



September, 2026

QUARTERLY UPDATE

God is doing some powerful things in each of us, and we know this by the steps of faith people are taking to give sacrificially to the FORWARD initiative. We are excited for all God has done and will continue to do through us.





FORWARD Vision

FORWARD is a two-year journey of faith and generosity. Over the next two years, we'll renew our existing facility, grow as disciples of Jesus, and continue God's mission as we share the gospel to our community.

Primary goal - 100% Participation, We're in this Together!

Secondary goal - \$6 Million, Over Two Years

Renew Our Campus

Planned improvements include replacing the school's original windows, adding air conditioning, updating classroom lighting and ceiling fans, renovating school bathrooms, and improving church and school offices for greater security and a more welcoming environment. These improvements are more than building projects—they are an investment in creating a safe, welcoming, and effective environment for future generations to learn about and follow Jesus.

Grow As Disciples

We are strengthening discipleship and helping people grow in their faith. The goal is to create a clear discipleship pathway that helps people become more connected to the congregation and grow from new believers into committed followers of Jesus. We also want to equip families to live out and share their faith in everyday life, while creating new opportunities through men's and women's groups and retreats. The goal is to form lifelong disciples and Christian leaders whose faith is lived out at home, at work, in the community, and throughout the congregation.

Strengthen Our Ministries

We are continuing and strengthening the faithful ministry of St. John. It recognizes the generations who built, served, and generously supported the church and school, and challenges the current generation to carry that legacy forward. Funding will help ensure that the church and school remain vibrant and equipped to meet the needs of the congregation and community. This supports preaching and teaching God's Word, children's Scripture and hymn memorization, mission opportunities, marriage counseling, and many other ways St. John serves people. We are not simply maintaining what previous generations gave us—we are continuing the mission of Jesus and carrying that legacy forward to future generations.

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)

GENEROSITY UPDATE



TOTAL PLEDGED & ANTICIPATED GIFTS
\$5,352,156.60

Forward giving season from June 1, 2026-June 30, 2028

TOTAL RECEIVED GIFTS AS OF AUG. 31, 2026
\$1,400,420.10

Your support makes a difference, and we are extremely grateful! No matter where you are on your generosity journey, have you considered online giving? Giving online is simple, secure, and impactful! With our online giving platform, you can easily make one-time or recurring donations, providing St. John with a steady, reliable source of support. This method also reduces administrative costs and helps us allocate more resources directly to ministry work, making a greater difference together. Join us in this convenient way to give and strengthen our mission.



GIVE NOW

Every dollar given fuels our ongoing ministry, creates refreshed spaces, and is an investment in making life-long disciples. Quarterly Giving statements to be sent (via email) soon.

RECENT STEPS FORWARD

- May 2026

Commitment Weekend was on May 9-11. After family meetings, discussions, and prayer, we returned our Commitment Cards. We give thanks for every family that has taken a bold step in faith and has committed to our FORWARD Initiative.

- June 2026

Celebration Weekend was on June 6-8. This weekend marked the beginning of our two year FORWARD giving season. We encouraged the congregation to bring their first and best offering. We praise God for the largest offering in SJL's history - 3x more than our weekly average of gifts.

- June & July 2026

We created a *New Member Course* and a *Next Steps Guide* to better serve all who are new at St. John Lutheran. We'll use these resources (for the first time) in our September New Member Welcome Event. We're creating a pathway for discipleship and providing connections among the congregation.

Our campus was tested for Asbestos determining which parts of our building will need to be abated during the upcoming renovation. The analysis/testing was completed by NorthStar Environmental Testing.

Jos. Schmitt met with local HVAC contractors (Aldag/Honold, Kleeman and Schaus) for an onsite visit, to review our campus, and to provide more accurate quotes and recommendations for how they would approach the air conditioning installation.

- August & September 2026

Jos. Schmitt Construction is reviewing plans for renewing our campus - seeking to finalize plans for updating the Office and School Bathrooms.

SJL has received HVAC proposals from Aldag/Honold, Kleeman and Schaus. The Board of Trustees and the Board of Directors will meet soon to review these proposals and set a direction for the HVAC project.

- Follow every step of our FORWARD journey at www.sjlplymouth.com/forward
- **Save the Date for the Weekend of December 5-7, 2026**
- Once a quarter during the weekend services, we will have a FORWARD Weekend. We'll share stories, remember our goals, and provide upcoming timelines for renewing our campus.



LIFELONG LEARNING



162nd

School year celebrated at SJL

191

Students enrolled in
3K-8th grade

GROWING AS DISCIPLES

Sunday morning education opportunities begin again on Sunday, September 13 from 9:30am-10:15am (between church services). There is something for everyone at SJL!

- SJL Tots (children up to preschool-age with at least 1 parent) - Room 119
- Kindergarten/1st grade - Room 103
- 2nd/3rd grade - Room 105
- 4th/5th grade - Room 203
- Middle school Bible study (6th - 8th grade) - Conference Room (next to cafeteria)
- High School Bible study (9th-12th grade) - Youth Room
- Special Needs Bible study - Library
- Adult Bible study - Cafeteria

Be sure to check out the new, refreshed kids' activity bags in church!

TEACHING THE FAITH AT HOME

Grow as a Disciple Class for Parents

Sundays, October 18, October 25, and November 1

9:30-10:15 AM | School Classroom, 8th Grade

Led by Pastor Thompson

Raising a family is a wonderful gift—but amid busy schedules, school activities, work, and everyday responsibilities, it can be difficult to make time for the things that matter most. How can parents keep Christ at the center of family life and help their children grow in faith?

We will explore practical and encouraging ways to talk about Jesus, pray together, build faithful habits, and make the Christian faith part of everyday life at home. You do not need to have everything figured out. Come connect with other parents, be encouraged, and discover simple ways your family can grow together as disciples of Jesus.

WOMEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

Saturday, October 31 | 8:00–10:00 AM

SJL Fellowship Hall

Guest Speaker: Dr. Jenna Roeske

Registration Fee: \$15

RSVP: sjplymouth.com/events

Women of all ages are invited to begin the morning with fellowship, encouragement, and prayer. Enjoy breakfast together, connect with other women, and be encouraged by a special presentation from Dr. Jenna Roeske. Invite a friend and join us for a meaningful morning of faith, friendship, and the power of prayer.

MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

Saturday February 10, 2027

SJL Fellowship Hall

8:00-10:00 AM

Speaker = Dr. Brad Alles, professor at CUW

Topic = The ABC's of Defending Your Faith

Brad Alles makes understanding the Bible easy, specializing in the topics of apologetics (defending the faith), worldviews, and eschatology (the end times). He defends the Word and explains the world from start to finish.

FALL 2026 SMALL GROUPS

Small Group Study of Zephaniah and Haggai

Topic: Journeying Forward, From Judgment to Renewal

Sign Up: Irooker@sjlplymouth.com

We need connections and life together. God will form us into His disciples as we gather around His Word, share meals, pray, and encourage one another.

This fall, we will explore the Old Testament books of Zephaniah and Haggai. Their messages lead us to see God's gracious work of restoration, renewal, and hope. Groups will gather in homes and other welcoming spaces for fellowship, food, prayer, and time in God's Word. Whether you have participated in many Bible studies or are joining one for the first time, there is a place for you.

FALL SERMON SERIES

Building For Eternity: Lessons From The Life Of Abraham

This fall, we will journey with Abraham and discover what it means to trust God when the path is unclear, persevere when His timing seems slow, and move forward with confidence in His promises. As we follow Abraham's journey, we will be reminded that the God who guided him is the same God who leads us today through faith in Jesus Christ. Remember to bring your Bible to Church! Take notes, underline, and study God's Word in community!

OKTOBERFEST AUCTION



We Can't Wait to See You Again this Year!

Join us for this year's St. John Lutheran Church & School Oktoberfest Themed Auction - an evening of fun, fellowship, and supporting Christian education! Whether you joined us last year or are planning to attend for the first time, we can't wait to welcome you! This exciting evening will feature a traditional German feast, festive music, joyful fellowship, and a mix of silent and live auction items. Doors open and Silent Auction will begin at 4:30pm, Dinner at 5:30pm, and Live Auction at 8:00pm. Purchase your tickets today.



Your Donations Make a Difference!

Help make our upcoming Oktoberfest Auction a success! We are currently seeking donated items to be auctioned off such as gift cards, unique/handmade items, themed baskets, services, experiences, and more. Every contribution, big or small, makes a meaningful impact at SJL! Please bring donated items to the office by September 25th.



WORDS FROM OUR PASTOR

Thank You.

Thank you for the many ways you support the mission of St. John. Through your prayers, encouragement, service, and generosity, children are learning about Jesus, families are growing in faith, and the good news of Jesus is being shared from one generation to the next. You are an important part of this mission and your faithful participation matters.

As Jesus continues to lead us forward, I invite you to help in four important ways:

- **Pray for us.** Pray for our students, families, teachers, staff, and congregation. Ask God to bless our ministry and guide every step we take.
- **Tell our story.** Share with others how faith is being formed and lives are being changed at St. John. Your personal invitation may open the door for someone to encounter Jesus.
- **Send your students to our Christian school.** Consider St. John Lutheran School for the children in your family, and encourage other families to discover the blessing of Christ-centered education.
- **Share your resources.** Every gift - large or small - helps us teach the faith, care for families, and carry the gospel forward.

God is guiding our steps,

+ Pastor John Schultz

P.S. I am grateful to be your pastor. Please know that you are valued, your participation matters, and your prayers and generosity are making an eternal difference.