

The Messenger

September 2026 Edition



A Monthly Newsletter from St. John Lutheran Church and School

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Gather. Grow. Go. To the Glory of God!

Devotional Corner



Devotion Corner: Sure and Certain of the Unseen

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1

It is amazing that with only a few clicks on a computer, we can dramatically alter photos. Such capabilities have led us to be a bit more wary. We find ourselves saying, “Unless I see it with my own eyes, how can I believe that it hasn’t been touched up? I’ll believe it when I see it.”

Often this cynical attitude can touch our spiritual life. How can I believe that God loves me and knows what is going on in my life considering all troubles and disappointments I have to deal with?

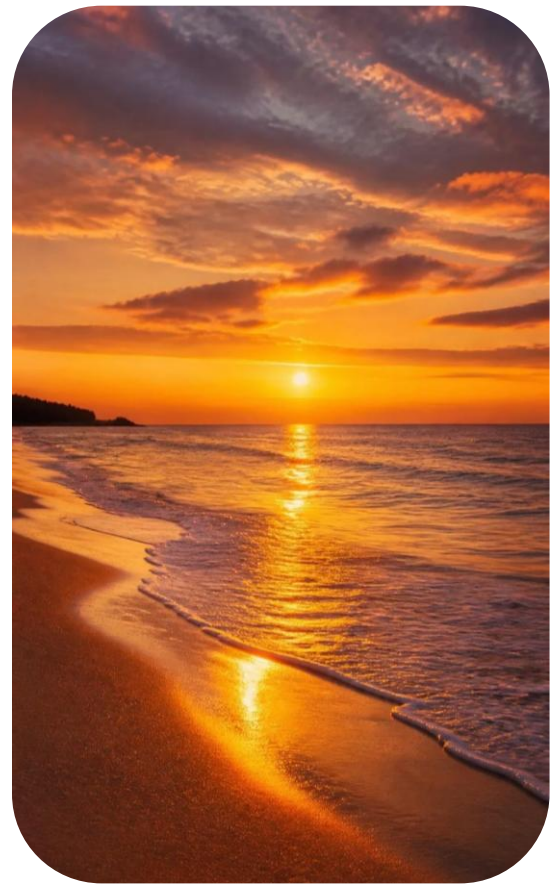
The Bible tells us, “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” How can we be sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see?

Think of a father and child playing the game where the father stands behind the child and tells him to fall backwards. The child, unable to see his father, still trusts that he is there and is certain that his father won’t let him hit the ground. The child leans back and falls, fully convinced that his father will keep his word and catch him, because his father has always proved trustworthy.

This is the kind of trust we can have in our heavenly Father. Though we did not see the creation or the crucifixion, though we were not present to witness Jesus rising from the Easter tomb, though we have not heard his actual voice forgiving our sins and promising his return, we believe.

How can we be so sure and certain? Because God’s Word is true and trustworthy. Our forgiveness is certain because Jesus did die and rise from the dead. God’s love for us today and every day is sure. Every promise our Father has made about our eternal future, he will keep.

Faith is sure and certain of unseen things because it takes God at his word.



Worship With Us Sundays at 9:00 am

Christian Parenting Today

Christian Parenting Today: Is Your Child's Heart Ready for a New School Year?

A FamilyChristian.com article by Lisa Rowell

Even after more than a decade of first days of school, my kids still get nervous (and borderline anxious) when the new year begins. School supply shopping and figuring out schedules help distract them during the day, but at night, the worry creeps in. They toss and turn or rattle awake from dreams about lockers that won't open and classrooms they can't find.

And I know it's not just my kids. Similar scenarios play out in other homes, too. As parents, while we're busy checking off back-to-school to-do lists, our kids are wrestling with bigger questions: Will I make friends? What if my teacher is mean? What if I can't keep up? It's up to us to help prepare their hearts, not just their backpack for the new year. Here are four ways to help your child step into the school year spiritually and emotionally ready.

1. Help your child face the unknown with faith, not fear. The start of a new school year brings a lot of unknowns, including new teachers, new classmates, and new routines. Even if your child isn't switching schools and has a few familiar friends nearby, your child may still feel unsettled and nervous. (I know my kids always do!)

That's normal. Routines and rituals help kids feel safe and make sense of their world. And, the only thing predictable about the new school year is how unpredictable it is. It takes time for everyone to settle into the new rhythm.

However, one thing that remains steadfast and true: God is already there. He's gone ahead of your child. He intentionally placed your child in that classroom with those kids and that teacher. It's part of His good plan. He is faithful. Always.

Joshua 1:9 says, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." That promise extends to your child, too. Being brave doesn't always eliminate fear, but it does give your child God's steady hand to hold when courage is needed.

Try this: Start a simple "faith over fear" ritual. On Sundays, talk about the upcoming week together. Write down one worry on a sticky note and one promise from God on another. Toss the worry in the trash and put the promise in your child's backpack or lunchbox.

Here are some common "what ifs" your child might wrestle with (and how you can respond):

What if I don't make friends? God will bring the right friend at the right time.

What if school is too hard? God will give you wisdom.

What if my teacher doesn't like me? God will help you build a good relationship.

What if I make a mistake or mess up? God will give you grace and help you learn and grow.

What if I feel alone? God will always be with you.



2. Reinforce your child's identity in Christ. God doesn't grade us like school does. Our salvation and His love aren't based on our performance. Instead, He focuses on the process of growing to be more like Jesus and developing the Fruit of the Spirit. However, school uses a grading system to chart a child's progress toward learning goals. Those grades help teachers and parents identify where a child might need help or recognize emerging talents and gifts.

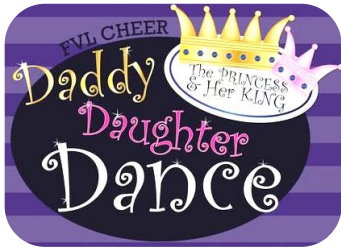
But, if we're not careful, school can easily lead our kids to believe that their worth and identity come from grades. That's why we get to be the steady voice reminding them: You are not your report card. You are God's beloved child. Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Upcoming Events



St. John Inaugural Golf Outing- Saturday, September 26th

Grab your clubs and meet us at Wandering Springs Golf Course in Greenleaf on Saturday, September 26th! Teams of 4 are invited to sign up for the event, which includes 18 holes of golf, cart rental, a bagged lunch, a taco bar dinner with soda and beer, and snacks and drinks throughout the course. The cost is \$95 per person, with proceeds to support increased school security at St. John. In-person registration begins at 10:30 am, with a shotgun start at 12:00 noon. If you are not a golfer but would like to join us for dinner and fellowship afterwards, the cost is only \$20. Pre-register by following the QR code above, or contact Brandon Buchholz with any questions at 920-277-9802.



FVL's Daddy/Daughter Dance- Saturday, October 3rd

Girls ages 3-13 and their dads (or other special guy) are invited to dress up and spend an afternoon together filled with dancing, games, crafts, snacks, raffle baskets, and memories to last a lifetime! FVL's annual Daddy/Daughter Dance, sponsored by FVL cheerleaders, will run from 1:30-4:00 pm. Each princess will receive a tiara. Complimentary refreshments, photo booth ticket (per family), and 1 raffle ticket per participant is included with the cost. Additional raffle tickets available for cash purchase at the event. Pre-registration is highly recommended; the cost goes up slightly on the day of the event. Cost is \$30 for one daddy/daughter combination, \$45 with two daughters, \$50 for three or more, or \$20 per person at the door.

FVL Fall Sacred Band and Choirs Concert- Sunday, October 4th

Join us in the FVL Auditorium on Sunday, October 4th from 2:00-3:30 pm to witness FVL band and choir students sharing their faith through music and song. Admission is free and registration is not required. Those who can't attend in person can view the concert online at FVL's YouTube page: youtube.com/@FVLFoxes.



Mark Your Calendars!

Sept 1	Martha's Circle
Sept 2	Breakfast and Bible Study
Sept 4	No FVL Classes
Sept 7	No School (Labor Day) St. John + FVL
Sept 8	Fellowship Meal
Sept 9	School Eye Screening Weekly Choir Practice Resumes
Sept 12	Soccer Camp Fall Cheer Camp at FVL
Sept 13	Adult Bible Classes Resume Weekly
Sept 14	Cross Country Meet at Mount Olive Elders' Meeting Church Council Meeting
Sept 15	Outreach Team Meeting
Sept 16	Breakfast and Bible Study
Sept 19	Soccer Camp
Sept 20	Pastoral Call Meeting
Sept 21	Cross Country Meet at FVL
Sept 26	Soccer Camp Golf Outing
Sept 28	Cross Country Meet at Immanuel Greenville
Sept 29	PTO Meeting
Sept 30	Soccer Game and Party
Oct 2	No School- Teacher Inservice
Oct 3	Daddy/Daughter Dance at FVL
Oct 4	FVL Sacred Band and Choirs Concert
Oct 5	Cross Country Meet at St. Mark GB
Oct 14	School Picture Day

News Highlights

Pastoral Call News

Pastor Noah Bater, our most recently called pastor, has returned his call to St. John, deciding to continue serving at Prince of Peace in California. With this news, we will continue our search for a new full-time pastor. Please plan to attend our next pastoral call meeting on Sunday, September 20th after service to help us decide on the next call.



PTO Meetings Restart

With the beginning of the new school year, PTO is starting back up again. Meetings this year will take place on the last Tuesday of each month, beginning at 5:45 pm each time. Everyone is welcome to attend. Meet at the school or speak to Courtney Schisel, our PTO president, about setting up an online connection.

Adult Bible Classes Resume

Our bi-monthly Breakfast and Bible Study opportunities will restart this Wednesday, September 2nd. They will be held every first and third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 am in the kitchen hallway. Sunday Bible classes will resume in the worship area following Labor Day weekend. These will begin on September 13th and run every Sunday at 10:15 am (following the worship service) unless otherwise noted. Everyone is welcome to attend both of these classes.



Choir Practice Returns

St. John's choir will be starting regular practices and performances again beginning on Wednesday, September 9th. Practices will run each Wednesday at 6:00 pm. Choir is open to people of all ages and abilities. Anyone interested in joining can come to practice or speak with Ginny or Jeremy Uecker.

September Birthdays

Happy birthday to our church members celebrating in September!

Sept. 1- Owen Propson
Sept. 2- Allen Johns
Sept. 6- Cassie Nielson
Sept. 11- Liberty Cisler
Sept. 12- Lena Abrahamson
Sept. 12- Ava Uecker
Sept. 12- Elena Uecker
Sept. 12- Barb Verbeten
Sept. 13- Madi Vickman
Sept. 14- Amanda Spatchek
Sept. 15- Kenneth Lemke
Sept. 15- Ethan Propson
Sept. 17- Lois Baumgartener
Sept. 17- Damian Guggenbuehl
Sept. 19- Dane Schisel
Sept. 21- Andrew DeMerritt
Sept. 21- Alan Lemke
Sept. 23- Lincoln Demerath

Sept. 25- Scott Schroeder
Sept. 26- Trevor Golden
Sept. 27- Michael Breister
Sept. 29- Jesse Schmidt
Sept. 30- Chase Denor



Happy birthday to our students celebrating in September!

David M.P.- September 2nd
Isabella L.- September 3rd
Pippa B.- September 4th
Liberty C.- September 11th
Ava U.- September 12th
Elena U.- September 12th
Madi V.- September 13th
Brayden M.- September 14th
Dane S.- September 19th
Maverick V.- September 21st
Mia A.A.- September 26th
Nova K.- September 30th

Is Your Child's Heart Ready for School?

Continued from page 3

Try this: Help your child memorize three simple truths:

I am loved by God (1 John 3:1)

I am chosen by God (1 Peter 2:9)

I can do all things through Christ (Philippians 4:13)

Write them on index cards and stick them on the bathroom mirror where your child can see those reminders daily. And when grades come home (whether your child's name is on the honor roll or not even close), celebrate your child's effort. Remind your child that God's love doesn't rise and fall with grades.

3. Talk to God together about all the things.

Make prayer a natural part of your back-to-school routine by talking to God about the real stuff your child is facing. Sometimes we overcomplicate prayer or fall for the lie that a pastor's or "prayer warrior's" words hold more weight in God's eyes. They don't! You are a child of the King, too! Some of the most meaningful (and honestly raw) conversations with God happen in the car on the way to school or while you're tucking your child into bed.

Encourage your child to bring everything to God, the excitement about art class, the nervousness about the lunch line, the hope for new friendships, and yes, even the worry about memorizing math facts. Philippians 4:6-7 reminds us not to be anxious about anything, but to present our requests to God with thanksgiving.

Try this: Start a simple prayer journal together. Each week, write down one thing your child is excited about and one thing they're worried about. Pray over both, then look back later to see how God answered. This process builds your child's faith and helps you both see how He responds!

4. Be on the lookout for His goodness and mercy.

School will have its challenging moments. Your child will face disappointments, fights with friends, and hard assignments. And on more than one occasion, your child's efforts won't be reflected in the grades. But God is still good.

Psalm 23:6 says, "Your goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life." God promises His goodness and mercy will always be present, but sometimes, especially on the hard days, we need to view the day in hindsight to see Him.

Try this: Go on the "hunt for good." At dinner or bedtime, ask your child to share one way they saw God's goodness. For your child, that could be the friend who shared the swings at recess, snuggling with the dog after school, or getting picked to be the line leader. This practice trains your child to look for God's goodness everywhere.

To view the article in its original format, visit

<https://www.familychristian.com/parenting/is-your-childs-heart-ready-for-a-new-school-year/>

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