



Letter from a Seminarian

Postmarked May 10, 2021

Nick Wagenknecht is our Adopt-a-Student funding recipient for 2019-2021

To the members of Saint John Lutheran Church,

Blessings to you from a beautiful and spiritually filled Concordia Seminary. For many days over the last month, I have walked out of my dorm room to see the beautiful tulips blooming by the building. I turn the corner by the fountain and the buds on the trees are exploding in colors. The weather has been amazing the last few weeks with the weather in the 70's on average for the past three weeks. This usually means you would find me wearing shorts and getting unusual tan lines from my sunglasses. The weather warming up reminds me that the semester is coming to a close and another school year has been finished. I was thinking about it the other day, this will be the end of my 19th academic school year. Time sure does fly by when Jesus is leading the way.

The nice weather has got me outside quite a bit over the last month. A group of friends and I have been playing disc golf weekly at several different parks in the St. Louis area. I started playing disc golf last year and I have to say that it has become one of my favorite "relaxing" past times. I put that in quotes because many times I miss easy shots and the day turns far from relaxing. I have also picked up the sport of golf. It is crazy, I know. A farm kid from Minnesota picking up golf clubs is a funny thing. Something crazier is that I am enjoying the sport. I am looking forward to continuing this activity in the future.

Not all the days this month have been sunny. We have had rain and storms. The rainiest day so far was this last Wednesday, April 28th. But rain and the storms could not put a damper on that day because it was Call Day. Finally, after two years of hard school work and preparation for the ministry, Hannah and I were going to find out where we would be spending the first year of our marriage. The anticipation started right away when I woke up to downpour rain which led to me driving through the rain to the airport to pick up my parents. We then went to eat at one of my favorite places in St. Louis, Salt & Smoke! We met up with Hannah, my soon-to-be in laws, and my fellow field worker Dave. We then took a trip to the Jewel Box to look at some flowers. We headed back to the Seminary and the "adults" went to Dave and his wife's (Cindy) house to watch the service. Due to the pandemic, each vicar candidate was only allowed one guest in the chapel. So, of course, I chose Hannah.

The service began with a nice introduction hymn where all the vicar candidates walked in and took their seats. We had a nice sermon on "Embracing the Authoritative Adventure" by President Michael Lange of the California- Nevada-Hawaii District. It was then time for Dr. Nielson to announce our placements. It was very entertaining to watch the expressions on all my fellow brothers in Christ's faces when they found out where they were going. Many had a rough idea already, but some were completely shocked. Of course, with my last name being "Wagenknecht" I was the second to last one to get my

placement. The time finally came, as I got to the front of the chapel, Dr. Nielson announced, "Nicholas Wagenknecht, Indiana District, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Seymour, Indiana." A sigh of relief left of my body since I knew at that point Hannah and I would be only an hour away from her school.

Immanuel is one of 4 churches in the town of Seymour. This was cool to hear knowing that there are going to be many Lutherans in the area. Immanuel has a K-8 school connected to it which means there is a good chance that I will be leading chapel services and possibly teaching some theology classes. There is also a Lutheran High School in Seymour which means there is a chance for me to watch some of the high school members play basketball and other sports. There are going to be many opportunities for me to preach this next coming year. There are over 2500 confirmed members at Immanuel which is going to be a big culture shock for me. The largest church I had been part of at this point had only 300 members. Hannah and I are both looking forward to being part of the Immanuel family next year.

Hannah is doing great and as I write this letter, there are only 28 days until the wedding! It is hard to believe that the big day keeps getting closer and closer. We are getting excited and are working on the final touches of getting things organized. The dress is picked out and I still have to get fitted for my suit. Our wedding colors are navy and pink. The galls will be wearing pink dresses and the men will be wearing navy suits. We both are anxious and awaiting the day that we become one with Christ. We are going to try and live stream the wedding on Facebook, I will write to you again once we figure that out.

We have decided that we will be doing a road trip honeymoon. We will start in Bloomington, Indiana, and make a stop in Nashville so I can get my country on. We will spend a few hours there then drive to Chattanooga for the night. We will get up the next day and head for Tybee Island, Georgia. We will spend about three nights here enjoying the scenery and all there is to offer. When we leave Georgia, we will make several stops along the way in South Carolina and North Carolina while we head back to Louisville. We will stay the night there then head back to Bloomington to start our married life together!

I want to close by again saying Thank You! This has been a very hard year for a lot of people and Hannah, and I are both very thankful for the generosity you have given to us. Your donation to the Seminary has allowed Hannah and I to live financially stress free over this last year. Since we did not have to worry about paying for tuition, we have been able to focus more on our studies and we could plan the wedding with a little less stress ☺. I hope you have a wonderful rest of your spring, and I look forward to writing you again! (If you would like to watch the livestream of our wedding, please send me a message on Facebook messenger.)

God's richest blessings,
Nick Wagenknecht

Nick and Hannah (soon and very soon) Wagenknecht.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" Hebrews 13:8

From the Chair – Judgement Is Not Easy

I recently read a sentence that caused me to do some real thinking. Perhaps this will initiate some thoughtful meditation for you as well. The sentence is, “When you replace judgement with curiosity, everything changes.”

We are all familiar with Matthew 18:15-19, on how to address differences with other believers. Mathew 7:1 is actually a precursor given to us by Jesus on how to judge correctly. As if He is telling us to judge but to do it in a particular manner and warning His followers of self- righteousness and hypocrisy. If we are going to judge someone, then we must expect to be held to the same standard. The measure you use will also be measured upon you.



The curious part of us tends to not be judgmental but to foster understanding as well as acceptance. Trying to be a good disciple causes us not only to reflect on what others may do that we consider wrong, but it strengthens us to really “Love like Jesus.”

Dennis Smith



The Origin of Father's Day

Many people assume Father's Day (and **Mother's Day** for that matter) is a holiday designed by greeting card makers to turn a profit. But that couldn't be farther from the truth. The story behind how this day became a holiday is actually a tale of determination by one woman and a decades-long fight to get fathers the recognition they deserve.

Some attribute the first Father's Day observance to the 1907 Monongah, West Virginia mining disaster that killed 361 men—250 of them fathers— and which left more than a thousand children without a dad. Grace Golden Clayton, whose father was killed in the tragedy, suggested a service of commemoration to the pastor of her local Methodist chapel. But it never really caught on as an annual observance.

Two years later, in May of 1909, a woman named Sonora Louise Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington, heard a Mother's Day sermon by Reverend Dr. Henry Rasmussen in her hometown church and thought a similar day should be set aside to honor fathers. Her own father, William Jackson Smart, a Civil War veteran, raised six children as a single parent.



The Struggle to Make Father's Day A Holiday

On June 6, 1910, Dodd approached the Spokane Ministerial Association and the local Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) with her petition outlining the idea for an annual observance, and she received overwhelming support. Spokane's held its first Father's Day celebration on Sunday, June 19, 1910, with moving speeches by her own pastor and those from other area churches.

The first U.S. President to celebrate it was Woodrow Wilson in June of 1916, who opened the church services by telephone to Spokane from the Oval Office. Wilson liked the idea so much of a day of observation for fathers that he pushed to make it a national holiday (he had just made Mother's Day official in 1915), but members of Congress resisted, fearing that such a day would take away support from the Mother's Day holiday, and commercialize the day for fathers, causing more harm than good.

Undeterred, Dodd took her mission on the road and spoke publicly to fathers to gain their support. But she was met with hard criticism. According to *The Spokesman-Review*, they laughed at her and said they didn't want a Father's Day. "A national fishing day would be better," they told her.

Sonora Louise Smart Dodd, Courtesy of Northwest Museum of Art's Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society

The effort to formally recognize a day for fathers met with even more hurdles over the years. In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge urged states to observe the day nationwide but refused to issue an official proclamation for the holiday, and by the 1930s there was an effort to combine Mother's Day and Father's Day into a single "Parent's Day" holiday. Even the newly formed "Father's Day Council," made up (and funded by) of members of men's clothing retailers, couldn't get the holiday recognized by 1938, only succeeding in getting calendar makers to mark the third Sunday in June with tie and pipe illustrations. And the general public had no interest in buying cards or gifts for dad that he probably didn't need.

A Maine Senator's Harsh Words

Maine's U.S. Senator, Margaret Chase Smith, had her own thoughts on the matter. When the holiday efforts reached another stalemate in Congress, Chase-Smith penned a harsh memo in which she declared, "Either we honor both our parents, mother and father, or let us desist from honoring either one. But to single out just one of our two parents and omit the other is the most grievous insult imaginable."

More than 50 years after Dodd's initial efforts, Father's Day was recognized as a holiday to be celebrated on the third Sunday of June by President Lyndon Johnson's Executive Order in 1966. But it was still not officially recognized as a federal holiday until six years later, in 1972 when, during his re-election campaign, Richard Nixon signed an official proclamation setting Father's Day permanently on the third Sunday in June nationwide.

So, when you're picking out that special gift and card for dad, remember Sonora Smart Dodd and her efforts to get fathers the recognition they deserve. In 1978, Mrs. Dodd died at the age of 96. Her grave at Greenwood Cemetery in Spokane reads:

*Sonora Smart Dodd
Founder of Father's Day
1882-1978*



Happy
Father's Day

June 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 12pm AA	2 12pm AA	3 12pm AA	4 12pm AA	5 8:07am Men's Breakfast 10am AA
6 10:30am Worship LWML MITES Breadbasket	7 12pm AA	8 12pm AA	9 10am Avenues Bible Study 12pm AA 1:30pm Kaffee Klatsch	10 12pm AA	11 12pm AA	12 10am AA
13 10:30am Worship 12:30pm Church "Picnic"	14 12pm AA	15 12pm AA	16 12pm AA	17 12pm AA	18 12pm AA	19 10am AA
20 10:30am Worship Father's Day	21 12pm AA	22 12pm AA	23 10am Avenues Bible Study 12pm AA	24 12pm AA	25 12pm AA	26 10am AA
27 10:30am Worship	28 12pm AA	29 12pm AA	30 12pm AA			



Pastoral Transition Information

(Revised: January 8, 2021)

Points of Contact for Saint John Hattiesburg during the Pastoral Transition:

Dennis Smith 601.329.6806	General administration of the congregation. Oversight of property, programs, maintenance, supervision of paid and volunteer staff not otherwise delegated.
Mark Keyl 601.466.0200	Oversight of the call process and chair of the Pastoral Call Committee. Point of contact with Interim Pastor Gary Weier.
Nancy Kaul 601.307.5127	Coordination of worship schedules and services. Point of contact for members in need of spiritual care, delegating to other elders and spiritual care-givers.
Rev. Gary Weier	Interim Pastor serving onsite two or three Sundays per month. Other worship services will be conducted by lay members of our fellowship or other pastors as coordinated by Nancy Kaul under Pastor Weier's supervision. Pastor Weier will provide home and hospital visitation as time allows in addition to other elders and members.
Church Office	The necessary functions of the church office will be coordinated for the next several weeks by John Karle and Dennis Smith. Several individuals will be helping locally and remotely so that the core activities of the congregation continue as best possible. Email and phones will be monitored on a daily basis. There are no set onsite hours for office staff.
Continuing Business	Pastor Karle plans to make monthly visits for the next three months to advance landscaping, building repair, and administrative projects already underway and provide operational support as needed. The visits will be in the middle of selected weeks. He will provide background support for bulletin preparation on an as needed basis. Most of the basic preparation work for the next three months has already been completed and is in place.
All Other Roles	All other roles – such as Altar Guild, The Avenues Bible Study, LWML – will continue in an orderly way as they have been. Other programs will be resumed post-Covid.

Serving June

Interim Pastor

Gary Weier

Music Director

Jason Sims

Altar Care Team

Sheila Curry and Christina Keiper

Live Streaming of Worship Services — www.saintjohnhattiesburg.com.

Portals of Prayer for April-May-June are available at the lobby mailboxes.

July Newsletter Deadline — Monday, June 21st at 10am.

Kaffee Klatsch — June 9th at 1:30

About Tithes and Offerings — As followers of Jesus, we are convinced that the continuation of Christ's work — both in this place and to the ends of the earth — depends on each of our generosity of our life's passions, priorities, and provisions. As partners in Jesus' Gospel mission, we thankfully dedicate a part of our income to the Church's larger work. Financial tithes and offerings may be given Sunday mornings during worship in the offering plate, via the regular mail, or online at the congregation's website by clicking on the 'Give' button. Thanks!

BOD Announcement — The Board of Directors reviewed our current practices when in the building, regarding Covid protocols. Since a majority of our folks are seniors with compromised immunity systems, and some of us may not yet be vaccinated, we felt the best course of action is no action for the time being. We will strongly suggest all folks entering the building wash/sanitize their hands, wear a mask, and practice social distancing when choosing where to sit. We will continue to monitor the situation as things may change. Thank you for your understanding and adherence to these practices.

Men's Breakfast — After many months of not meeting, the men's club will resume our first Saturday of the month breakfast on June 5th at 8:07AM, next Saturday. We will meet for breakfast and fellowship at Chesterfields located at 4646 Hardy street. Bring a friend, your appetite, and a smile. See you there!

Church "Potluck Picnic"— We are going to have a potluck picnic on Sunday June 13th after service. Since that Sunday is a lay person lead service, we will not have communion. That means our get together time will be a little earlier and will start at 12:30 or so. That will give time for going home, picking up your covered dish, getting swimsuits, and getting out to the pavilion/clubhouse at lake Serene. Watch for directions, and the address shortly. Since we are just getting Covid 19 behind us, we need to know how many folks are planning to join us. Please RSVP to Dennis Smith by June 6th. His phone number is 601 329 6806, and email is smithdennis926@gmail.com.

Weekday Growth Group for Adults

The Avenues Study Group — (Even Week Wednesdays) Meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at 10am at Saint John. They are studying Hope When Your Heart Breaks: Navigating Grief and Loss, a book of Hope when your heart breaks. The next meeting will be June 9th.

Pastoral Call Process

Progress Report — The Call Committee has received the Call List from the District President, as was announced on Sunday, May 2, 2021. Since then, the Call Committee has diligently and prayerfully studied the potential candidates and have begun the process of selecting the candidates whom the committee will contact and determine whether they are open for a call and would agree to an initial interview. Once this step is completed, the committee will prayerfully discuss and determine second interviews, potential site visits, and recommendations to the congregation. Should you have any questions concerning the process, please feel free to contact Mark Keyl. The committee requests your continued prayers as they go about their deliberations.

Duty Roster — Those serving on the Call Committee are: Mark Keyl (chair), Christina Jimenez, Wayland Johnson, Nancy Kaul, Jane Kersh, Steve Lawrence, Christopher Longman, Shawn O'Connor, Ethan Potesta, Pat Potesta, and Dennis Smith.



From the Altar Guild

Pentecost

As of June 6th, the liturgical colors in the church change to green. I've always related to green as a time of growth, as in growing in our relationship with the Lord. As I looked ahead through the Church Year Calendar, my eyes were opened to see that there are 25 Sundays marked *after* Pentecost taking us through to November 14th. Even the Celebrated Feast days of Reformation Day (October 31st) and All Saints' Day (observed November 7th) are, respectively, the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Sundays *after* Pentecost.

So yes, we are to grow in our relationship with the Lord, *AND* we are to spread the Good News of Jesus so that others may discover a relationship with Him and grow and share too! He has equipped us with the power of the Holy Spirit, put words upon our tongues, and love in our hearts to share with others.

We are Protected

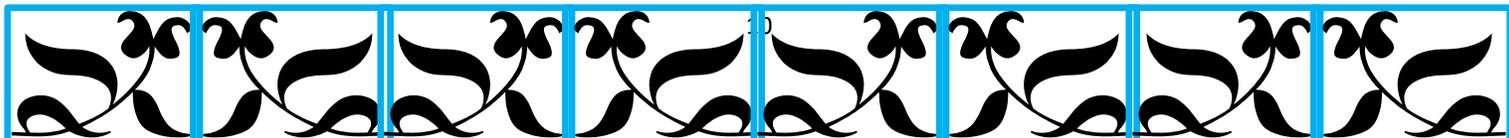
It is so easy to become afraid when we are disturbed by outside stimuli: gossip, images, language, news, natural disasters, or other world events. We might even begin to feel that we are in some type of danger in most places we go.

Turn to Jesus. He is our source of peace and protection when we focus on Him. Jesus' love within us will help to cast out the demon of fear. Listen when Jesus speaks, "Peace, be still!" Allow his love and light that is already inside us to shine into the world. Others will see this. How can they not?

The Lord created us, He formed us, He has redeemed us, and He calls us by name.
Let us sing it, let us do it, let us be it:

*This little light of mine
I'm going to let it shine
Let it shine, all the time, let it shine*

Christina Keiper
Altar Guild Chair
601-550-1050
ckeiper511@gmail.com



Lutheran Women's Missionary League

LWML MITES collected on Sunday, May 2, 2021, totaled \$90.78. Thank you again for your prayers and support for the Mission Grants selected in Convention by the Gulf States District and National LWML MITES will be collected NEXT on Sunday, June 6, 2021.

Are you tired of COVID-19, the isolation from friends and family, the safety precautions, the loneliness? Are you wondering if things will ever be normal again? God tells us in His Word (Isaiah 40:31) "But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint." God Loves You! God is in Control of all things! I have shared these words with my dear sister-in-law, who along with many others, is struggling with her and my brother's health. During times like these, Christians need to lift each other up in prayer and encourage each other to wait on the Lord. God promises in His Word, "I am with you, always!" God knows our every need and hears our prayers. Be thankful for all your blessings, pray always for God's Will, and share the Love of Jesus wherever God leads you.

The 39th Biennial National LWML Convention will be held in Lexington, Kentucky, June 24-27, 2021. THEME: Running the Race... Looking to Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2). Brenda Hesselgrave, Elaine Kersh, and I will be attending the National Convention. If you would like to participate in the Gifts from the Heart collection, please get your gift cards at WALMART or TARGET in the amount of \$10.00, \$15.00, or \$20.00 and get them to one of us before Sunday, June 13, 2021. Recipients of these gifts are: Assurance for Life Ministries (Lexington), MOST Ministries, and Food Bank Support at Fort Wayne and St. Louis Concordia Seminaries. We are excited and thankful to be able to attend another National Convention.

Anyone interested in meeting for a Salad Luncheon at my home on Saturday, July 23, 2021? Hopefully it will be safe to meet without safety precautions, etc. Also, I am hoping that we can resume our LWML Business Meetings at church beginning the first Sunday in September. Please let me know your thoughts regarding these ideas.

MITES will be collected Next on Sunday, June 6, 2021. If you are not able to attend worship, you may make your checks out to Saint John Lutheran LWML, and mail them directly to Christina Noffke at 108 Ramblewood Drive, Hattiesburg, MS 39402.

Until Next Time..... Serve the Lord with Gladness!!!

Shirley Thone
President LWML

Oktoberfest Opportunities 2021

Planning is underway for Saint John's 42nd annual Oktoberfest celebration scheduled for Saturday, October 2, 2021. This is the primary fundraiser for money allocated for missions annually. The entire congregation gets involved in the effort; seasoned members, as well as new members are welcome to pitch in. Because of last year's postponement due to COVID-19, and the continuing uncertainty of putting on a safe event, we are in a rebuilding year in the scope of the festivities.

The current plan is to have all of the Deli items (sausage, potato salad, sauerkraut, mustard, and baked goods) in the fellowship hall, and dispense with the silent auction. The baked goods Deli, where we sell German and other baked items, including German bread, stollen (a German sweet bread), and other baked goods has always been a great draw. We are looking for individuals that enjoy baking, especially bread, to assist in this effort. If you bake or are willing to learn the art, please leave your name with the church office and we will contact you, or see Mark Keyl, Susan Perkins, or a member of the Oktoberfest Committee for information.

We also have opportunities for individuals to "learn the ropes" in individual areas of food preparation. If you want to work with an individual in a specific area, please contact the folks above and we will get you connected.

Our current plans are to have a takeout menu, including brat plates and hotdog plates. This will allow for adequate spacing for attendees to feel comfortable around others. It is a great time to meet new people, enjoy good fellowship, and enjoy the Lutheran tradition of eating when more than one comes together in his service. There will be a phoning committee that will contact each member of the congregation about their availability and willingness to assist in this effort.

The scope of this year's celebration will depend on the number of people who will be willing to work. A large response could allow us the ability to expand the celebration, depending upon the safety factors anticipated by October 2, 2021. Please prayerfully consider assisting in this effort and continuing this legacy of mission giving at Saint John.

Mark Keyl
Chair

Birthdays in June

Damian Potesta 6/2	Madison Lowry 6/4	Christina Noffke 6/7
Rita Wilson 6/8	Lori Coleman 6/10	Dewey Case 6/13
Bjorn Wastvedt 6/14	June Songy 6/16	Corbin Blair 6/20
Elaine Kersh 6/21	Emma Kivlighn 6/21	Shelia Curry 6/23
Catherine Lee 6/25	Jerry Hagen 6/29	



Anniversaries in June



David & Nancy Grunig, 54yrs 6/3
Bjorn & Judy Wastvedt, 51yrs 6/12 Jerry & Debbie Frederick, 52yrs 6/13
Fred & June Songy 6/16

Baptisms in June

Bill Coll 6/1 Bridgette Lee 6/11 Alex O'Connor 6/11 Rita Wilson 6/20

Surprise the World!
Love. Like. Jesus. + Hope for the City.



Saint John Lutheran Church

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