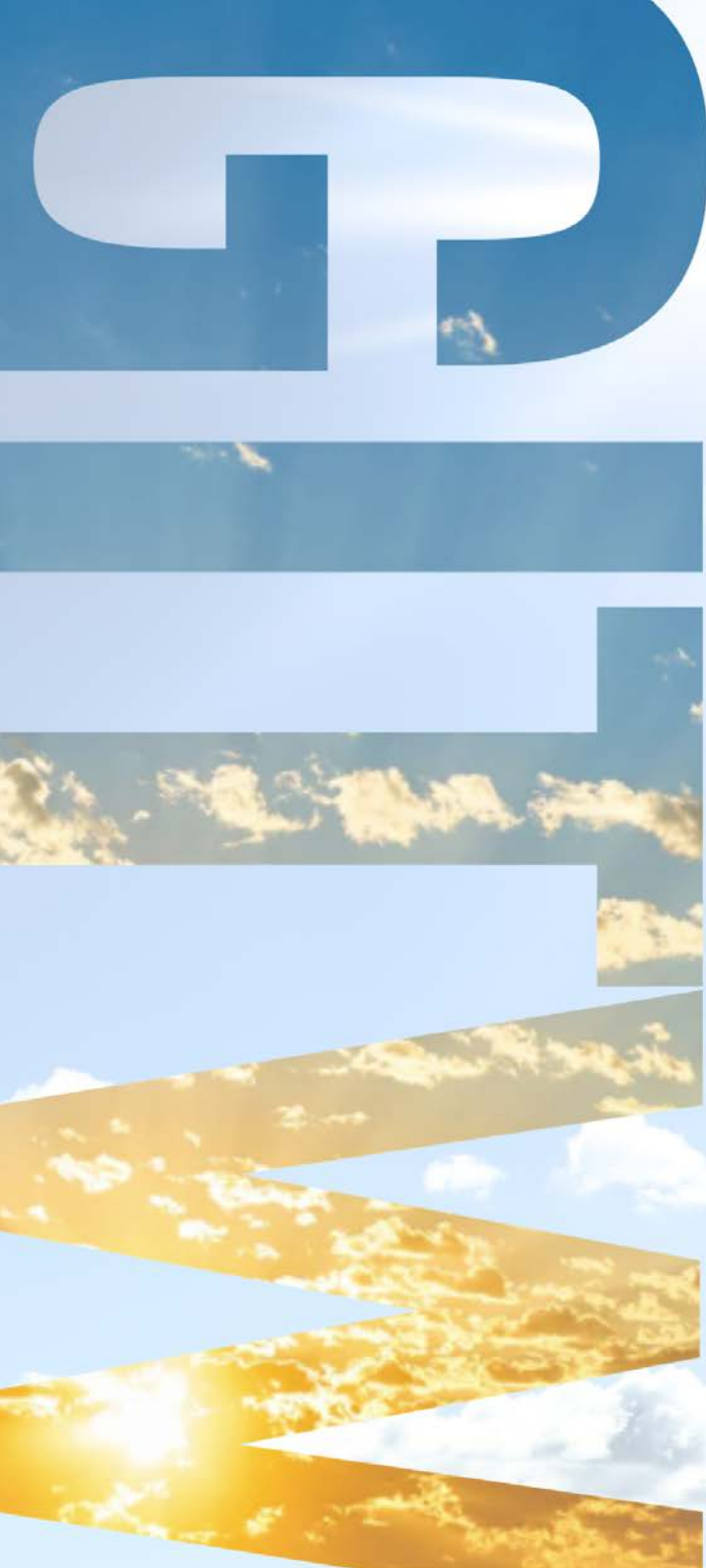




get into
**THE
WORD**

september
—
december
2026

Get Into The Word!

Fall 2026 Schedule

As we begin a new year, it brings a natural opportunity for a restart - a refocusing on what really matters in defining who we are, and what we are becoming. What could be better than seeking the Lord through His Word for that new beginning?

You are invited to take a moment and discover what follows in this GET INTO THE WORD guide! We seek to make studying and experiencing God's life-renewing presence through His Word as accessible as possible! From children to seniors, men and women, Bible basics to more in-depth studies, large or small groups, on and off campus, there truly is something for everyone no matter your age, life circumstance or schedule! Many classes and groups start in the coming days and weeks.

If you feel called to lead a class, group, or seminar, please contact Pastor Tyler Cronkright (PastorTyler@stjohnrochester.org) to discuss your ideas!



ONE-DAY EVENTS



GRIEFSHARE Loss of Spouse Session

Saturday, September 19 from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Church Library

Leaders: Terry Priestley

GriefShare is hosting a one-time session devoted to those who have lost a spouse. It is always hard to lose someone you love, and the loss of a spouse is not only losing your loved one, but your lifestyle as well. Whether you are recently widowed, or it has been several years, you are invited to join us on Saturday, September 19 from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM in the Church Library. For planning purposes, please email Deaconess Terry Priestley at tpriestley@stjohnrochester.org and register on the website <https://find.griefshare.org/events/299483>.

ST. JOHN MEN'S BIBLE BREAKFAST

Saturday, September 19 at 8:00 AM

Leaders: Chance Childers

Gentlemen! Save the date for the fall Men's breakfast event! We will be joined by Chance Childers, Director of Outreach and Athletics at Christ the King Lutheran Church and School in Southgate, Michigan. He is also a former football coach at Concordia University in Ann Arbor. He will be sharing his story, what he has learned along the way, and offering encouragement to us as we walk with Christ. Don't miss it! Watch for an RSVP in the coming weeks. See you then!



DONAVON RILEY: FROM DARKNESS TO GRACE

Saturday, November 21, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

On November 21, St. John Lutheran Church & School invites you to a special event featuring Rev. Donavon Riley as he addresses the deeply personal challenges of mental health and addiction. Drawing from nearly two years of parish ministry as well as his own powerful journey as a former addict and convert from atheism, Rev. Riley brings a raw, unflinching perspective to these modern struggles.

Grounded in a rich Lutheran theology of grace, his message and gift for storytelling moves beyond self-made solutions to shine a light on the true rest, healing, and hope found in Christ alone.

Whether you are personally struggling, supporting a loved one, or seeking to care for your community, come be encouraged by the daily reality that we do not have to carry our heaviest burdens alone. Join us for an inspiring, honest conversation on moving from shame, guilt, or heartache to the promises of the Gospel. RSVP by November 7 at <https://www.stjohnrochester.org/event/darknesstograce>.

Registration for our St. John family is open now. Get your tickets before registration opens to the public on October 4. We expect this event to sell out so act quickly!

LADIES ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT

Friday, December 4

Women of St. John! Please save the date for our annual Advent/Christmas evening of fellowship, prayer, worship, and meditation. Speaker and other details will be shared as the date gets closer, but for now put this date on your calendar! Don't miss out on this beautiful evening.

GALENTINE EVENT

Saturday, February 13

Save the date for this women's event. More information to come!

ONLINE

READ THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

Daily | Your Bible

Leaders: Chad Bird and Erick Sorensen (1517.org)

We invite you into a daily Bible reading challenge with us to read the entire Bible in 2026! Each day, there will be readings and a short video from Chad Bird (Hebrew Scholar from 1517.org) exploring different nuances and details that we might have missed in our reading. If you've done this before with 1517, you know that this is an incredible and engaging way to dive deep into the Scriptures. Visit <https://www.1517.org/oneyear> or scan the QR code to get signed up and have the readings and videos delivered to your inbox every day! If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out Pastor Tyler at pastortyler@stjohnrochester.org.



SUFFERING SERVANTS PODCAST

Weekly (almost) | Podcasting Apps

Leaders; Pastor Tyler and Trevor Noonan

Did you know that Pastor Tyler and Trevor, in partnership with the Michigan District, host a podcast? Christianity has a lot of unspoken suffering and challenges. Suffering Servants is their way of bringing these every day struggles into the modern context by reading books, articles, and conversing about the ever changing culture and the Church's response to such change. They also have conversations with other "suffering servants" about their sufferings in life and what God has revealed to them through those sufferings.



Scan the QR Code above to be taken to our website where you can listen to each episode, or subscribe on your favorite podcast app, like Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Overcast, etc. <https://sufferingservants.buzzsprout.com/>

If there is a topic that you would like to have addressed on the show, please contact Pastor Tyler at pastortyler@stjohnrochester.org.

LIFEGROUPS

VARIOUS SMALL GROUP GATHERINGS IN HOMES STUDYING AN ABUNDANCE OF DIFFERENT TOPICS

*If you'd like information about starting your own LIFEGROUP,
reach out to Pastor Tyler at PastorTyler@stjohnrochester.org.*

MOM'S MORNING PRAYER

Wednesdays at 8:40 AM, beginning September 2 | Church Nursery

Moms (and Grandmas) are invited for a short time of prayer over our school, each class and grade, and the staff at St. John. This is a short, intentional time of prayer lifting up the school and students. This takes place in the church nursery so you can attend with younger children. Each week we will end in time for parents to be able to attend Wednesday's school chapel service. For more information please contact Jennie Eller at jeller@stjohnrochester.org.

THE CHOSEN - WOMEN OF FAITH

2nd & 4th Wednesdays at 7:00 PM, starting September 9 | Off-site in a member's home

Leader: Shannon Bradley

Beginning September 9, this group is for women who want to form lasting friendships, nurture growth in faith, support one another in and out of church as we strengthen our relationship with Jesus. Through video and discussion-based studies, we grow together in faith, encourage & pray one another, and find meaningful ways to live out and share the love of Christ through fellowship and service. This fall we will begin exploring The Chosen, Season 2. For more information contact Shannon Bradley at sibradley1208@gmail.com.

WOMEN OF FAITH - PRAYER AND SERVICE

Fridays at 9:00 AM, beginning September 11 | Helmer House

Leader: Beth Helmer

You're invited to join Women in Faith as we gather around God's Word together in study, discussion, sharing life's joys and sorrows, fellowship, prayer and service. Women of all ages are welcome. No homework, and dropping in is fine when your schedule allows. If you have any questions, contact Beth Helmer at helmerdb25@comcast.net.

242 LIFEGROUP - ESSENMACHER

Every other Tuesday at 6:30 PM | Varying locations

Leader: Erika Essenmacher

A great opportunity to grow in the Word together, tackling behind the scenes of sermon prep, content, and digging deeper into the texts from Sunday! This group is intended for younger people, newly married, or new to the church, especially if you just went through the ONE Class. If you are interested or desire to join us, please reach out to Erika Essenmacher at eschleis2@gmail.com.

YOUNG ADULT GROUP INTEREST

St. John is gathering interest in starting a young adult social group. This group will be for people in their 20's to 30's that are looking to build a community with others that share a similar faith in Christ. We hope to plan faith-based activities and social events to get to know each other better!

If you are interested in joining this group please fill out the survey by scanning this QR code.



ROCHESTER MILLS BREWERY MEN'S LIFEGROUP

2nd Wednesday/Month at 7:00 PM | Rochester Mills Brewery

Leaders: Ed Potoczak, Tim Noonan, Eric Pieper, Gary Hedlund

RMB LIFEgroup is an informal gathering for men to connect for great conversation about faith, life, and following Jesus...along with a cold brew if you so desire. Take the time to be with others for helpful insights, good laughter, and an occasional outreach serve project. Before you know it, God shows up in ways you didn't see coming. Bring a friend and tell the restaurant host you looking for the St. John group. We are usually found in the middle at the high-top tables. For more information contact Ed Potoczak at edpotoczak@oakstonegroup.com.

OWLS - OLDER WISER LUTHERANS IN SERVICE

2nd or 3rd Friday/Month | Noon | Concordia Hall

Leader: Roger Guetzkow

OWLS is a senior group "committed through Christian fellowship to help the young at heart experience Christ's love". OWLS has no age requirements and extends an invitation to all who enjoy a timely devotion, food, fellowship, and interesting presentations. Luncheon meetings are on the second or third Friday of the month (September - June) at noon in lower-level Concordia Hall. Please check the weekly Connection for the current month's planned menu and presentation. Our OWLS volunteer Ministry Team also organizes additional activities such as bus trips to the Detroit Institute of Arts, Meadow Brook Theatre performances, outreach service projects, and support for St. John's ministries including "Love for Others" and "Senior to Senior" Day. For more information, contact Roger Guetzkow at 248-622-1606 or e-mail rjguetzkow@comcast.net.

SUPPORT

GRIEF SHARE

Saturdays at 10:00 AM, starting October 10 | Church Library

Leader: Deaconess Terry Priestley

Grief Share is a special weekly seminary and support group offering comfort, answers, and hope. Our group is designed to help you rebuild your life after losing a loved one. It is led by caring people who have experienced grief and want to help you through the days ahead. Our next session will begin on Saturday, October 10 and will end on January 9. For more information please contact Terry Priestley at tpriestley@stjohnrochester.org.

HEALING HEARTS SUPPORT GROUP

First Monday/Month at 7:00 PM, beginning September 14 | Church Library

Leader: Suzanne Preuss

Healing Hearts is a support group for those who have or are experiencing heartbreak in their marriage or have gone through an unwanted divorce. This can be a lonely and isolating time and we are here to listen and encourage. God has a plan for your life, and you can enjoy His plan and His blessings the most when you are the best version of yourself. This group is a safe place to share your hurts and disappointments, and it is also a place for encouragement to heal and grow. Healing Hearts meets the first Monday of the month, beginning September 14. For more information please contact Suzanne Preuss at suzannep1227@gmail.com.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sundays, beginning September 20 | 9:30 - 10:30 AM | Preschool Wing

Leaders: Various

Sunday School is offered weekly and meets at 9:30 AM in the preschool classrooms of our building. All children ages 4 through 6th grade are welcome. Parents and guardians check children in at the welcome desk, located in the preschool hallway. Check-in is required for safety and security purposes. After check-in, preschoolers and kindergartners go to their classrooms to hear about Jesus through song and lesson time. 1st - 6th grade students meet in the Multipurpose Room for an opening devotion, followed by grade-divided classroom time for teaching, small group discussion, crafts, and other activities depending on the week. There are no attendance requirements. We look forward to seeing your children and sharing with them the love of Jesus! For more information, please contact the Pastoral Office at church@stjohnrochester.org.

3rd GRADE BIBLE BLESSING

Tuesday, September 1 | 6:30 PM

Leaders: Pastor Tyler

All 3rd graders from our church, school and community are invited for a fun and engaging night where they will receive an age-appropriate Bible and learn how to use it! Join Pastor Tyler and our 3rd grade teachers as we will discuss how scripture works, including teaching time with the parent(s) and student, and fun Bible games. This event is free and does not require a sign-up. For more information, please contact our Pastoral Office at [248-402-8020](tel:248-402-8020).

YOUTH CONFIRMATION CLASSES (students not enrolled at St. John)

**6 Saturdays | September 26, November 7, January 16,
February 20, April 10, May 22 | 9:00 - 11:00 AM | Luther Hall**

Leaders: Pastors Marc, Steve, and Tyler

Our 7th and 8th grade students attending public school or other schools who are seeking to be Confirmed are required to attend and participate with their parents in six Saturday Confirmation instruction sessions. These sessions are an opportunity for our pastors to get to know both the students and their parents as we engage with God's Word. Small group discussion and specific parental involvement at home are key parts of the class. Any 7th and 8th grade student that does not attend St. John Lutheran School is welcome!



For more information, contact Pastor Tyler at pastortyler@stjohnrochester.org. To register, visit https://www.stjohnrochester.org/event/26-27_confirmation or scan the QR code above.

YOUTH CONFIRMATION CLASSES (students enrolled at St. John)

7th and 8th graders enrolled at St. John Lutheran School receive Confirmation education in religion classes during school hours. Detailed Confirmation information was emailed to these families on August 24. If you missed this communication and still need to register, please visit https://www.stjohnrochester.org/26-27_sjr_confirmation or scan this QR code.



MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY | 6th - 8th grade

Sundays | 12:30 - 2:30 PM | Gym

Leader: Melissa Hammett

Middle School Youth is a place where students can come and feel safe and at home. It is also a place for students to bring their friends to share Jesus. Our activities are for students in 6th-8th grade, and all are welcome! Our meetings are on Sundays from 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM. For more information, please contact our Interim Director of Middle School Youth, Melissa Hammett at 248-402-8008 or mhammett@stjohnrochester.org.

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY GROUP | 9th - 12th grade

Sundays | 6:00 - 8:00 PM | Youth Room

Leader: Melissa Hammett

High School is a defining part of a person's life. Students begin to really settle into their beliefs about the world, God, their purpose, etc. During this influential time, we want students to be surrounded by people who know and love Jesus. We also give them the skills and the support groups they need to make wise decisions at this critical time in their lives. All are welcome to join in the fun and fellowship! For more information, please contact Melissa Hammett at 248-402-8008 or mhammett@stjohnrochester.org.

ALL ADULTS

THE ONE CLASS | NEW MEMBER CLASS

Mondays beginning September 21 | 7:00 - 8:30 PM | Luther Hall

Leaders: Pastors Marc, Steve and Tyler

Are you ready to make St. John Lutheran Church & School your home? Have you or someone you know been looking for an opportunity to learn or rediscover what real faith in Jesus is all about? Join us in a relaxed and welcoming environment where your questions can be answered.

This is a great class for anyone new to St. John or returning after being away for some time, or for those who have been worshiping with us as a guest and feel led to make St. John their church home. Whether transferring from another church or brand new to the Christian faith, the ONE Class is for you... and now is the time to enroll!

Come join Pastors Marc, Steve, and Tyler on this engaging and interactive eight-week journey through God's Word! This is an opportunity to discover the Christian Lutheran faith and understand how our church and school mission and vision are rooted in its teachings. This is also a great opportunity to meet new friends and share your faith journey with others!

This class meets Monday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 PM, beginning on September 21. The last day to register for this class is September 28. Childcare is available for those who need it! Upon completion of the class, participants are welcomed to prayerfully consider official membership as part of the St. John family.

Register at <https://www.stjohnrochester.org/event/one-class> or scan the QR above.

If you have any questions, please contact the Ministry Engagement Coordinator, Deana Stevens at 248-402-8004 or dstevens@stjohnrochester.org.



THE PASTOR'S STUDY: THE EARLY CHURCH

Sundays at 9:30 AM | Concordia Hall

Leaders: Pastor Tyler, Pastor Marc, Pastor Steve

Join our Pastors on Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM in Concordia Hall, beginning on Sunday September 13. Discover how a small, persecuted group transformed into the world's largest religion. Uncover the pivotal controversies, influential figures, and the unyielding faith that propelled the early Christian church forward. This study from 1517 Academy offers a deep dive into the early church's life, exploring the foundational moments and teachings that influence Christianity today. From worship practices to the courage of martyrs, this course connects the past with the present in an engaging and insightful manner. When we finish this course, we will transition into a similar series discussion the history of Christianity in America. We can't wait to see you! If you have questions please contact Pastor Tyler at pastortyler@stjohnrochester.org.

PSALM 143 STUDY

Thursdays at 7:00 PM, beginning September 17 | Luther Hall

Leader: Melissa Auchter

Are you feeling overwhelmed, stuck in a rut, or walking through a season of uncertainty? Join us for a powerful six-week Bible study, "From Darkness to Level Ground: A Journey Through Psalm 143." Together, we will dive deep into King David's raw, honest cries to God and discover how he moved from deep emotional despair to absolute, unshakable trust. In the first week there will be a quick introduction of the study and a brief review of Psalm 143:1-7. In the second week we will start an intentional, verse-by-verse breakdown of Psalm 143:8-12. By focusing on just one verse each week, we will discover how to experience daily morning mercy, hide in God's safety, and rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us onto level ground. Everybody is welcome and no Bible study experience is required. Bring yourself, a pen, a notebook, and your Bible. Please contact Melissa Auchter at msauchter@gmail.com to register so we can get an accurate count of handouts needed.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY

Thursdays, 1:00 - 3:00 PM | Mary Martha Room

Leader: Peter Harris

Attendees of this class are typically immigrants or visitors to the United States - including the class leader Peter, however everyone is welcome. The aim of this Bible class is multifaceted. Together we use the Bible to learn: the English language, the history of Israel, how this led to Christianity, how Christianity became the foundation of Western civilization, especially in the United States, and how the Bible shows that women are as equally important as men (this is very important to those who come from other religious and cultural backgrounds which are often male dominated.) We learn that the Bible is as meaningful today as it always has been, and most importantly, to encourage all to trust God and to take joy from the Word. For more information, please contact Peter Harris at (248) 651-7532 or harris1964@wowway.com.

ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

Tuesdays at 1:00 PM, beginning August 25 | Mary Martha Room

Leader: Audrey Kiehl

Did you know that for more than 20 years, St. John has been home to an Adult ESL (English as a Second Language) group? On Tuesdays (1:00 PM - 3:00 PM) people from all around the world gather for conversation, learning, and friendship. Our wonderful volunteers from St. John offer warm smiles and encouragement as the group practices their English and builds connections. These gatherings are open to everyone in the community, and no sign-up is needed—just come and join the conversation! Please share our group with any English Language Learners you know! We also love adding more volunteers to support our ESL group. We begin meeting again on August 25th! If you are interested in volunteering or have questions, please contact Audrey Kiehl at 248-396-2220 or Audrey.kiehl@hotmail.com.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY:

THE BIBLE ON TRIAL - BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT - first 4 weeks

Wednesdays at 6:00 PM, starting September 9 | Concordia Hall

Leader: Pete Grund

The world's most widely circulated book is also one of its most highly debated. Check out how the Bible has withstood intense scrutiny from critics and cynics alike. You'll come away with a fresh appreciation of the Bible as an historical document and the Word of God. Class led by Pete Grund. For more information contact Bob Danielson at

cornell_eng@hotmail.com (NOTE: We will be selecting another topic when this series ends.)

WOMEN

LADIES BIBLE STUDY - THE NAMES OF GOD

Wednesdays at 1:00 PM, beginning September 9 | Concordia Hall

Leaders: Jennie Eller

From the opening chapters of Genesis through the final verses of Revelation, God is known by many names; names that reveal who He is, what He does, and how He relates to His children. He is El-Roi, "the God who sees me." He is Jesus, "the Lord is salvation." He is the Spirit, your Comforter and Counselor. And you? You have a name, too. You are His beloved child, a Christian, one who bears His name. In this 8-session Bible study for women, various teachers will walk us through the pages of Scripture. Together, we'll examine names for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and you'll discover the impact each of God's names has on your relationship with Him. Each name you encounter will inspire you to worship God for who He is and challenge you to consider how your life can be transformed in light of His character. Join us on Wednesday's at 1:00pm! For more details regarding purchasing study materials (scholarships available), please contact Jennie Eller at jeller@stjohnrochester.org.

ST. JOHN'S QUILTERS FOR WORLD RELIEF

2nd and 4th Mondays/Month at 9:00 AM | Room 128

Leader: Susan Walker

Do you enjoy working with the hands God gave you? Our group pieces together fabrics and colors to create quilts that travel the world to bring warmth and comfort to families in need. No sewing skills required. If you can thread a needle, tie a knot, or tell a good story, that's all that is needed. We would love for you to join us as we create and share the things of God. For more information, please contact Susan Walker at susanwalker749@yahoo.com.

ROOTED TOGETHER: MOMS GROWING IN FAITH

Fridays at 2:00 PM, beginning September 11 | Luther Hall

This is a welcoming community for moms seeking deeper roots in Christ and stronger connections with one another. Pastor Tyler will be sharing Scripture, prayer, and honest conversation around the Scriptures as we grow together in faith while navigating the joys and challenges of motherhood. This fall we will begin our journey through the book of Luke! Whether you're new to faith or have walked with Jesus for years, you're invited to come, be encouraged, and grow alongside other moms. Please join us on Fridays of each month at 2:00 PM in Luther Hall before pick-up! If you have any questions, please reach out to Beth Lowell at ealowell1@gmail.com or Kim Miehlke at kpaselk@gmail.com.

ST. JOHN MOMCO

2nd & 4th Thursdays/Month at 9:00 AM, starting September 10 | Luther Hall

Leaders: Ashley Baumann, Mady DeMiro

Are you a mom of a newborn, toddler, or preschooler and looking for a supportive group of women going through what you are? At St. John MomCo (formerly MOPS) we share Jesus with moms of young children (pregnancy-Kindergarten) and come together to support one another through our motherhood journeys. We meet at St. John on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM, from September through May. Our meetings include childcare drop-off in age-based rooms with loving care-takers, videos, speakers on topics important to motherhood, activities to promote community, and a breakfast with coffee setup! We look forward to having you join us in this upcoming season! For more information, please contact Ashley Baumann or Mady DeMiro at stjohnmomco@gmail.com.

LINGERING IN HIS WORD

Thursdays at 1:00 PM, beginning October 8 | Church Library

Leader: Candi Schwark

Join us Thursdays, October 8 - November 5 at 1:00 PM for a Visual Faith Ministry (VFM) Bible Study series: "Tapestry, Women in the Gospels!" This study is written by many different voices from our VFM community, with the connecting thread being nine Biblical women who were influenced by, associated with, or played an important part in Jesus' story. Our time together will include video teaching time, discussion, and VFM practices put to use. The 68-page Tapestry book, is \$17, plus shipping and tax and should be ordered as soon as possible. There are 2 other book options. Contact Candi Schwark, candice@mac.com, for book options, and to sign up.

MEN

DADS' BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays at 6:00 AM | Luther Hall

Leaders: Pastor Tyler

This study is intended for dads of all ages and walks of faith as we grow in God's Word together, learn what it means to lead our families well and receive encouragement in the highest calling God has for men. Beginning on September 9, we will start our walk through the history of Israel. The books 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings have so much to say to us about history and foretelling the coming of the ultimate King, Jesus. We will also be celebrating the Lord's Supper each week as we pray for strength to lead and be transformed into the men God has called us to be. For more information, please contact Pastor Tyler at pastortyler@stjohnrochester.org.

THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES

1st & 3rd Mondays at 9:00 AM -10:30 AM | Church Library

Leader: Gil McDonald

This men's group is taking a look at the Old Testament, doing a deep-guided study and discussion on the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament. Join us on the first and third Mondays for discussion, laughter, prayer, and of course, snacks! For more information please contact Pastor Mac at g47mcd@hotmail.com.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY - BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR FORMULA OF CONCORD TOPICS

1st & 3rd Thursdays/Month | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Church Library

Leader: John Fedototszkin

Beginning September 3, this group takes a look at various articles from Concordia Publishing House's magazine, The Lutheran Witness. Through discussion and Biblical discovery, this group will explore how we are to interpret our ever-changing world through a Christian perspective with a God who does not change. The coffee is hot and the conversation is engaging, so please join us on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month! For more information, please contact John Fedototszkin at (248) 375-0832 or sherryjohnf@aol.com.

BIBLES AND BASKETBALL

Saturdays, 8:00-10:00 AM, beginning October 3 | Gymnasium

Leader: Eric Garland

Here is an opportunity to get into God's Word, play some basketball, and promote the ideals of Christian brotherhood. This group of men meets almost every Saturday morning beginning October 3. This is open to men of all ages and all ability levels - the more the merrier! Whether you come regularly or occasionally, all are welcome. For more information, please contact Eric Garland at egarlan10@gmail.com.

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