SAINT JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

"St. John's Early Childhood Center"

Bellmore / Merrick Newsletter

SEPTEMBER ~ 2025

Dear Friends in Christ!

Labor Day Weekend [August 31] marked the conclusion of our first extended "live together" trial as one congregation in our Bellmore campus which began last March… and now, we will be making the switch for a full Sunday School Program year to "live together" at our Merrick campus – **as of Sunday Sept. 7th 2025…** On that first Sunday, we will celebrate the **Holy Eucharist at 9:30am** with our **Sunday School Rally Day** ~ share in special blessings for our children's back-packs as they return to school, recognize Grandparents Day and share in a special Service Project as part of **"God's Work ~ Our Hands."** What a packed Sunday it will be, filled with so many wonderful things to kick off the fall season together, leading us all into a new month with new adventures… can you feel the energy?! We are moving ahead slowly – but we are on full steam… as our individual councils and transition team will now be joined together for joint gatherings so that we are all on the same page moving forward in our collaborative efforts.

Our congregations are working ever so diligently in combing our efforts in every facet of our church life in order to move toward becoming one new church. We have already seen this begin to take root in the past year as we have begun to combine all of our committees and various ministries, most evident in our Social Ministry and Altar Guild. This month will mark our efforts to combine councils and transition team members to reduce the number of meetings and to assist all the leaders to be better informed in the final steps we are taking toward consolidation. This joint newsletter is yet another visible manner of our efforts – yet we still need a name and we are a work in progress… names collected over the summer will be put before Council on 9/9 in order to make a decision. We have also turned down the potential work with a consultant company, yet have made the decision that we do need some form of outside assistance in our final phase… as we covenant with Mark Nocero, a strategic planner in our Synod, who has consented to work with us. A planning retreat is being coordinated as we enter this process with Mark Nocero and we will need "you" to serious and prayerfully consider being a part of it… we will be looking for about 20 or so folks in total representing both our congregations with a date to be determined sometime this fall season.

On **Sun., Sept. 21 at 9:30am** we will offer special blessings in a 2nd Rally Day for our E.C.C. ministry, teachers, staff, children and their parents who will join worship that day. A special coffee hour will be available in the Fellowship Hall and we hope that you will make every effort to attend. On **Sun., Sept. 28 after the 9:30am** Eucharist, we will be called to share in a joint Special Congregational Meeting and we hope you will be there to lend your voice. Details will be sent via email and worship announcements.

As we prepare for another year of living and learning together, having fun and encountering God's grace in Jesus in a variety of ways… I encourage you to "come" to share in worship, share in the life-giving word, share your stewardship for the building up and care of our church, "come" and share in Jesus who offers us the gift of salvation that we can share with our children. Looking forward to share a word with you… Jesus, the living bread of life!

Early Fall Blessings in Christ! ✠ Pastor Kirschbaum

Saint John's Lutheran Church of Bellmore & Merrick

Welcome to Worship – Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

2150 Centre Avenue, Bellmore, NY 11710
Office – 516-785-4331
Email – stjbellmore@gmail.com
Website – saintjohnbellmore.org

1 Van Roo Avenue, Merrick, NY 11566
Office/Fax – 516-379-3858/3681
ECC Office – 516-378-4ECC (4322)
Email – stjmerrick@gmail.com
Website – stjohnsmerrick.org

Mission Statement: **We are a people of God, eager to share the Good News with others through serving, teaching and spreading His message of unconditional love and forgiveness.**

Vision Statement: We are a community of believers, growing together to reinvigorate the Lutheran faith in our communities…

- ✠ Combining our various talents to spread the Good News
- ✠ Providing outreach and spiritual growth
- ✠ Raising our presence in the community
- ✠ Moving forward purposely in faith, not letting fear or doubt stand in our way
- ✠ Trusting in God's plan for us to thrive as one body in Christ

Congregational Council

President: Margaret Neverka
Vice President: Kathy Strouse
Secretary: Jerilyn Hunsinger
Co-Treasurers: Charlene Drews/Ira Bergman

Karen Brucia
Nancy Kamps - Cook
Craig Medico
Nina Thilesen
Christa Tuccillo
Lori Vanderwaren

President: Heidi Kohler
Vice President: Barbara Entenza
Secretary: Dawn Kohler
Treasurer: Ken Glupe

Michael Chin
Gerry Finck
Barbara Kohler
Lisa Reisner
Marge Scarangella

Church Staff

The Reverend Perry J. Kirschbaum, Pastor
Ms. Charlene Drewes, Deacon
Mrs. Anita Fiedel, Church Admin. Assistant
Ms. Quinn Anderson, Organist
Ms. Deborah Stanczuk, ECC Director
Mrs. Bernadette Murray, ECC Admin.Assistant

Early Childhood Center Teachers

Ms. Michelle Alessi
Ms. Daisy Galan
Ms. Christina Kublo
Ms. Lisa Luchsinger
Ms. Mikalah Perrotta
Ms. Lisa Zachar
Ms. Sharon Loscalzo

Online Worship

Worship will be live streamed on the St. John's Merrick Facebook page on Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. and shared to the Saint John Bellmore Facebook page.

https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsmerrick/
https://www.facebook.com/saintjohnbellmore

Memorials

We would like to thank all those who made generous donations to our various funds in July

In memory of Renate Petschauer from:

Karen & Tom Brucia – Donation to the Inn Cooking
Nancy Kamps-Cook, Amy Wee, and Harriet Verde – Donation to the Memorial Fund
Thomas Petschauer – Donation to Current

Worship Server Schedule

	Assisting Minister	Acolyte	Usher	Lector	Altar Guild
9/7	Nancy	Gavin	Barbara K/Ken	Nancy	Kathy S/Carol
9/14	Charlene	Logan	Margaret/Mike T	Dawn	Lori/Carol
9/21	Nancy	Makenzie	Annamarie/Craig	Kathy G	Kathy S/Marge
9/28	Gail	Ashlynn	Nina/Mikayla	Gail	Nina/Marge
10/5	Nancy	Zachary	Jim/Nicholas	Nancy	Christa/Carol

September Birthdays

Zachary Dean	September 2nd
Irina Sargent	September 5th
Michael Giordano	September 20th
Jennifer Cline Sargent	September 22nd
Ashlyn Schurade	September 27th

If you would like to add your name to the birthday list, please contact the church office.

Altar Flowers

The Altar Flower Calendar is hanging on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Select a Sunday to offer a gift of flowers to be given In Honor of or In Memory of … a loved one or a special occasion. A contribution of **$30** is requested for each single-face floral arrangement. Please fill out an Altar Flower envelope found in any pew rack and place it into the offering plate. The same information can also be mailed to the church office with a check at least 2 weeks in advance of the date you choose.

Christ in Our Home

Copies of this daily prayer devotional are available in the narthex on a small table next to the ushers' closet as well as at the greeters' desk/information table for the months of…

OCTOBER – NOVEMBER – DECEMBER

Large print editions are also available. Please feel free to take a copy of either version for your personal daily devotions whether on your own or with the family at key points of the day – morning, noon, evening, mealtime or before bed. Why not take an extra copy and share it with someone else. Spread the WORD!

✞ In Our Prayers ✞

We begin a new month concluding our summer festivities with Labor Day Weekend… here's hoping that everyone had some time for rest, refreshment and renewal before resuming regular schedules. We pray for safe travel home & the excitement of a new start…

We lift in prayer our elected & lay leaders in both ecumenical and inter-faith relationships… for all associates in ministry, deacons, pastors and bishops, especially for: Yehiel Curry, *ELCA Presiding Bishop-Elect;* Katrina Foster, *Synod Bishop-Elect of Metro New York;* Christopher Vergara, *Synod VP* … for our Co-Deans: Pr. Sheridan & Pr. Hickey; along with the congregations in our Eastern Nassau Conference; for all congregations in transition and discernment… especially for our Bellmore/Merrick Collaborative – for the work of our B/M Transition Team; for the Huntington Collaborative with Pr. Pollicino and other transitions…

For our E.C.C. Ministry; Deborah Stanczuk, E.C.C. Director; for our joint B/M Church Councils along with a dedicated host of volunteers; our Companion Synod [diocese] of Tanzania; for these United States of America; our current Administration and for help to combat racism, white privilege, prejudice, gun-violence, hatred and war… for Ukraine & Russia; Israel & Hamas/Hezbollah over Gaza; tensions with China, North Korea, Iran and Yemen; for all in need of healing; for those who faithfully serve in our Military and for our Police Officers; for yourself and your family that you might find strength of faith in good times as well as in times of trial… for all who continue to struggle with Long Covid and yet another surge of Covid variants, flu strains and RSV; for the vaccinated and the unvaccinated; all who have died…, for all teachers, parents, first responders, doctors, nurses, medical teams, scientists and all essential workers…

We lift in prayer the following servants of God who are in need of healing & wholeness during the month of…

September ~ 2025

Valentina Allesandra	Maria Ege	Lila Kuhns	Roy & Kathy Scott
Marilyn Anderson	Barbara Entenza	Fung Lee	Fran Saperstein
Mike Annarelli	Nicholas Entenza	Hope Leys	Baby Holland Schofield
Judy & Neil Bene	Doreen Etienne	Susan Marcin	Pat Schubert
Ira & Jennifer Bergman	Charlie Etherson	Jane, Joseph & Steve Marrin	Tom Smart
Donna Boulder	Ric Flanagan	Robert & Dinae Martorella	Christ Thieme & Family
Joe Brucia	Laura Hackel	Carol McCrystal	Richie Turrello
Lorraine Buck	Barbara Haase	Dorothy Medico	Erika Valasquez
Pete Cappisillo	Kristen Hahn	Melissa & Nathaniel Milaccio	Sal Vassallo
Amanda Caponi	Betsy Hirsch	Bruce Oehler	Cliff Vooris
Dona Caragol	Marylou Hyland	Rosario Panzica	Pat Waring
Irma Caragol	Karen Joyce	Sharon Parinello	Dorothy Williamson
Peg Crawley	William R. Kamps	Maria Pusateri	Bobby, Charley & Erica Woell
Rita Cella	Kevin Kilgallin	Alan Reisner	Bruce Zimmerman
Mark DeFilippis	Richard Knoll	Kathy Rollando	Michelle & Dan
Addalina DiTierri	Stephanie Kugler	Joe Salow	
The Duncan Family	Christina Maddalena	Marion Schurade	

To include someone on our "Prayer List," please fill out a Prayer List Request Form printed on "blue" colored paper located on the information table in the narthex. It may be returned via the offering plate during worship, you may hand it to Pastor following worship or you may call or email the church office. You can also call or email to let us know when someone can be taken off the list.

Social Ministry Committee

The Social Ministry Committee has had a busy and productive summer, continuing its vital work across both Saint John Bellmore and St. John's Merrick.

In June, the group gathered after an INN Cook to talk about keeping better track of donations and expenses, and to make sure all the favorite recipes are collected and posted in the church kitchen for everyone to use. Ideas for future summer meals were tossed around, with lighter and meatless dishes suggested, and planning began for our much-anticipated Summer BBQ. Nancy Kamps-Cook has graciously offered to co-chair the Social Ministry Committee and we hope to have someone to represent the Merrick campus as well.

By July, preparations for the barbecue were in full swing. Thanks to a Thrivent grant obtained by AnnaMarie Wilson, most of the food and supplies were covered, and volunteers stepped up to grill, serve, and bake. The group also decided to swap the next INN meal from tuna to ham casserole, using ingredients already on hand. Before wrapping up, a few members stayed to sort through clothing donations – an extra effort that helps stretch support for our outreach programs.

August was a big month with both an INN Cook and the Summer BBQ. Five trays of tuna casserole were prepared for the INN, while the barbecue brought in an even larger crowd than expected – about 75 people! The evening raised $680, part of which was given to our guest speaker, Lynn Butte from the New Life Center, with the rest supporting the church. Thank you to Gerry Fink for setting up the tables in the heat and for Gerry and Brian Barteld for cooking on the grill. Though the heat reminded us that future events may need a cooler venue or to take place at a different time of year, the spirit of fellowship was strong. Most importantly, the barbecue served as a joyful farewell and godspeed to Carol and David Schmidt. It was a night filled with gratitude, laughter, and blessing for their next chapter.

Looking ahead, the committee is excited for Rally Day in September, a festive Oktoberfest at the end of that month, and a Christmas Craft Fair in December with vendors, treats, and family fun. We're also exploring new ways to make the most of Thrivent grants to continue supporting the good work of our ministries. We plan on inviting a representative from Thrivent to host a coffee hour after worship in the fall to discuss the advantages of membership and how to apply for grants.

We are so grateful for all the hands and hearts that make these events possible. From chopping vegetables to grilling burgers, from moving tables to sorting clothes, each act of service helps our church reach out with love.

Our Pastoral Care Ministry

PLEASE REMEMBER TO INFORM YOUR CHURCH with information you might have of any hospital admissions or emergencies. We can assist the *Pastoral Care Ministry* of our parish by keeping the church office up to date with what is going on in our lives as part of God's family…for example**…**

- You are in need of prayer.
- You are ill or hospitalized.
- A baby is born into your family.
- A family member has died.
- Funeral Arrangements need to be planned.
- You are making plans for your Marriage.
- You wish to receive Holy Communion.
- You are moving/transferring to a new Parish.
- You or someone you know should be on our Prayer List - OR - you or someone you know has now recovered and the list can gladly be updated.

<u>The Holy Communion</u> *(in special circumstances);* the <u>Anointing of the Sick</u> for healing and wholeness are both available for all who desire. <u>Blessing of a Dwelling</u> is also available for all who have moved into a new living space *(i.e., new apartment or house)* and seek God's blessing. Be open to the gracious gifts of God in the power of the Holy Spirit received in Living Faith.

Thank You to...

- **Mike Scarangella & Gerry Fink** for all their help with property issues including fixing the bumps in the parking lot, the ECC office ceiling patchwork, leak repair in the sanctuary balcony and side aisle, and replacing the shed floor and the liner in the dumpster.
- **Michael Chin** for cleaning the grease trap in the kitchen.
- **Lisa Reisner** for coordinating the removal of two hollowed out trees in front of the church.
- **Ken Glupe, Mike Scarangella, Bill Wilson, Lisa Reisner, the Kohler Family, David Schmidt and Nathan Prince** for maintaining the landscaping and plantings.
- **Karen & Tom Brucia** for taking care of garbage and recycling during the summer. Also, for putting special pickup items to the curb.
- **Margaret Neverka, Kathy & Jim Strouse** for installing a/c at the Parsonage.
- **Jim Strouse** for replacing exit bulbs in preparation of yearly inspection.
- Our **coffee hour volunteers** – please keep signing up for the fall months! Sign-up sheet is in the Howe Room and will be brought to Merrick Fellowship Hall.
- All of our **Assisting Ministers, Ushers, Lectors, and Acolytes**!

We are so grateful for all the helping hands from both of our church families who have been caring for our properties. Whether mowing lawns, making repairs, or lending a hand in countless other ways, your efforts keep both of our church homes welcoming, safe, and ready for ministry.

Christmas Craft Fair

As summer is winding down, we're looking ahead to one of our favorite events - our **Christmas Craft Fair** which will be held at the Merrick Campus on **Saturday, December 6, from 10 AM to 4 PM**! As part of the festivities, we will have raffles and we're looking for donations of new, unused items such as:

Scratch off lotto tickets – any denomination
Christmas items – preferably new or gently used
Household/personal items
Children's games/toys
Unused gift cards
Premade baskets

Donated items can be brought to worship with you on Sunday or dropped off at the Merrick church office during the week. Thank you in advance for your generosity and support!

Welcome back! We are looking forward to spending time with the children and enhancing their spiritual life through song, videos, and hands on crafts. Each Sunday we encourage the children to participate in the service, have their "coffee break" and head off to the Christian Ed Hall at 10:30am for age-appropriate endeavors.

Once again, we are blessed to have four age groups. We completed last year's Sunday School program at the Bellmore Campus and this year, we will be worshiping as well as instructing our children at the Merrick Campus. A calendar for all ages is on the next page. A separate calendar will be provided for our confirmation students. We ask that confirmation students come to church to worship and socialize as well as interact with the younger students even if they do not have instruction that week. Third grade through second year of confirmation will be trained to acolyte. Third year on will be trained as ushers. Of course, at any time a confirmand wishes to be on the lector list or even would like to receive instruction to become a Junior Assisting Minister, we would be so excited!

Of course, any suggestions or feedback is most welcome as well as helpful hands! Confirmation information will be distributed separately.

Rally Day, September 7th is also Grandparents Day. Why not invite a grandparent or special person in your child's life to kick off this year by inviting them to help coordinate our Health Kits for Lutheran Social Services and enjoy an extra special coffee hour. If you have not had a chance to donate an item for this project, it is not too late. A reminder of all items needed will be emailed through the church office.

Please return the registration form to the church office via email: stjbellmore@gmail.com ASAP so we can properly plan for our children, parents and guests.

Peace and Blessings,
The Christian Ed Committee

Sunday School (for children age 3 to 5th grade) meets weekly this year at the Merrick Campus on Sundays (Calendar provided) after service starting at 10:30AM beginning on Rally Day (Sept. 7, 2025). We invite you to remain for Coffee Hour while your children are participating to socialize with the other parents. Our Confirmation Age students (Grades 6-8) will be emailed an additional calendar for instruction dates. We ask that you encourage your confirmands to attend church and come down to help interact with the younger children. They are setting an example for them. Please fill out this form and return to the church office via email: stjbellmore@gmail.com

Child #1

Name _____**Birthday** ____/____/____**Age**_____**Grade** _____

Child #2

Name _____**Birthday** ____/____/____**Age**_____**Grade** _____

Child #3

Name _____**Birthday** ____/____/____**Age**_____**Grade** _____

Home Address _____**City**_____**Zip**_____

Parent/Guardian _____**Email**_____**Cell**_____

Parent/Guardian _____**Email**_____**Cell**_____

Emergency Contact _____**Relationship**_____**Cell**_____

My child(ren)'s photos may be published on our website and other media [ ]yes [ ] no

2025-2026 Sunday School Calendar

9/7	Rally Day/God's Work Our Hands	12/7	Advent Workshop/Pagaent Practice	3/8	Sunday School
9/14	Sunday School	12/14	Sunday School	3/15	Sunday School
9/21	Sunday School	12/21	Christmas Pagaent	3/22	Sunday School
9/28	Sunday School	12/28	No Classes	3/29	Palm Sunday
10/5	Sunday School	1/4	Sunday School	4/5	Easter Sunday
10/12	No Classes	1/11	Sunday School	4/12	No Classes
10/19	Sunday School	1/18	No Classes	4/19	Sunday School
10/26	Reformation	1/25	Sunday School	4/26	Sunday School
11/2	Sunday School	2/1	Sunday School	5/3	Sunday School
11/9	Sunday School	2/8	Sunday School	5/10	No Classes
11/16	Sunday School (Kirking Attending)	2/15	No Classes	5/17	Last Day/ Ice Cream Party
11/23	No Classes Confirmation Celebration	2/22	Sunday School		
11/30	No Classes	3/1	Sunday School		

Carol and David Schmidt want to thank all those who were at the Social Ministry BBQ. It was so good to see you again. We appreciated the fact that some who do not usually drive at night made the effort to come and then had to deal with the rain that night.

We thank all those who made the food and provided the special cake. We will enjoy the flowers for many days. While we live in a comfortable building that is situated in the middle of many gardens, we of course can't cut the flowers or even work in the gardens; we really miss gardening. However, we do enjoy the grounds, walking several laps around the building each day and sitting in the gazebo or on the porches in big comfy rocking chairs. Whereas at home there were always fresh flowers in the house year-round because we are outside so much, we have flowers all around us. Presently there are the hydrangea trees and shrubs, the crepe myrtles and all the many bright colored annuals and perennials to enjoy.

We especially want to thank all those who contributed photos and to Dawn Kohler who put them together in a digital picture frame. It was a great gift idea, and we will enjoy looking at the photos. Our grandson, Brandon, did that for our 61st Anniversary celebration, including photos from our wedding day to the present. These electronic machines that are now available sure bring a lot of pleasure to us, especially as we get older.

We have joined the Ascension Lutheran Church in Deer Park. Our daughter, Suzi, picks us up and takes us to church. We have not yet gotten involved but will soon as the fall programs go into action and we discover what we can do to help with their mission work. We have had several people from St John's visit us this summer. If you would like to visit us, please call and come. We are quite happy here in our lovely little apt. We have found senior people are very interesting to talk to. It is surprising how many here went to John Adams High School in Queens where I went. We think of you often and hope that the merger will soon take place and you all can work as one.

With best wishes,

Carol & David Schmidt
Phone # 631 223-3883

Dix Hills Senior Living
337 Deer Park Rd. Room 210, Dix Hills 11746

GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS

Rally Day is almost here - **Sunday, September 7**! For our God's Work/Our Hands project, we'll be putting together Health Kits for Lutheran Social Services, and we'd love your help in gathering the needed items. Thank you for your generosity and support!

Unscented Bar Soap
Tooth Brush/Tooth Paste
Shaving Cream
Disposable Razors
Shampoo
Conditioner
Body Wash

FOOD PANTRY

If you would like to help out with the Pantry, our most needed items at this time are:
egg noodles, rice, peanut butter, jelly, crackers, juice, toothbrushes, facial tissues and laundry soap

FISHING TRIP

Join us on **Saturday, September 13th from 2 – 5pm** for a fishing trip around the Great South Bay with all rods, reels, tackle and bait provided. Please speak to **Ira Bergman** if you would like to attend and for further information.

Women of the ELCA

The 2025 Annual Gathering of the Metro-NY Women of the ELCA will be held on **Saturday, September 20, 2025 from 9am to 4pm** at the Wartburg at 1 Wartburg Place in Mt. Vernon, NY. $40 per person – continental breakfast and lunch included. For more information, please email Deacon Evie Buhner at eviline@optonline.net. Registration is due by September 10 and forms are available through the church office.

DOODLES OF DEVOTION

Raquel Busa, a seminary student at the United Lutheran Seminary reached out to us to share the illustrated children's devotionals she has created combining her artistic talents with ministry. Her latest issue (Aug 31, 2025) is included in this newsletter. The gospel reading for August 31, 2025, is Luke 14:1, 7-14. In this passage, Jesus teaches us valuable lessons about humility and hospitality using the metaphor of banquet etiquette. At first glance, a parable about a banquet may seem unrelated to school, but it is quite relevant. It can be directly applied to school lunchroom dynamics and those social expectations and interactions that can be anxiety-inducing. Who do we sit with at lunchtime? Are there those who linger on the edges, feeling overlooked? These questions resonate not only with children but also with adults, reminding us of our busy lives and how often we may overlook those who could benefit from a friendly gesture or an invitation to join in. To encourage meaningful conversations around this gospel reading, she has included reflection questions, tips for starting conversations, and a fun visual puzzle. The essence of this week's Doodles of Devotion is about stepping outside ourselves and shifting our focus from "me" to "us." How can we embody this spirit of hospitality and humility in our daily interactions? You can access past issues of Raquel's work on her website at **https://www.maquina37.com/doodlesofdevotion**.

St. John's Early Childhood Center Ministry

September ~ 2025

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the start of the 2025/2026 School year. I am honored to lead this school community and its talented staff. We are devoted to serving the students in our care and their families. We are dedicated to fulfilling our motto of being a place where "A Love of God and Learning Grow." It is our goal to meet the spiritual, emotional, academic, and social needs of the children in our care.

The ECC just completed our six-week Summer Program. We enrolled over 40 kids, age 2-4, in three programs. Each week revolved around a fun theme, such as 'Down by the Sea,' 'Going on Safari,' 'Let's Get Buggy and more. The crafts, stories, songs, and games revolved each week around the weekly theme. In addition, we offered outdoor play with our water table, sand table, sprinkler, bubbles, bikes, sidewalk chalk and more. We provide Community Service Hours to local teenagers who work as Counselors-In-Training. Many of our Counselors and CIT's have come through our ECC Preschool Program and return each year to work in our Summer Program. It is so nice to see our kids come full circle.

All our teachers and staff will be back on Tuesday, September 2nd to prepare their classrooms as we get ready for the start of the new school year. In addition, teachers will take part in Professional Development workshops and recertify in CPR/First Aid. We are excited to welcome Mikalah Perrotta as a Co-Teacher in our Two-year Old Program. All students will have the opportunity to come in to meet their teachers, see their classrooms, and share an activity with friends on our 'Hello Days,' which run the week of September 2-5th. On Monday, September 8th, we will welcome all the children back for our first full day of classes. In addition, our 'Meet the Teacher Night' for parents will be on Thursday, September 4th at 6:30 PM. This evening gives parents the opportunity to see the classrooms, learn about school policies and procedures, and ask questions of the administration and teaching staff. We are also excited that our many vendors will be available to answer questions and enroll students in one of our add-on enrichment programs.

This year we will be offering enrichment programs in gymnastics, cooking, and sports such as Amazing Athletes and Karate Zoo. These programs are meant to enrich learning by offering activities that develop a child's special interests and creative side. In addition to being open to students at St. John's ECC, they are also open to the larger Merrick community and beyond. All enrichment classes start at 12:00 and run till 1:00. Please share this information with your family, neighbors, and friends and let them know about the wonderful programs St. John's ECC offers. More information regarding registration can be found on our website https://stjohnsmerrick.org.

The ECC is also happy to sponsor the Fellowship Hour following the worship service on Sunday, September 21st for our ECC Rally Day. The worship service will include installation of the teachers, a song performance by our school children, and a children's sermon from Pastor. The fellowship hour will include tattoo art, crafts, and special treats for the children. We hope the church congregation and Sunday School will join us.

Upcoming ECC fundraisers include a Scholastic Book Fair for families the week of Monday, September 22 – Friday, September 26th. Please stop by to support the school and shop for books to gift to family and friends. The ECC will also hold our annual Fall Plant Sale from September 15th – September 22nd, with delivery set for Monday, October 6th. Order your Fall mums, hay bales, corn stalks, and more through us. Our Applebee's Pancake Breakfast will be held on Saturday, October 18th from 8:00-10:00 AM. Please join us at the Bellmore location on Sunrise Highway. Tickets cost $10 per person and can be purchased at the door. Breakfast includes eggs, pancakes, sausage, bacon and a beverage. These events all help to raise money for our Early Childhood Center and supports programs for our school. All our combined church congregation members, their family, and friends, are welcome. Please come out and support the school while enjoying some fellowship! This year, funds raised, along with Grant money received through St. Peter's Special Ministry and LuHI will help us to replace the flooring on our playground. The ECC appreciates support from our school families and the church community.

Regards,

Deborah Stanczuk

Deborah Stanczuk, Director
Phone: (516) 378-4322
E-mail: ecc@stjohnsmerrick.org
Website: www.stjohnsmerrick.org

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST

9:30 AM

RALLY DAY

ST. JOHN'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

CHILDREN'S SERMON/

SING ALONG

CRAFTS/FACE PAINTING

BOUNCE HOUSE

BLESSING OF THE TEACHERS

ENTER ON MERRICK AVE

THROUGH THE CHURCH DOORS

COFFEE HOUR TO FOLLOW IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

Find all 8 differences

AUGUST 31, 2025

ISSUE #6

DOODLES of DEVOTION

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GOSPEL

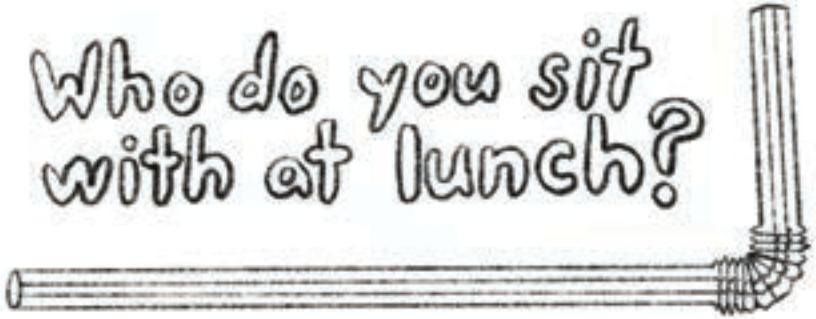
LUKE Chapter 14 Verses 1,7-14

HUMILITY and HOSPITALITY

Read and Reflect

Read the Gospel of Luke 14:1,7-14 with your friends or family. Think about the story and take turns answering these questions:

Who do you sit with at lunch?



What is more important to Jesus Popularity or kindness?

How can we invite people who might feel left out?

CONVERSATION STARTERS

If you see someone looking for a place to sit, you can say, "Hi! are you looking for a spot to sit? You can sit next to me if you'd like." Introduce yourself and keep the conversation going by taking turns answering these questions:

What's your favorite sport?

Do you have any pets?

What's your favorite food?

What's your favorite after school activity?

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

1 VAN ROO AVENUE, MERRICK, NEW YORK 11566

(corner of Merrick Ave & Van Roo Ave)

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A

SEP 27TH

5:00 PM

OKTOBERFEST

CELEBRATION

Please Join Us for a

TRADITIONAL GERMAN MEAL CELEBRATING THE FALL SEASON

Saturday, September 27th 5:00PM

MENU

Tossed Salad

Entrée

Sauerbraten, Spaetzle & Red Cabbage

Or

Roast Pork , Roasted Potatoes & Sauerkraut

Candied carrots

Dessert/Coffee/Tea

A variety of homemade cookies and cakes

Water, Lemonade and Iced Tea provided

Please feel free to bring your own beer or wine and even some to share!!!

$30 per adult $15 per child from 4 - 12 Yrs old

Under 4 free Chicken Nuggets and French Fries available.

RSVP by September 13th

Please send payment and choice of dinner to Anita at St. John's Merrick 516-379-3858

Name _____

Choice of Dinner:

Sauerbraten # _____ Roast Pork# _____

Chicken Nuggets # _____

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

1294 Bellmore Avenue North Bellmore, New York

16TH ANNUAL HARVEST CRAFT FAIR

OCTOBER 18, 2025
10:00AM - 4:00PM

LOCAL ARTISANS
HAND -CRAFTED ITEMS
NAME BRAND GIFTS

GRAND RAFFLE PRIZES & RAFFLE BASKETS
HOME MADE FOODS/ BAKED GOODS
CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES
PUMKIN PAINTING
MUMS
BUILDING A SCARECROW

27 "Take your Bible and take your newspaper, and read both," wrote Lutheran theologian Karl Barth (1886-1968). "But interpret newspapers from your Bible." Ask God to help us attend to our communities, nation and world, and remember that our faith in Jesus Christ calls us to foster peace, justice, love, forgiveness and healing among all people.

28 The story of Lazarus and the rich man in the gospels of Luke and John reminds us of God's love and concern for those who suffer poverty, illness and neglect. Pray that we will embrace all people as neighbors who deserve respect, compassion, love and inclusion.

29 *Michael and All Angels* Ask the Spirit to help us be aware of God's activity in the world and to strengthen our faith when we are perplexed by the mysteries of God's ways and the presence of angels and spiritual beings who serve as God's messengers.

30 Ask God to bless and guide the work of the ELCA Gender Justice and Women's Empowerment program, informed by the unique voices and experiences of people across race, ethnicity, ability, class, sexuality and age. Pray for the advancement of gender justice in the church and society — justice grounded in Scripture, Lutheran theology and people of all gender identities working together.

This resource may be copied and shared among members and friends of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Contact info@elca.org *for additional information. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631-4101. Telephone: 800-638-3522.*

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

PRAYER VENTURES
SEPTEMBER 2025

These petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social and outreach ministries of the ELCA, as well as for the needs and circumstances of our neighbors, communities and world. Thank you for your continued prayers for the life and mission of this church.

1 *Labor Day* Praise the work people do to sustain their families and benefit their communities and society. Pray that all will receive fair wages, work in safe environments, receive encouragement, be renewed through times of sabbath, and experience joy and fulfillment in their labor. Pray for those who seek employment and for the care, support and well-being of people unable to work.

2 "Let mutual affection continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it" (Hebrews 13:1-2). Pray that our fears, prejudices and ideologies will not prevent us from showing love, respect and hospitality to one another — friends, family and strangers alike.

3 *Suicide Prevention Month* Pray for our neighbors and siblings in Christ who feel lonely, depressed and hopeless, that they will find compassion, support and spiritual renewal in times of darkness and suffering. Ask the Spirit to inspire and guide our care, support and counsel for those who are contemplating suicide, and for those who grieve the loss of someone to suicide.

4 Give thanks for the faithful service and leadership of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Pray that her faith, gifts and commitment will continue to inspire us to work for justice and peace, to love and serve our neighbors, and to share the good news of Jesus Christ in a world yearning for hope and renewal.

5 "Praise the Lord! Happy are those who fear the Lord, who greatly delight in his commandments" (Psalm 112:1). Pray that we will find joy and guidance in the ways and commandments of God and be inspired by God's wisdom, love for humanity and concern for those who suffer.

6 The 2025 Churchwide Assembly has elected the Rev. Yehiel Curry to serve as the next presiding bishop of the ELCA. Pray that the Spirit will strengthen his faith, gifts and wisdom as he leads our church in its mission to share the good news of Jesus Christ, reflect God's abundant love and mercy for the world, and serve our neighbors in need.

7 *"God's work. Our hands." Sunday* ELCA congregations join together today for our annual day of service, celebrating that we are freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. Pray for service activities around the country that unite people, ecumenical partners and community agencies as we serve our neighbors in need, strengthen our communities and demonstrate God's love.

8 Pray for the resolution of international conflicts that cause suffering, violence, mistrust, injustice, economic crises and political instability. Ask God to forgive us for sometimes playing a role in these conflicts, intentional or not.

9 Pray for our missionaries in Latin America and the Caribbean and for the Young Adults in Global Mission volunteers serving in Mexico, Argentina and Uruguay, that the Spirit will nurture their faith as they accompany global companions in ministries that include education, immigration and pastoral leadership.

10 Pray for faith in the ways and thoughts of God, which stretch beyond our comprehension and imagination yet stir awe and devotion.

11 Give thanks for deacons in congregations and faith-based organizations. Praise God for their gifts and service in a variety of ministries, including camps, nursing, music, education, administration, social service, and youth and family ministries.

12 Pray for the Spirit to strengthen our discipline so that we might better study and reflect on the Word of God and its significance in our daily lives.

13 Give thanks and pray for volunteers of all ages and abilities who serve in congregations, outdoor ministries, Lutheran social ministry organizations, ELCA Global Mission, Lutheran Disaster Response, Mission Builders and community social services.

14 Pray that we will consider thoughtfully the wide-ranging impact of proclaiming that "all are welcome" in our congregations and the church.

15 *First Day of National Hispanic Heritage Month* Give thanks to God for the gifts, contributions, traditions and rich cultural diversity of our Latiné neighbors and siblings in Christ. Ask God to bless the ELCA's 147 Latiné ministries, which share the gospel, serve their neighbors, promote inclusivity and support rostered and lay leaders. Pray for the Spirit to guide and further the work of the ELCA Latino Ministries Association.

16 Take time to pray for the people and situations that first came to mind when you awoke this morning.

17 Give thanks and praise to God, who shows us mercy and patience, knows our gifts and stirs within us meaning and purpose for our baptismal journey.

18 Pray for ELCA World Hunger leaders, congregations and ministry partners participating in the ELCA World Hunger Leadership Gathering in Columbus, Ohio, that their sharing, planning and networking will enrich their work to address hunger and its root causes in our communities and the world.

19 "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises" (Psalm 98:4). Join your siblings in Christ in prayers of praise and thanksgiving for our amazing God!

20 Pray for Palestinians in Gaza, its surrounding areas and wherever they have fled in search of shelter and relief from war. Pray that the devastation and suffering will end and that leaders will commit to peaceful solutions, reconciliation, mutual respect and the rebuilding of communities that can thrive.

21 Remember in prayer those recovering from devastating floods and grieving the loss of loved ones and neighbors. Give thanks for the work we do through Lutheran Disaster Response to respond to urgent needs, give emotional and spiritual care, support long-term recovery and restore the vitality of communities. Ask God to strengthen and bless our partnerships with synods, congregations, local relief agencies and ecumenical relief programs.

22 *First day of fall* "In this great and strange creation, with a breath God gives us birth: born of soil to live as stewards, called to love and serve the earth" ("Earth Is Full of Wit and Wisdom," *ACS* 1064). Sing praise to God for creating and entrusting to our care the earth, its natural resources and the inspiring beauty of all living things, including humankind.

23 Pray for church leaders as they gather for the Stewardship Kaleidoscope conference in New Orleans to study and reflect on stewardship and to equip themselves for cultivating generosity in congregations. Give thanks for how God works through this partnership with the Presbyterian Foundation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the ELCA's stewardship and generosity team.

24 Praise God that our church gathers and nurtures the gifts of so many through congregations, synods and special ministries to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, care for neighbors in need, equip and encourage one another, and invite all to experience the blessings of being valued members of faith communities.

25 Remember in prayer those who are fighting cancer or experiencing a wide range of emotions upon receiving a cancer diagnosis. Pray that we and our faith communities will offer steadfast support, care and encouragement to them and their families.

26 Pray that all people will know the love, peace and wisdom that comes from God, made real to us through the birth, life, suffering, death and resurrection of our true savior, Jesus Christ.

St. John's Merrick/Saint John Bellmore ~ September 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Pastor away 9/1 – 9/3	1 Church Office & ECC Closed	2 9am – ECC Staff Mtg & CPR Training @ SJ/M	3 9:30am – ECC Training @ SJ/M	4 9am – ECC 3's Hello Day @ SJ/M 6:30pm – ECC Meet the Teacher Night @ SJ/M	5 9am – ECC 2's Hello Day @ SJ/M	6 11am – Altar Servers Mtg. @ SJ/M
7 **Time after Pentecost – 23rd Sunday – "GWOH"** **9:30am – Holy Eucharist @ SJ/M w/Sunday School Rally Day & Coffee Hour Grandparents Day**	8 ECC First day of classes @ SJ/M	9 10am – Soup Kitchen Cook at SJ/B 7pm – Joint Council/ Transition Mtg. @ SJ/B	10	11	12	13 **9am – Cook for Soup Kitchen w/ Social Ministry Mtg. @ SJ/M** **2pm – Fishing Trip on Captain Whittaker**
14 **Time after Pentecost – Holy Cross Sunday** **9:30am – Holy Eucharist @ SJ/M w/Sunday School & Coffee Hour**	15	16	17 10am – WELCA Bible Study at St. David's Massapequa	18 9:45am - ECC Chapel Time @ SJ/M 12:30pm – ECC Comm. Mtg. @ SJ/M	19	20 **8:30a – 12p Workshop for Strategic Plans w/Mark Nocero @ Cross of Christ - Babylon**
21 **Time after Pentecost – Saint Matthew** **9:30am – Holy Eucharist @ SJ/M w/ ECC Rally Day Sunday School & Coffee Hour**	22	23 ECC Closed	24 ECC Closed	25 6:30pm – ECC PIE Meeting @ SJ/M	26	27 5pm – Oktoberfest @ SJ/M
28 **Time after Pentecost – 26th Sunday** **9:30am – Holy Eucharist @ SJ/M w/ Special Joint Cong. Mtg . Sunday School & Coffee Hour/Bag Lunch Ministry**	29 St. Michael & All Angels	30				
	2pm – Bagel Ministry @ SJ/M **7pm - Recovery – Group @ SJ/M** **7pm – GA Mtg @ SJ/B**	**10:30am – Pastor's Text Study @ SJ/M** **12-2pm – GA Mtg @ SJ/B** **12:30pm – Afternoon Social @ SJ/B** **7:30pm – AA @ SJ/B**	**5:30 - Karate @ SJ/B**	**5:30 - Karate @ SJ/B**	**7:30pm – AA @ SJ/B**	**WEEKLY EVENTS**