so excited to go. Marion had a plan for Jeff and me — only I did not know it at the time. Marion's plan included God as well. Once VBS was complete, Marion approached me again and invited Jeff to Sunday school. Marion had a way with people that you could never say no to her. This included her faith in God and love for children too. So Jeff went to Sunday school and loved going each and every Sunday. Marion then approached me once again to say that Pastor Jaeger was holding a new members class and would

I be interested in attending. I thought about it, had been looking for a church and gave it a try. So glad I listened to Marion and my heart. Jeff was confirmed here, he also participated in youth events. But my most blessed events at St. John's was getting married to Al and Jeff being awarded his Eagle Scout. Feeling blessed once again. We have our share of tough times too, the passing of my Mom and Dad, Al having a stroke but through it all was my strong faith in God and the family here at St. John's. We are family, we support each other through the good and the bad. The most awesome memory recently for me is this past Christmas as we supported the Blackfeet Indian Reservation children. That was a God moment as well. To take on that task, of supporting 158 children was a bit scary but we, as a church family, prayed and God answered our prayers. To see our family wrapping these

*(continued on page 3)*

## My Story (Part 2) . . .

(continued from page 2)

Christmas gifts was my best Christmas ever. Plus, who can forget Al and Pastor's Matt trip to Montana delivering those gifts. We are reminded of love

and compassion all around.

So in closing almost 30 years later, I remain here at St. John's. As the years pass I feel even closer to God. He supports me through good times and bad. I

am so grateful that Marion did what she did so I can be here writing this article. I am beyond blessed. Thank you all for being there for me just like God is.  
*Pat Soderquist*

## Giving to Support St. John's

As a church we encourage those who are part of the St. John's family to be giving to the work of our congregation. We believe you should not feel burdened by the issue of giving but in fact, find it a joy! We are pleased to provide e-giving options as an alternative to giving cash and checks in the offering plate (your cash and checks are always welcome!).

- **Mobile Phone:** Scan the QR code provided here to access our mobile giving site and follow the prompts.



- **Our Website** – on your computer, go to [www.stjohnschehalis.net](http://www.stjohnschehalis.net) and click on the

“donate” button

- **Online Banking** – Arrange to give through bill-pay at your own bank's website. You will be asked for the following information:  
St. John's Lutheran Church  
2190 Jackson Hwy  
Chehalis, WA 98532  
360-748-4741

**Questions?** Contact Pastor Matt

## TO THE PARENTS OF OUR YOUNG CHILDREN, MAY WE SUGGEST . . .

RELAX! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress it in God's house. All are welcome!

Sit toward the front where it is easier for your little ones to see and hear what's going on at the altar. They tire of seeing the back of other's heads.

Quietly explain the parts of worship and actions of the pastor, ushers and assistants, etc.

Sing the hymns and songs, voice the responses and pray. Children learn church behaviors by copying you!

If you need to leave worship with your child, feel free to do so, but please come back! As Jesus said, *Let the children come to me!* (Matthew 19:14; Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16)

Remember that the way we welcome children in church directly affects the way they respond to the church, to God and to one another. Let them know that they are at home in this house of worship.

Please let your child use the reverse side of cards in the pews to draw and doodle.

### To the Family of St. John's

The presence of children is a gift to the church and they are a reminder that our church is growing. Please welcome our children and give a smile of encouragement to their parents. They could use it!



**STP Bicycle Classic, July 15-16:** There are sign-up sheets in the church narthex to help work in the kitchen, donate food, pickup luggage, etc. The need for moving luggage to the church on Saturday and back to Recreation Park on Sunday is especially important. There are still many opportunities open for food prep and service volunteers on Saturday and Sunday. If you have questions about helping, contact Donna Moir at 748-4517; for more information about donating food or helping prepare and serve meals, contact Susan Russell, cell 360-269-1527 or e-mail [orrussell5@yahoo.com](mailto:orrussell5@yahoo.com) or fill in the blanks on the sign-up poster in the narthex. Thank you to everyone who has already signed up or donated food.



## July Celebrations

### Birthdays

- 1 Carol Kostanich
- 2 Frankie Judd
- 3 Emmelyn Affeldt  
Kim Wright
- 5 Sandy Gilliland
- 6 Billie Melin
- 12 Truman Affeldt  
Doug Lee
- 13 Bob Utter
- 14 Kate Amrine
- 15 Elizabeth March
- 17 Bernie Schreck
- 18 Nancy Sjoberg
- 19 Ron Braaten  
Tess Cummings  
Garvin Johnson
- 20 Laurie Suhrbier

- 21 Jim Ruth
- 23 John Haworth
- 24 Marilyn Schmitt  
Myra Lee Volland
- 26 Megan Gerke  
Trent Vlach
- 27 Al Soderquist
- 28 Hans Meier
- 29 Shirley Kuxhausen
- 30 Tyler Carlson
- 31 Betsy Faro

### Anniversaries

- 5 Jordan and Cori Jo Duncan
- 6 Melody and Ron Braaten  
Kathryn and Matthew  
Rotter
- 7 Gayle and David Isaacson  
Cheryl and Kerry Vance

- 9 Joan and Jim Jahnsen
- 15 Patty and Mark Wilson
- 22 Doris and Jim Carey
- 26 Cheryl and Scott Amrine  
Lexi and Matt Gage

### Baptism Anniversaries

- 4 Jim Jahnsen
- 9 Austin Michal
- 16 Oliver Heck
- 17 Amber Olson  
Jason Olson
- 20 Megan Gerke
- 23 Susan Russell
- 24 Deane Johnson
- 25 Wyatt Dean
- 28 Samuel Lynch

## August Celebrations

### Birthdays

- 2 Eva Munz
- 4 Susan Jendryka
- 6 Bill Hulse  
Vicki Graham
- 7 Gail Van der Hoeft
- 8 Louise Runyon
- 9 Luke Amrine  
Laurie Callas
- 10 Doug Ruth
- 11 Barb Stanfield
- 15 Ashleigh Cox
- 19 Larry Unzelman
- 20 Sue Austin  
Lexi Erwin

- Kasey (Wilson) Ramacher
- 21 Cael Justice  
Janie Mauel
- 22 Michele Cox  
Austin Carlson
- 26 Larry Dean

### Anniversaries

- 1 Donna and Larry Moir  
Pastor Matt and Rachel  
March
- 4 Katrina and Greg Kirsch
- 7 April and Rick Michal  
Christine and Trent Vlach
- 9 Lauri and Bernhard Kreutz
- 13 Colleen and Tim Touhey

- 15 Judy and Bob Utter
- 31 Marilyn and Greg Schmitt

### Baptism Anniversaries

- 3 Glen Unzelman
  - 5 Matthew Rotter  
Evan Unzelman
  - 14 Cori Jo Jahnsen
  - 16 Rob Alexander
  - 23 Marilyn Schmitt
- If we missed your birthday or anniversary, let us know! Call the church office at 748-4741 or e-mail: [office@stjohnschehalis.net](mailto:office@stjohnschehalis.net).

## Bits and Pieces

**Thank you** to people who are serving and providing cookies for after service coffee fellowship. If you are unable to serve but would like to provide cookies, we would appreciate your donation of cookies. Anyway you are able to help, we thank you. *Lerna Johnson*

Want to be a part of the volunteer team that makes St. John's run?

We need volunteers for the following jobs:

- Mowing the lawn when needed;
- Updating the St. John's sign weekly;
- Refreshing/replacing/straightening information in the sanctuary pews.

Talk to Pastor Matt, Custodian Bernie Schreck or Church Secretary Linda Lowery if you would like more information about any of the jobs. **We need you!**

# July 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 9:45 a.m. Worship	3	4 	5 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 10:00 a.m. Lewis County Genealogical Bd.	6 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	7 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group  Pastor Matt's Day Off  Office Closed	1  8
9 9:45 a.m. Worship	10 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 7:00 p.m. Youth and Family	11 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	12 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301	13 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	14 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group  Pastor Matt's Day Off  Office Closed	15 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">STP</div>
16 9:45 a.m. Worship  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">STP</div>	17 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group	18 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	19 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301	20 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo	21 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group  Office Closed	22
Pastor Matt on vacation July 17 through August 6						
23 9:45 a.m. Worship	24 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 5:00 p.m. BBQ and Movie "Paper Tigers"	25 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	26 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301	27 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	28 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group  Pastor Matt's Day Off Office Closed	29
30 9:45 a.m. Worship	31 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Worship and Music 7:00 p.m. Habitat for Humanity	1 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center 5:30 p.m. Property 6:00 p.m. Social Ministry 7:00 p.m. Church Growth	2 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301	3 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	4 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group  Office Closed	5

★ For up to date calendar information, visit our website, [www.stjohnschehalis.net](http://www.stjohnschehalis.net) and click on the "News" tab ★

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		<b>1</b> 5:30 p.m. Property	<b>2</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 10:00 a.m. Lewis County Genealogical Bd.	<b>3</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	<b>4</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group  Office Closed	<b>5</b>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">                         Pastor Matt on Vacation                     </div>						
<b>6</b> 9:45 a.m. Worship	<b>7</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Social Ministry 7:00 p.m. Youth and Family	<b>8</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center 6:00 p.m. Mutual Ministry 6:30 p.m. Church Council	<b>9</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301	<b>10</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	<b>11</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group  Pastor Matt's Day Off  Office Closed	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 9:45 a.m. Worship	<b>14</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group	<b>15</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	<b>16</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301	<b>17</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo	<b>18</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group  Office Closed	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 10:00 a.m. Outdoor Worship and Picnic at Stan Hedwall Park  	<b>21</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group	<b>22</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	<b>23</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301	<b>24</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	<b>25</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group  Pastor Matt's Day Off  Office Closed	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9:45 a.m. Worship	<b>28</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Worship and Music 7:00 p.m. Habitat for Humanity	<b>29</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center 5:30 p.m. Property 6:00 p.m. Social Ministry 7:00 p.m. Church Growth	<b>30</b> 7:30 a.m. Women's Exercise Group 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301	<b>31</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center		

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## I wonder ...

By *ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton*



Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

Recently, I heard the Bach cantata *O heiliges Geist und Wasserbad*. The cantata's text is based

on John 3:1-15, which was the Gospel lesson at the service where the cantata was first performed. The image that stuck with me and about which I have been doing a lot of thinking was the story of the fiery serpents sent among the people of Israel in the wilderness.

Both the Gospel lesson for the day and the Bach cantata allude to this. You might remember this tense episode during the Exodus. The people of God had been liberated from crushing oppression in Egypt — the plagues, Passover, walking dryshod through the sea, manna from heaven and water from the rock! We can only imagine the excitement of those heady days when God set Israel free.

But now the journey had become long and they had to detour around Edom. The people became impatient and angry. They began to murmur. They had murmured before against Moses and Aaron, but now their murmuring was directed at God. It turned out to be the same old laundry list of complaints: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there

is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food" (Numbers 21:5).

Now remember, this "miserable food" was manna from heaven. God promised to provide enough for each person each day. They were to collect no more and no less than a day's supply. Some collected more, not trusting that God would be faithful. Some collected less. These were the Lutheran Israelites, who did not believe that God's all sufficient love was for them too.

Enter the snakes. "Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died" (Numbers 21:6). A calamity had befallen the people. In their panic and in their pain they pleaded for deliverance. God rescued Israel, not so much from poisonous serpents but from Israel's own faithless and poisonous complaints that had appeared long before the snakes did. In that faithlessness, Israel had set itself against God.

Israel's rescue was a restored relationship with their true God, not simply escaping the snakes. God rescued Israel both from themselves and from God's judgment. The symbol of their salvation was a fiery serpent — a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole. The very image of suffering and death was also the image of life and salvation.

This is what Jesus was talking about in his encounter with Nicodemus. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the

wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (John 3:14-15). This is what Bach's cantata sings about: "You know, my God, how painfully I feel the old serpent's sting; sin's poison destroys my body and soul.

Help me, so that in faith I choose you, blood-red image of a serpent, that was raised on the cross." The cross in John's Gospel, like the pole with the bronze serpent, signifies both the poison of death and the life-giving power of God.

I have read Numbers several times and there is no indication that the serpents ever left. The plague of serpents remained an ongoing threat and the raised bronze serpent remained an ongoing reminder of the need to turn to the healing power of God.

And here's what really has me thinking —t he word for fiery serpent is "seraphim." Seraphim. The same angels who, with the cherubim, attend God. Could the fiery serpents be snake-angels that like border collies nip at us when we go our own way? Could the sting of their bite remind us to look to the cross, the death of our death? Could the snake-angels be fiery guardian angels who bring us back to the truth that, left to our own devices, we are helpless and sometimes dangerous and apart from God, that we can do nothing?

Just wondering.



## **Outdoor Worship . . .**

At Stan Hedwall Park followed by the church picnic. Church Growth will provide the burgers and brats, coffee and table service. Please bring a lawn chair to use during worship services, and a side dish or dessert to share and your own beverage for the picnic. Invite your friends, family and neighbors to share in this unique time of worship and fellowship!

**August 20, 2017**

**10:00 a.m.**



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2190 Jackson Highway  
Chehalis, WA 98532  
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