

On Eagle's Wings



St. John's Monthly Newsletter – October 2025

Pastor's Paragraphs

A “path dependent process” is one where past decisions constrain what can happen in the future. A computer keyboard is an example. The arrangement of letters on a computer keyboard is based on the arrangement of letters on a typewriter. The letters on a typewriter were arranged the way they are for reasons long since lost; although many people say it prevented the keys from jamming on early typewriters. Whatever the case, since the keyboard comes from the past, and everyone is trained in that past model, it is difficult or impossible for a new keyboard arrangement to be formed, even if it is demonstrably better.

Path dependent processes tend to perpetuate themselves. They absorb those things which make them more solid, while they push aside anything that challenges them. Change can be very difficult. When a change does occur it is usually messy and sometimes violent. But changes do occur. Sometimes path dependent processes get upended. Major technological advances, or significant societal shifts do change even deeply engrained processes.

I believe the widespread prosperity that came about after World War 2 set in motion societal changes to path dependent processes that were long established. I've said several times recently that the decline and collapse of the church and many civic organizations began back then; even though many appeared to be flourishing at the time.

With widespread prosperity came new levels of independence and individuality. Instead of having to work together and be a part of a community because of financial limitations, people could afford the option of doing life on their own. Even though the strongest, most efficient, and safest way to go through life is to be part of a strong and healthy community, people choose individuality whenever they can afford it.

Thus began the erosion of the faith-based path dependent processes our culture had been built on. Jesus taught “take up your cross and follow me.” He taught that we are basically sinful and need repentance. He taught sacrifice and even embracing the necessity of suffering. Christianity teaches the ironic truth that the way to be your fullest self is to give deeply of yourself. But our current culture teaches that the way to be your

fullest self is to consume more, be an individual, and define yourself on your own terms.

The newly forming path dependent process of our society seeks to discredit and dismiss the ways of Christianity. Have you ever noticed that good things about Christianity are often overlooked, yet failures and scandals grab headlines? That's society discrediting that which could challenge it.

Path dependent processes increasingly reward those who go along, and punish those who don't. An easy example is that decades ago a child used to be able to participate in both sports and faith activities. Not so today. The social cost of commitment to Christianity is growing higher. Prioritizing faith over other extracurricular activities will not only get a child scorned for having the wrong priorities, but actually excluded from many fun things. Thus, society's path dependent process reinforces its own values and morality. It is effectively impossible to stop.

This is not a cause for despair. Faith and the Church are God's. They always have been and always will be. My point in writing all of this is for us to fully recognize the tasks ahead of us. Simple changes and gimmicks will not turn around a declining church. Neither will service projects, fellowship events, and fancy programming. Amazing worship experiences won't do it either. Society's path dependent process is against us. We do well to recognize that.

This is not new territory for our faith. The same was true for the early church. We will do what they did. They were small counter-cultural groups who lived their faith with the full knowledge that it wasn't going to be popular. Thus, they didn't buy into their society's messages or morality. They also didn't try to accommodate it. They stood apart from it and built their whole lives standing apart and depending on each other. Their trust in God was not just theoretical. They lived it! Ultimately their hope and focus were on eternal life. They knew this world, even at its best, could not truly offer fulfillment. That same hope and focus comes to us as the source of our energy today.

Blessings,
Pastor Jon

October Worship Assistants

	October 5	October 12	October 19	October 26
Greeters & Ushers	John and Linda Thompson	Linn Griffio and Morgan Sackett	Helen Crown	Linda Flood
Acolyte	Thomas Bullwinkle	Alyssa Young	Charlotte Stroup	Elijah Young
Altar Care (10:30)	Emma Deibler		Emma Deibler	Emma Deibler
Communion Assistants	Mary Zuege		Greg Zuege	Nancy Pape
Counters	Bill and Katy Stimmel	Bruce and Connie Stevenson	Janice Lockwood and Burdie Gillern	John and Linda Thompson
Coffee Hour				Pie Sunday



Upcoming Bible Readings from Luke for Worship

In October our gospel readings continue to follow chapters 17-18 in Luke's gospel. This continues accounts of Jesus' ministry in his long journey to Jerusalem. Jesus teaches about money, priorities, and faithfulness.

- 10/5 Luke 17:11-19
- 10/12 Luke 17:20-37
- 10/19 Luke 18:1-17
- 10/26 Luke 18:18-30 (Reformation Sunday)



Worship In-person and Zoom

10:30 is in-person

worship in the sanctuary and also by Zoom. The Zoom link for 10:30 is emailed weekly. If you cannot connect to the 10:30 service with a computer you can still hear and participate in the service with any phone.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85898911838?pwd=Ho0hGtKqSjAnRpugabpkQTuY73SbyK.1>

Meeting ID: 858 9891 1838

Passcode: 020293

By phone:

1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

Church Garden Harvest

We harvested 1176 pounds of potatoes from the church garden this year. That's the second year on the low side for us. We usually aim for around 3000 lbs. The dry weather didn't help the situation. The pumpkins also suffered from the weather plus deer damage. Despite the lower results this year, the Victor-Farmington Food Cupboard is glad to have what we produced. Thank you to everyone who helped with harvesting and with tending the garden throughout the summer.



Thank you!

- Thank you to everyone who mowed the lawn in September.
- Thank you to those who gathered to dig the hole for the new cross in the Outdoor Chapel. A special thank you to Greg Welch for serving as the lead carpenter on making the cross.
- Thank you to Nic Stuart and Mary Zuege for organizing the lunch for William Shi's last day as our pianist.
- Thank you to those who helped to raise the new cross in the Outdoor Chapel and for helping to backfill the hole.



Prayer Labyrinth Initial Groundwork

Saturday October 4 we plan to loosen and remove the top layer of soil where the labyrinth will be located. We may also do some work to relocate the gaga ball pit. If you're able to help please be in touch with Tom Urbanic.

Capital Fund Drive

A small capital fund drive is in the works for later this year. The details will be worked out in the next few weeks. The overall intention is to pay for the parking lot light replacement, purchase ceiling fans for the sanctuary, replace the small heat/air conditioning unit in the narthex, and possibly purchase an upgraded lawn tractor with a snowblower.



- Alex Clark, friend of the Shulers. He is a 38 year old father who was recently diagnosed with stomach and intestinal cancer.
- Marilyn Bair who is currently home and is improving slightly in health.
- Patty Anderson, niece of Bruce Stevenson, who has congestive heart failure, declining kidney function, and diabetes.
- Amy Reddy, niece of Bruce Stevenson, who is recovering from back surgery to remove a cyst.

Community Outreach Committee News/Next Projects

- Gift cards for needy families in the Victor school district. The list will be up about Oct. 12th . They are requesting we get \$25.00 gift cards as we have done before. Some suggestions are Target, Wal Mart, Kohls etc. The cards need to be in by Sunday, November 9. There will be more instructions on the posted list.
- Mitten Tree to collect gloves, hats, mittens, and scarves. We will give them to children in the Rochester City School District.



Pie Sunday



Reformation Sunday is October 26 this year. So, as is our tradition we will have pie for coffee hour! There will be pie after both worship services. In order to not go overboard with pies please sign up in the Gathering Area if you will provide a pie. That way we won't have far too many!



September Bible Trivia Answers

1. In the parable of the prodigal son, is it the older son or the younger son who leaves? Answer: Younger (Luke 15:13)
2. When Jesus cleanses ten lepers only one returns to give thanks. What was his nationality? Answer: Samaritan (Luke 17:16)
3. In the parable of the dishonest manager what does he do to win people's favor? Answer: Reduces their debts (Luke 16:6-7)
4. In the parable of the lost sheep the shepherd has lost one out of how many sheep? Answer: 100 (Luke 15:4)

October Bible Trivia Questions

Hint: All of the answers can be found in the Bible readings appointed for worship in October.

1. Why did Zacchaeus climb a tree to see Jesus?
2. What was Zacchaeus' job?
3. What did Jesus disciples do when people brought children for Jesus to bless?
4. Jesus said it was easier for what animal to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God?



September Council Highlights

The church council held its regular monthly meeting on September 8. Major items on the agenda were:

- review results from God's Work Our Hands Sunday and the church garden
- plans for creating the prayer labyrinth
- having a small capital fund drive for paying for the parking lot lights replacement and some other property items
- acquiring a good quality foosball table and other play items for the fellowship hall



October 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 8:30 Men's Breakfast 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:30 Alcoholics Anonymous	2 10:00 Bible study at Lyons Church 10:00-2:30 Monarch Homeschool	3	4
5 <u>17th Sunday After Pentecost</u> 8:30 Service of the Word 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	6 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:00 Boy Scouts	7 1:00 Women's Bible Study 3-7 Violin Lessons	8 8:30 Men's Breakfast 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:30 Alcoholics Anonymous	9 10:00 Bible study at Lyons Church 10:00-2:30 Monarch Homeschool	10 2-7 Cello Lessons	11 Barnes Family Party Zuege Family Party
12 <u>18th Sunday after Pentecost</u> 8:30 Service of the Word 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Service of the Word	13 <u>Columbus Day</u> 3-7 Violin Lessons 6:00 Church Council 7:00 Boy Scouts	14 1:00 Women's Bible Study 3-7 Violin Lessons	15 8:30 Men's Breakfast 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:30 Alcoholics Anonymous	16 10:00 Bible study at Lyons Church 10:00-2:30 Monarch Homeschool	17 2-7 Cello Lessons	18
19 <u>19th Sunday after Pentecost</u> 8:30 Service of the Word 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Holy Communion	20 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:00 Boy Scouts	21 1:00 Women's Bible Study 3-7 Violin Lessons	22 8:30 Men's Breakfast 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:30 Alcoholics Anonymous	23 10:00 Bible study at Lyons Church 10:00-2:30 Monarch Homeschool	24 2-7 Cello Lessons	25 1:00 Helen Thiel Funeral
26 <u>Reformation Sunday</u> 8:30 Holy Communion 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Holy Communion	27 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:00 Boy Scouts	28 <u>Simon and Jude, Apostles</u> 1:00 Women's Bible Study 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:00 Property Committee	29 8:30 Men's Breakfast 3-7 Violin Lessons 7:30 Alcoholics Anonymous	30 10:00 Bible study at Lyons Church 10:00-2:30 Monarch Homeschool	31 <u>All Hallows Eve Reformation Day</u> 2-7 Cello Lessons	



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

*We are a community of faith
committed to living and sharing the love of God.*

St. John's Lutheran Church

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October Newsletter

10/4 Prayer Labyrinth Prework

10/26 Pie Sunday