

The Messenger

August 2025 Edition



A Monthly Newsletter from St. John Lutheran Church and School

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ST. JOHN
LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

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

Devotional Corner



Devotion Corner: How can I be happy if I only think of others?

“Blessed are the pure in heart.”

Matthew 5:8

Wash your hands. Wash your hands! So often we are reminded of the need to wash our hands. After using the restroom, before eating, after eating, before cooking, after cooking. It's so hard to keep them clean.

And that's just our hands! Try keeping our hearts clean, and we have an impossible task! How hard it is to have perfectly pure motives! When I cut that little section of grass between my neighbor's house and mine, the good deed is spoiled with the self-serving intent that maybe he'll let me borrow his edger. I give some money to a worthy charitable cause, but only because I don't want to disappoint the sincere person asking.

We may be able to hide our impure motives from others, but not from God. The Bible says, “The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). We can't fool God. There is no covering false notions or hidden deception. God looks right through the outward act and inspects the inner motivation. He is looking for the pure in heart.

What is the measure for that kind of inner purity? God holds us up to his perfect will and measures us against

it. The conclusion is that all of us have sinned and fall short of the sinless standard that God has set for us. Under God's inspection, our hearts are not pure.

What's the solution? Our hearts need to be washed. But how? We can't wash them on our own, so Jesus did it for us. The Bible says, “The blood of Jesus, [God's] Son, purifies us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). By his death for us, Jesus washed our hearts clean; he has cleansed us of sin's stain. Through him all our sins are forgiven, and our hearts are now pure in God's sight.

The forgiveness of sins and purity of heart that we have received freely from Jesus powerfully motivates us to stay away from anything dirty. We'll not want to dirty our hearts again with sinful things. Rather, we'll be happy to strive to live according to the pure way that God teaches and thereby indicate our great appreciation for the sacrifice that Jesus made to wash our hearts clean.



Worship With Us Sundays at 9:00 am

Christian Parenting Today

Christian Parenting Today: Six Ways to Respond to a Strong- Willed Child

A FocusOnTheFamily.com Article by Danny Huerta

Raising strong-willed children can be demanding, but it's also incredibly gratifying. When taught with patience and firm, loving guidance, they can become life-changing leaders.

Have you ever pictured the apostle Paul as a strong-willed child during his early years? Have you ever wondered how his parents corrected, guided, and helped shape his strong convictions? In the Book of Acts, we read how God confronted and later used Paul's high-spirited nature to spread the gospel across the known world. We get to glimpse into Paul's drive and courage as we read about his various missionary journeys and imprisonments. Paul learned to relentlessly follow Christ for an intimate relationship with God while listening carefully to the Holy Spirit. He learned how to base his strength on love.

I imagine Paul's parents had many exhausting days raising him because parenting a strong-willed child can be exhausting, challenging, and also rewarding. These "high spirited" children typically have a stubborn, independent mentality. However, they can also be overflowing with confidence, determination, drive, and focus.

In my private practice, I worked with a couple parenting a strong-willed child. This teenager's mom and dad were peacemakers who were afraid of him when he got angry because he was big, strong, and had an explosive temper. He was used to calling the shots because of his charm, size, and intimidating outbursts. His parents had not learned how to mold him into an influential leader and wanted peace at home. They were warm, sensitive, and loving — but not directive or consistent. As the son took more authority and power, he became angrier and more frustrated. What he longed for were consistent, clear boundaries and guidance.

Discipline and training

Strong-willed children can be inflexible, stubborn, and tend to get emotionally stuck in frustration and anger if they don't get their way. They can be opinionated and hyper-focused on doing things their way. They can seem relentless in pursuit of power and control. But for all



this, when they learn humility, kindness, and self-control, these children can develop into outstanding leaders.

The Bible tells us, "For the moment, all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11). We must discipline and train our strong-willed children so that they can grow into the fullness of what God has for them.

Training requires intentionality through goals. Creating structure takes time, repetition, and hard work. What are you training your strong-willed child to pursue and do? As the Bible says, "Discipline your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart" (Proverbs 29:17).

Here are six practical ways to respond when parenting a strong-willed child to help them grow into the best person they can be:

1. Be calm. Calmness helps you tap into your intuition and parenting intelligences. It lets you respond to their beliefs rather than their behaviors. For example, your child may have an outburst, but instead of immediately correcting the behavior, you can try understanding what he sees and wants. Help him learn how to better interpret what he's experiencing or more effectively pursue what he wants. Your calmness helps calm a chaotic strong-willed child's brain.

2. Be clear. Clarity helps you reinforce boundaries rather than spend your time and energy nagging and arguing. Tell your child the rules and consequences — good and bad — and reinforce what you have discussed. It's a great idea to have your child play an active part in developing the rules and consequences. Take time to make sure things have been communicated clearly.

Article continues on page 6

Upcoming Events



Outdoor Service Followed by Summer Bash- August 10th

This August 10th, we are bringing back an annual favorite with a new spin! We will hold an outside service beginning at 10:00 am (please note the time change!), to be followed by a church and school picnic event from 11:00 until 2:00 pm! There will be yard games, water activities, tractor rides, a petting zoo, and more fun activities. Everyone is encouraged to bring their lawn chairs for both the service and the picnic. Children are encouraged to bring their swimsuit to enjoy the water activities. Please register at <https://forms.gle/RTDGVYDaG4aF55Sv6> so that we know how many people will need food. If you have questions or wish to help out with the food and fun, please contact Tim.raddatz@stjohnwrightstown.com.

School Orientation Nights

Our St. John Lutheran School orientation nights are coming up on Wednesday, August 13th, and Thursday, August 14. In response to family feedback, the first hour of orientation will be dedicated to new families. New families can arrive at 5:00 pm to drop off school supplies and ask questions of the classroom teacher. We will move to the worship area for a presentation at 5:30. At 6:00, returning families should join us at the presentation for new information. The returning families will be able to drop off school supplies following the presentation around 6:30. Children are encouraged to come along, and childcare will be provided during the presentation.

The PTO is looking for help with running the childcare on both orientation nights. If you are able to help, your time spent will count towards your family's required volunteer hours for the school year. Please visit <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4DABAB23ABFF2-57622988-orientation#/> to sign up or contact PTO@stjohnwrightstown with questions.



Tunes on Tuesdays

St. John's PTO and outreach committees have joined forces to set up a concession stand at Wrightstown's Tunes for Tuesdays events this summer. There are still a couple of concerts left, and we will be returning for more food and fun. Visit our stand in the river district on August 12th and 26th from 6-9 pm for some great food and fellowship. Bring your lawn chairs to enjoy tunes by Karen's Hit List (August 12th) and Him and Her (August 26th). Proceeds from the St. John concessions are going towards a large canopy featuring the St. John logo to increase our recognition at events.

Mark Your Calendars!

- August 3- Annual Voters Meeting
- August 8- Last Day of Summer Program
Cardinal Quests "County Fair"
- August 10- Outdoor Worship
Summer Bash
- August 11- Elder's Meeting
Church Council Meeting
- August 12- Fellowship Meal
Tunes on Tues w/SJL Concession
- August 13- School Orientation Night
- August 14- School Orientation Night
- August 18- FVL Orientation Day
- August 19- Outreach Team Meeting
- August 20- Breakfast and Bible Study
FVL First Day of School/Opening Service
- August 25- First Day of School
Opening Service
- August 26- Tunes on Tues w/SJL Concession
- September 1- No School (Labor Day)
- September 3- Breakfast and Bible Study
FVL Chapel
- September 5- Apple Bowl (FVL @ Xavier)
- September 6- MLC Football Game at Lawrence Uni.

Church Highlights

Annual Meeting August 3rd

The annual report has been compiled for fiscal year July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025. Please check your e-mails for a copy or visit the back table in the hallway behind the worship center. We ask all voters to join us in the annual meeting on August 3rd following the church service to review the report and address any needs.



Thank You, VBS Volunteers!

We nearly doubled the number of children served during this year's Vacation Bible School (VBS) event, reaching 98 youth, and we couldn't have done it without our amazing volunteers! Thank you to all those who helped, whether for just a day or for the whole week. Your time and efforts were highly appreciated.

Apple Valley Food Pantry Needs

The August 2025 collection for the pantry will be held on Saturday, August 9th, 9 am - 11:30 am. The following is the list of items currently in need of: Helper meals, adult cereals, canned fruit cocktail, mandarins, peaches, pears, canned pasta, pasta sauce, spaghetti noodles, egg noodles, canned chicken, tuna and salmon, canned chicken and tomato soup, canned cream of mushroom and chicken soups, pork n beans/baked beans, chunky soups, chilis and stews, jams, peanut butter, canned corn and carrots, boxed and bagged mashed potatoes and women's shampoos/conditioners and body washes. Thank you for your support during the slow months of summer!



August Church Birthdays

Happy birthday to our church members celebrating in August!

Aug 2 Ari Vickman
Aug 3 Dale Laabs
Aug 4 Rebekah Kraus
Aug 5 Owen Raddatz
Aug 6 Lyle Schmidt
Aug 7 Judy Rotzenberg
Aug 9 Jake Bowers
Aug 9 Claire DeMerritt
Aug 9 Amanda Wingo-Barrett
Aug 12 Adam Kussow
Aug 12 Charlene Lemke
Aug 14 Matthew Van Schyndel



Aug 16 Mitchell Herlache
Aug 16 Oliver Olp
Aug 23 Charlotte Theunis
Aug 24 Paige Gilson
Aug 24 Kristin Pohlman
Aug 25 Diane Laabs
Aug 26 Rozanne Bohrtz
Aug 27 Grace Bauer
Aug 27 Joshua Verbeten
Aug 30 Rosella Laabs
Aug 31 Marna Johns

School Highlights



Cardinal Quests County Fair

St. John's Cardinal Quests summer program is wrapping up. For our last day, we are celebrating with a county fair! Our summer classes have been busy making artwork, baking cookies, and creating games. Entries will be judged and awarded prizes, and children will get to participate in contests like an egg carry and a three-legged race. Guest judges from the congregation will award prizes. Families are invited to join us for this fun activity being held from 2:00 until 4:00 in the afternoon!



Celebrating Miss Buss' Anniversary

Miss Buss is celebrating the completion of 10 years of service at St. John! Join us in showing her appreciation with cards and gifts. A display has been set up in the reception area, and cards and gifts will be collected throughout the month of August. Be sure to show your gratitude for her!

Volunteering at School

Each year, school families must contribute 10 hours of volunteer time to St. John. Now is a great time to start! Join PTO to find out about the many great ways that you can help. They can be reached by stopping by their table on one of the orientation nights or by emailing them at PTO@stjohnwrightstown.com. Current opportunities to help include things like helping to deep clean classrooms before the beginning of the school year or volunteering to cover childcare spots on orientation nights. There are also other ways to contribute, such as checking out our teachers' wish lists on stjohnwrightstown.com/PTO. Our newest teacher, Mrs. Schultz, now has a list added to the website to help her fill her first full time classroom.

First Day & Opening Service

Our first day of school is on Monday, August 26th. We invite parents to bring their child(ren) to school, spend some time with them getting settled in to the classroom, and join us for our opening service at 8:30 am. Following the opening service, students can peel off with their teachers for the rest of the school day. Parents are also invited to join us for chapel services on Wednesdays at 8:15 throughout the rest of the school year.



FVL Band (5th-8th Grade)

St. John, as a member of FVL Schools, offers middle school band as an optional activity. If your 5th-8th grader is interested in learning an instrument, please speak with Mr. Raddatz about setting up lessons, or contact the FVL Schools Band Program Director, Mrs. Elisabeth Wagner (ewagner@fvlhs.org). The program combines individual lessons held at St. John with group practices held at FVL.

August School Birthdays

Jovie S.- August 1
Ari V.- August 2
Graham T.- August 4
Jensen G.- August 6
Haven G.- August 6
Jacob B.- August 9

Strong-Willed Children

(Christian Parenting Today Article continuing from page 3)

3. Be consistent. Consistency helps strong-willed children learn that being in charge is not up for grabs. While it's not always easy, the parents must be united in their approach. Otherwise, the child quickly realizes that authority and power are wavering and divided. Strong-willed children respond to competence and confidence.

4. Follow through. Strong-willed children want to know that you mean what you say. They respect and trust resolute authority.

5. Delegate some control. Give your child opportunities to earn an appropriate measure of decision-making privilege in your house – she can't simply demand it. For example, you can assign her control over choosing what trail you will bike, but not whether you're going biking.

6. Teach and reinforce empathy and humility. Most importantly, teach and reinforce empathy and humility early and often. Help them learn to listen [to] and care about others. Talk about what it looks like to be honest, faithful, loyal, sincere, ethical, and genuinely loving and encouraging of others. When strong-willed children learn how to be empathic and humble (two foundational relational traits), they can become extraordinary leaders. Help them see the value of other people — their

thoughts, opinions, and well-being — as they learn to influence rather than dominate.

Young, strong-willed children also do well with distractions. For example, if they are stuck on a thought, tell them a random fact like, “Did you know some cats are actually allergic to humans?”

Strong-willed individuals can have historic impact.

I love considering the amazing contributions in history from strong-willed individuals. Thomas Edison (inventor of the light bulb) said, “I never allow myself to become discouraged under any circumstances.” Having a stubborn will can get us through discouragement, obstacles, and moments of failure.

Although parenting strong-willed children can be demanding, it can also be incredibly gratifying and powerful. However, it also involves your own growth in adaptability, respect, intentionality, steadfast love, boundaries, graceful forgiveness, and gratitude. What an incredible opportunity for personal growth as you guide an influencer and contributor in God's kingdom.

When taught with patience and firm, loving guidance, strong-willed children can become life-changing leaders like Paul, Peter, Esther, and Daniel in the Bible or the Thomas Edisons of the world.

See the article in its original form at:

<https://www.FocusOnTheFamily.com/parenting/6-ways-to-respond-to-a-strong-willed-child/>

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