

**St. John's Lutheran School
Nodine, Minnesota**

**Celebrating 50 Years of
Teaching God's Children
About God's World
In Light of God's Word**

Sunday, April 3, 2022

From Generation to Generation Psalm 78:5-7

*"So the next generation would know them . . .
and they in turn would tell their children."*



1971



2021



Hanging the first school sign – 1971



Maynard Brostrom & Lester Unnasch

**John Papenfuss and Peter Unnasch (age 8) held the ladder
with a rope from the doorway.**



First Kindergarten Class – 1971

Mrs. Mueller

Barry Zenke, Robie Boldt, Jill Papenfuss, Paul Gady



First 8th Grade Graduating Class from St. John's School

May 31, 1972

**Wayne Radsek, Larry Radsek, Steve Bartz,
Mary Unnasch, Rojean Heyer**



March 25, 2012 - Pastors and Wives – St. John's School 40th Anniversary

Back Row:

Rev. Galen & Sue Riediger; Rev. Peter Unnasch; Rev. Dennis & Allison Harbach; Rev. Jim Nelson

Front Row:

Rev. Anthony & Glenda Straseske; Rev. Frederick & Lois Mueller; Rev. Erling & Beverly Carmichael



50th Anniversary Celebration – April 3, 2022

Seated: Mrs. Lois Mueller, Mr. David Nell, Mrs. Judy Free Winsky, Mrs. Esther List Heyer

Middle: Mrs. Kathy Miller, Mrs. Laura Schaper, Mrs. Sue Riediger, Mrs. Julie Zeamer Beach,
Mrs. Nickie Buege, Mrs. Jenny Green Zenke, Mrs. Heidi Kutz

Back: Mr. Brad Hengeveld, Mr. Mark Kutz, Mr. Tom Zuberbier, Mr. Mike Mittelstadt
Mr. David Zabel

Christian Education in Nodine, Minnesota

From the very beginning, when Pastor Schmidt of South Ridge began services in Nodine in 1871, Christian education was provided for the young. Sometimes the instruction was done in the Pastor's home during the winter months. The Gemeinde Schule (Church School) was built in 1894 next to the church for instruction during the summer months. After Pastor Seiger's arrival in 1889, classes were conducted in the Gemeinde Schule only during the winter months. Children of confirmation age discontinued attending the public school so that they could receive their religious instruction. In 1918, the Church School was ended. From that time, only confirmation classes were held in the Church School. The children were instructed three mornings a week in the summer months over a two-year period.

When the changeover came from the German language to English language, two instruction classes were conducted, one in each language. When it came time for confirmation, the German class was confirmed on Palm Sunday and the English class in the fall. After 1921, the end came for instruction in the German language. Catechism classes were held in the Gemeinde Schule until 1951, after which they were conducted on Saturday mornings at church during the school year for a period of two years.

Since the Christian Day School was established in 1971, those of confirmation age attending the school received their instruction during the school day. Those who attend public school receive confirmation instruction on Wednesday evenings during the school year.

In the spring of 1971, under the able guidance of Pastor Frederick Mueller, our congregation decided to purchase the available two-room Nodine Public School. Pastor Mueller's background and experience helped our congregation establish St. John's Lutheran School.

School opened in the fall of 1971. Two graduates from Dr. Martin Luther College and Mrs. Lois Mueller taught 47 pupils for the first year. Mr. David Nell taught the 4-8 grades and Miss Judy Free taught 1-3 grades. Mrs. Lois Mueller taught Kindergarten in the church basement.

In 1976, two bequests from the Darwin Gady estate helped make it possible to build a teacherage for the principal on two acres of land, which had been donated by Mrs. Lena Schroeder. In 1995, the congregation purchased the former Harriet Papenfuss Sebo home for a second teacherage.

Growth in enrollment over the years caused the need for a new facility. January 20, 1985, at the annual meeting, plans were finalized for a new school 80 feet south of the church. Mrs. Edna Wolter donated a one-half acre strip of land that would join the entire south boundary of the church property. March 31, 1985, was a ground-breaking ceremony and Sept. 15, 1985, the new school dedication service was held. In 1990, increased enrollment made it necessary to purchase a portable classroom. This was used until 1999.

November 1995 construction began on the All-Purpose Room. In the summer of 1999, kitchen cupboards, sink, and double ovens were installed in the kitchen of the All-Purpose Room. These have served many pot lucks, Mission Fest meals, Ladies Aid parties, celebration dinners, and school hot lunch meals over the years.

In 2004, construction began to add more classrooms to the existing school building. A classroom, a meeting room, a storage room and a pre-kindergarten room were added. With the additional space, we are able to offer several community events as well as hold large worship services in the All-Purpose Room. We have an annual Easter Egg Hunt, Family VBS, and Harvest Fest. Mission Festival, Christmas Eve Children's Service, and special celebration services are held in the APR.

As of March 2022, 611 students have attended St. John's Lutheran School, led by 34 different teachers over 50 years. Our current school consists of six teachers and 74 students in PreK-8.

Mrs. Nickie Schossow Buege - Pre-Kindergarten

Mrs. Kathy Dobrunz Miller - Kindergarten

Mrs. Jenny Green Zenke - Grades 1-2

Mrs. Sandy Brown Brauer - Grades 3-4

Mr. Brad Hengeveld - Grades 5-6

Mr. Mark Kutz – Principal and Grades 7-8.

The Pastor conducts confirmation class three mornings a week.

We have an office manager, office assistant, and many church and parent volunteers.

God has blessed our mission abundantly and we look forward to many more years serving the congregation and community with His guidance.

School Song

St. John's, St. John's, hats off to thee
To our colors true we will ever be
Firm and strong, united are we
Rah Rah Rah Rah Rah, Rah Rah Rah Rah Rah
Hats off to St. John's School!
Ooh Rah Rah, St. John's School
Ooh Rah Rah, St. John's School
Ooh Rah Rah, St. John's School
Yea Patriots!

St. John's School – 50 Years of Highlights – April 3, 2022

1971 – Rev. Frederick Mueller

Congregation purchased Nodine Public School building from Winona School District for \$4,210, plus \$5,000 for contents

August 30, 1971, School Opened with 45 students

Mr. David Nell, Principal and Teacher of Grades 5-8 (25 students)

Miss Judy Free, Teacher of Grades 1-4 (16 students)

Mrs. Lois Mueller, Teacher of Kindergarten in church basement (4 students)

First School Board: President, Maynard Brostrom
Secretary, Lester Unnasch
Treasurer, Donald Diekrager

1976 – First Teacherage was built. Bequest from Darwin Gady estate and
Land gift from Lena Schroeder. Entire project \$32,744

1976 – Rev. Erling & Beverly Carmichael, Lisa, Scott, Janine, Rachel arrive.

1981 – 10th School Anniversary

1984 – Growing enrollment and faculty.

Mrs. Judy Free Winsky - Kindergarten in church office

Mrs. Beverly Carmichael - Grades 1-2 in church basement

Miss Julie Jacobs - Grades 3-5 in School Building

Mr. David Karnitz – Grades 6-8 in School Building

1985 – New School Building

72' x 90' – 4 classrooms, faculty workroom, janitor closet, parking area,
Well, septic system, landscaping – total cost \$195,000

1990 – Growing enrollment and faculty.

Added Portable Classroom and Teacher for 3-4 Grade

Kindergarten, 1-2, 5-6, 7-8 Grades in School Building

1995 – 2nd Teacherage purchase – Harriet Sebo home across the street from the church.

1995 - All-Purpose Room Constructed

64' x 125' all-purpose room, kitchen area, locker rooms, storage area

\$197,679 (\$80,000 raised by members and Wade and Blaine Boldt memorial fund)

1996 – 25th Anniversary of School

1999 – Kitchen in All-Purpose Room completed

2004 – August - Pastor Dennis & Allison Harbach,
Jeremiah, Susanna, Chloe, Matthew, Michaela, Jonathan arrive.

2004 - New Parsonage constructed on former school playground next to the teacherage.

2004 – Growing enrollment brings building addition. 2 new classrooms, meeting room, storage area enables PreK-8th grade to be all in one building. New space enhances Sunday School, community activities, church and school meetings and activities.

2004 – PreKindergarten program for 4 year olds began. Mrs. Judy Winsky taught Kindergarten Mondays, Wednesday, Fridays, and PreK on Tuesdays and Thursdays

2005 – Mrs. Sue Riediger was called to teach the PreKindergarten program and add 3 year olds on Mondays and Wednesdays

2006 – March 5 – 25th Teaching Anniversary Celebration for Judy (Free) Winsky
(All of her teaching has been done here at St. John's)

2010 – Mrs. Heidi Kutz was called to teach the PreK 3 program on Tuesdays and Thursdays until 2016.
Mrs. Sue Riediger teaches PreK 4 on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays until 2012.

2016 – Mrs. Judy Winsky retired after teaching 37 years at St. John's, Nodine.

2016 – Mrs. Kathy Miller was called to teacher Kindergarten five days per week.

2017 – Mrs. Nickie Buege was called to teacher PreK.
Current class schedule is Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays.

2020 – Mr. Tom Zuberbier took a call to Beaver Dam, WI, after serving 19 years at St. John's.
Mr. Richard Eckmann was assigned for one year to teach grades 5-6.

2021 – Mrs. Julie Beach retires after teaching 23 years at St. John's Nodine.
Mrs. Laura Schaper took a call to St. Paul's, Onalaska, after serving 22 years at St. John's.

2021 – Mr. Brad Hengeveld was assigned to teach grades 5-6.
Mrs. Sandy Brauer was called to teach grades 3-4.
Mrs. Jenny Zenke was called to return to teaching grades 1-2.
Pastor Dennis Harbach accepted a call to serve St. John's, Hastings, MN.

The following teachers have served at St. John's Lutheran School from 1971 to present:

David Nell, PRINCIPAL, 1971-1979

Judy Free Winsky, 1971-1975; 1984-2016, Retired, 37 years

Lois Mueller, 1971-1975

Corrine Olson Paul, 1975-1976

David Karnitz, PRINCIPAL, 1979-1988 (Called Home 2009)

Esther List Heyer, 1976-1980

Judy Metzger, 1980-1983

Beverly Carmichael, 1984-1988

Julie Lineberger, 1983-1984

Julie Jacob (Carmichael)– 1984-1988 (Called Home 2015)

Julie Zeamer Beach, 1987-1993; 2004-2021, Retired, 23 years

James Schmidt, PRINCIPAL, 1988-1992

Philip Peterman, 1988-1989

Andrew Plocher, 1989-1993

Janean Plocher, 1990-1992

Mark Murphy, PRINCIPAL, 1992-1997

Jodi Murphy, 1992-1997

Thomas Gray, 1993-1995

Jennifer Green Zenke, 1993-1998; 2021-present

Michael Mittelstadt, (PRINCIPAL 1999-2004) 1995-2004

Carolyn Olsen, 1997-1999

David Zabel, PRINCIPAL 1997-1999

Susan Kuckhahn, 1998-2004

Laura Schaper, 1999-2021

Thomas Zuberbie, 2001-2020

John Ferguson, 2002-2003

Mark Kutz, PRINCIPAL, 2004-present

Susan Riediger, 2005-2012

Heidi Kutz, 2010-2016

Kathy Miller, 2016-present

Nicole Buege, 2017-present

Richard Eckmann, 2020-2021

Brad Hengeveld, 2021-present

Sandy Brauer, 2021-present

Pastors who have served the school:

Frederick Mueller 1966-1974 – Called Home 2016

Erling Carmichael 1976-2002 (Retired, 26 years) – Called Home 2017

Dennis Harbach – 2003- 2021 (Accepted Call to St. John's Lutheran Church, Hastings, MN)

Student Anniversary Hymn

“Lord Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word”

Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word;
Curb those who by deceit or sword
Would seek to overthrow your Son
And to destroy what he has done.

Lord Jesus Christ, your pow’r make known,
For you are Lord of lords alone;
Defend your Christendom that we
May sing your praise eternally.

O Comforter of priceless worth,
Send peace and unity on earth.
Support us in our final strife,
And lead us out of death to life.

Alumni Anniversary Hymn

“Beautiful Savior”

Beautiful Savior, King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I’d love thee, truly I’d serve thee,
light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

Fair are the meadows, fair are the woodlands,
robed in flow’rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
he makes our sorr’wing spirit sing.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration
now and forevermore be thine!

David Charles Karnitz

1952 - 2009

David Charles Karnitz went home to be with his Savior on Monday, April 27, 2009, after a 10-month battle with stomach cancer.

David was born on Nov. 17, 1952, in Minneapolis, Minn., to Emil and Lyla (Jabs) Karnitz. He became part of God's family through Holy Baptism at Pilgrim Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, on Dec. 7, 1952, and was confirmed in his faith on April 16, 1967, at Timothy Evangelical Lutheran Church in St. Louis Park, Minn.

David graduated from high school at Martin Luther Academy in New Ulm, Minn., in 1971 and Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm in 1977 with a degree in elementary education. During his career he served at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran School in Hoskins from 1977-1979, St. John's Evangelical Lutheran School, Dakota, Minn., from 1979-1988, Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran School, Wausau, Wis., from 1988-1993 and St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran School, Lake Mills, Wis., from 1993-2008.

Over the years he served as a teacher, principal, coach and technology director among other things.

Dave loved the outdoors and enjoyed taking his students on an annual camping trip as well as hunting and fishing with his friends.

He is survived by his parents; a brother, James (Patricia); a brother, Mark; two nephews and a niece as well as other relatives and many friends.

A personal note from long-time friend, Jim Veglahn:

There was only black or white with Dave Karnitz. Never grey. Only right or wrong, no in-between.

Two days before Dave passed, he called the undertaker. The undertaker quoted him a higher price than what had been agreed upon. Dave told him he was fired and found a different undertaker to care for his earthly body.

In Dave's career we heard him say several times, "It's not the severity of the punishment, it is the certainty of it."



Julie Marie Carmichael

1962 - 2015

Julie Carmichael (nee Jacob) was born into this world on October 1, 1962 to Donald and Donna (Smith) Jacob. She was baptized into the Christian faith at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in Beaver Dam, where she also publicly confessed her Lord and Savior at her confirmation.

She went on to graduate from Lakeside Lutheran High School Lake Mills and Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN. She was united in marriage to Scott Carmichael on June 11, 1988 at St. Stephen's in Beaver Dam. The Lord blessed their marriage with 5 sons.

During her life Julie taught grades 3-5 at St. John's Lutheran School in Nodine, MN and preschool at St. John's Lutheran School in Lake City, MN and Pilgrim Lutheran School in Menomonee Falls.

The Lord called Julie from this world to her heavenly home on Saturday, October 10, 2015. Julie is survived by her husband Scott, sons Thomas of Beijing China, Joshua of Boone, NC, Aaron, Daniel and Ben of Milwaukee, WI. Brother Russel of Beaver Dam, sister Sally of Milwaukee as well as 3 nieces Jennifer, Rebekkah, Eryn and great-nephew Noah, also survived by other relatives and friends. Julie was preceded in death by her parents.



Rev. Frederick Mueller

1928 - 2016

The Lord, in His mercy and grace, welcomed Pastor Frederick Mueller, 87, to be with Him and all the saints in heaven, on Wednesday, May 11, 2016. He was born September 3, 1928, in LaCrosse, WI, to the Rev. Theodore and Frieda Mueller.

He enjoyed his early years in La Crosse and then in Milwaukee, WI. After completing his education to be a pastor, he was privileged to serve his Lord in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He spent close to a year there, and then returned to school to obtain a teaching certificate. He served in the teaching ministry for 9 yrs. at Trinity Lutheran School in Kaukauna, WI, where he met his future wife, Lois Rupperecht. They recently were privileged to celebrate 50 years of married life on June 27 of last year.

In 1966, Pastor Mueller began serving as a pastor in Nodine, Minnesota. During his time there, the congregation, with God's guiding hand, established a Christian Day School. In 1975, God called him to serve as pastor in Marinette, WI at Trinity Lutheran Church. He served Trinity as full time pastor until 1995. Pastor Mueller was grateful to our Lord for permitting him to continue as a part time pastor until the time of his death.

Exercise was very important to Pastor Mueller. He enjoyed biking, swimming, fishing, hiking and playing tennis with his family and friends. Pastor Mueller is survived by his wife, Lois, one son, Mark (Laura) of Black River Falls, Wisconsin, and one daughter, Ruth (Andy) Mauritz of Oshkosh, one brother, John (Nancy) Mueller of Menomonee Falls, WI, a sister-in-law, Anita Rupperecht of Redding California, and a brother-in-law, Jonathan (Carmen) Rupperecht of Milwaukee. God also blessed him with 4 grandchildren, and 7 nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by 2 infant children, James and Sarah.



Pastor Erling Lloyd Carmichael 1932 - 2017

Pastor Erling Lloyd Carmichael, 85, of La Crosse, died on Monday, November 13, 2017 at the Hillview Health Care Center.

Erling Lloyd Carmichael was brought into this world on Feb. 23, 1932 to Charles and Alvina Carmichael. He was baptized into the Christian faith and later publicly confessed that Christian faith at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Fort Atkinson, WI. He received his Christian education while studying at Northwestern Preparatory School and Northwestern College in Watertown, WI, Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, WI. He served his Lord while teaching at Wisconsin Lutheran High School and also in the pastoral ministry. He served at a tri-parish in rural Tomah, WI, rural Fairfax (Wellington Township) and finally in Nodine, MN. While in the pastoral ministry, he served on many different boards and committees.

On June 14, 1958 he was united in marriage to Beverly Rehwinkel at Grace Lutheran Church in Oshkosh, WI. Their marriage was blessed with 4 children. The joy of his life was serving his Lord as a pastor and reaching out to the many children in the Christian Day schools that were a part of his ministry.

Erling was preceded in death by his parents, his daughter Janine, his brother Chuck, his adopted daughter Cheryl, his daughter-in-law Julie, and his brother-in-law Howard Wessel.

He is survived by his wife, Beverly, his children Lisa (La Crosse, WI), Scott Milwaukee, WI and Rachel (Tim Scriver) of Springville, IA, adopted daughter Chris Rolloff (Dave), adopted son-in-law Jim Boyum (Fairfax, MN), brother Gary (Caroline) of New Ulm, MN, sisters, Lucille Wessel (New Ulm, MN), Charlene Miedtke (Roger) Fairmont, MN and Kay Yanz (Jerry) Mills River, NC, grandchildren

Thomas, Joshua, Aaron, Dan, Ben, Jordan, Zach, Sam, Jordyn, Sami, Ellie and Adam and great-grandchild Nolan and many nieces and nephews. Blessed be his memory.

SPECIAL MEMORIES

These notes were taken from my diary that I kept in 1971. I believe the information should be quite accurate, at least I hope so! It maybe was read at your 40th anniversary. I believe my husband read it because it sounds like he is talking. ~Mrs. Lois Meuller

THE BEGINNING OF OUR CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL

On March 1, 1971, I found out that the Nodine School would be closing. I said to my wife, "Do you think we could buy it, and use it for our own Christian Day School?" The following is from her diary:

MARCH 9, 1971 - I brought up this idea to the Church Council. They didn't reject it. They thought it might work!

April 16, 1971 - After canvassing the congregation, we had 27 prospects for grades K-8.

APRIL 18, 1971 - This was our big congregational meeting. The Sunday's procedure went like this"

Luther High School Principal, David Kuske, preached for the service. The congregational meeting was held immediately after the service. Mr. Rolf Riessman got up and said, "As I read this morning's devotion in Meditations, I thought, "The Lord is telling us what to do." The Devotion was entitled "Feed My Lambs."

We also had Mr. Adolph Fehlaue, Superintendent of our WELS schools, get up and speak to us. He gave us about a 30 minute talk about the blessings of a Christian Day School. After a question and answer period, a vote was taken about whether we should buy the school and use it for a Christian Day School for our congregation. 31 voted in favor of the motion, and 17 voted No, and 2 were blank. Another vote was taken to spend not over \$5,000 for the school. The actual bid submitted was \$4,210.53.

MAY 11, 1971 - Mrs. Dobrunz and I went to Winona. It was the day they opened the bids for the Nodine School. There was only one bid--ours!!! So the school was ours!

MAY 16, 1971 - At this congregational meeting several votes were taken:

1. We'd pay for the school from the Building Fund.
- 2 Lester Unnasch, Maynard Brostrom and Don Diekrager would be the School Board.
3. We voted for teachers--3 options;
 - a. 1 male, 1 female 14 votes
 - b. 2 female 12 votes
 - c. 1 male - 9 votes

Don Diekrager got up and said, "I move we go all the way--2 teachers, 1 male and 1 female!

Mr. David Nell and Miss Judy Free were assigned to our congregation from Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm.

JULY 30, 1971 -- The boarding places were finalized for our 2 new teachers. That was a job! We had 2 offers, one from Lena Schroeder and one from Ken and Flora Albrecht. Mrs. Schroeder wanted the girl, and so did the Albrechts, but finally Albrechts agreed to take the man, and what a blessing he was to their family--helping with the farm work in the summer and teaching in the school year.

AUGUST 22, 1971 -- Both of our new teachers were installed. God gave us two dedicated teachers. I often thought, "How will we make our budget?" The Holy Spirit opened the hearts of our members, through the Gospel, to meet this great challenge.

God blessed us richly in another way. We needed a playground, so I visited Lena Schroeder who lived across from school. We asked for one acre of her land, but she gave us 2, after consulting with her daughters.

What really made all this happen is found in Romans 1:16: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes." The dynamic Gospel power moved one family to call off their trip they had planned all winter so they could come to that important congregational meeting on April 18 when we voted to start a school. The Gospel power moved all of you to support this school for 50 years and see it grow from that initial 47 students, and witness lots of future graduates who became a firm foundation in our congregation and others. Trusting in Jesus, they are heading for our home in heaven!

What a miracle of love the Lord has worked here!!

I wonder if the tulips that the Kindergarten class planted by the church still come up?

As of March 2022, 611 students have passed through the halls at St. John's Lutheran School.

Mrs. Schroeder's daughter was always amazed at how the little village of Nodine could support a school.

The first of day school in 1971, the hymn for the opening service was "With the Lord Begin Thy Task."

The first School Board was Maynard Brostrom, Donald Diekrager, and Lester Unnasch. They met in the big room while I worked in the little room.

On my first birthday after school started (Jan. 1972), Irene Boldt brought pop and other treats to my room. The pop had been on her porch and froze. When we opened the pop cans, they flew all over. That was quite a celebration!

We had mother helpers in the little schoolhouse. They used the back hallway.

One day a student came with a sliver in her finger. I got out the needle and proceeded to take it out. During the process, she passed out on me.

Having 19 kids in a Kindergarten class that was held in Pastor's office.

~Judy Free Winsky

St. John's School was a treasure that my father had close to his heart. He enjoyed being around the children, often acting like a kid himself. It was a pride and joy in his ministry that he never tired talking about.
~Scott Carmichael

Being a part of the first ever girls team to win the LALSAC basketball tournament in 1993

All of Pastor Carmichael's stories in Catechism class.

We had 2nd grade in the church basement and they had started construction on the new school, and Uncle Wade drove a cement truck. I would go up to the bathroom and stand on the toilet and watch out the window while Uncle Wade was pouring concrete and Mrs. Carmichael had no idea why I was always running to the bathroom.

That our son, Tom taught there for 18 years. We used to love to come to Nodine! We gave five presentations on the Central African Medical Mission there for the school children, ladies' groups, and the congregation. Our memories of St. John's are precious.

~Sue Zuberbier

A Special Memory.... There are so many of them. One that comes to mind was when Courtney and Krista Hoeg came to school early and tried to switch places on April Fool's Day. They kept giggling. They were not successful in tricking anyone, especially their teacher. ~Mr. Kutz

Kids come up with some unique misspeaks as they are trying to master language skills. A memorable one that was heard in the Kindergarten room more than once was "Mrs. Whiskey" instead of Mrs. Winsky.

~Tracy Heyer

The Hoffes have so many! Our first would be when we thought we would try Vacation Bible School the summer of 2004 when it was a family event. As I walked down the school hallway toward the unfinished Pre-K room (that my second daughter would attend as the very first Preschool class with Mrs. Winsky), a nice guy said hello and as we made introductions, I asked if he had any children at this school since we were considering sending our oldest daughter when she was ready. He smiled and said "well actually I'm the new principal here - we've just moved to Nodine". We've been friends ever since. He went on to teach all four of our children over the course of many years, filling us all with great memories we treasure.

We have so many memories of our time in Nodine, but one of our fondest is of Erling Carmichael underneath the old lawn tractor, trying to fix it in his white shirt and tie. We never saw him dressed any other way. He was a very special man and we still miss him.

~Jim & Michelle Schmidt

The excitement of LALSAC basketball games!

Recess in the old schoolhouse basement.

Double Christmas Eve services in a packed church.

Christmas bags!!!!

I remember PreK.

Being a rural farm kid myself I loved having the windows open and hearing cows mooing, and horses whinnying when teaching.

The brand new All Purpose Room completed in the fall of my first year. 1995

New school addition, and building of a new parsonage my last year. 2004

Shooting hoops on the playground with students that knocked on my door.

Pastor Carmichael's leadership and guidance during my time at St. John's.

~Mike Mittelstadt

When sitting in the classroom at the old school you would be able to see your breath and the windows had so much ice on them you couldn't see out. One day I had to stay in from recess to do school work and I rang the bell so everyone started to come in, my teacher, Mr. Nell, was angry. Back then there was a wooden board about 2 feet long. Sometimes that warmed your backside if you got in big trouble.

~1972-1978 – Jim Erdmann

I remember kindergarten class with Mrs. Winsky. We would have morning recess and she always played with us. At story time her expressions and tone of voice would just make you laugh.

~1992-2000-Marcie Erdmann

When Abby fell off her chair and came right back up and said, "I'm ok." When Javon's shoe went flying during kickball. When my mom and I were practicing basketball and she fell face first. When the boy's in my class had a snowball fight with the neighbor.

3rd grade memories ~Savannah Erdmann

There simply are too many memories to write down. My best memory is the combination of them all that developed into lifelong friendships. I was privileged to be a member of the first class that went through every grade and to this day I can say all of my classmates are my friends! My memories include bus rides with Paul Gady, playing on the boys basketball team with Barry Zenke and staying overnight at Jill Papenfuss's house. Having our kindergarten class in the church basement and getting to walk to the 'big school room' was a big deal. "The Little Room and The Big Room"; Playing sports which taught us how to work with others (check out that trophy case!); respecting class time and our teachers which has made me a lifelong learner; having our basketball plays taped to the inside of our desks so we could visualize them (with Mr. Nell's guidance of course!) instilled a sense of healthy competition; getting good at memory work which made future studies so much easier! St. John's has shaped my life in ways I didn't even realize and am so grateful for. And now listening to my children have the same stories from their elementary school days and seeing their lifelong friendships continue warms my heart. Generations of love, faith, caring, respect, and friendships. Thinking back to how difficult it must have been for 2 new graduates having to teach 4 grades each and then to teach every subject and yet they did it with a smile on their face and with love in their heart.....they were given a difficult task that has turned into generations of success for so many years and for so many families.

~Robin (Boldt) Hoeg, Class of '80

The names of the first two classrooms at St. John's being Miss Free's room was The Little Room and Mr. Nell's room was the Big Room. Playing foursquare in the basement. King of the hill on the outside snow banks. Sliding down the grader ditch banks on our winter coats after it snowed. Practicing and learning the game of basketball from Mr. Nell outside during the winter months because we didn't have a gym--it was great! Playing softball and flag football at recess. We were allowed to play tackle football during recess only if there was snow on the ground--good times. Mr. Nell was always the all-time pitcher or quarterback for both sides. Christmas Eve programs in the church. My entire 8 years at Nodine school--all girls in my class--no boys. Competing against other LALSAC teams in softball, basketball and track. My Mom (Irene Boldt) for ALWAYS being a driver to our sporting events. Mr. Nell moving his mobile podium from the 5th grade class to the 8th grade class about a dozen times during the day. Walking over to the Nell's home so Mrs. Nell could practice our cheerleading moves with us in their basement home. Miss Free's apple necklace. Mr. Nell eating his daily bologna sandwich. Movie nights and annual school play/graduation party in the church basement. Solid Christian Education and then having our children attend and now our grandchild attend our little Nodine school...what blessing we had, we have and will continue to have. So many stories to cherish. Thank you St. John's for voting to purchase the "old school and then grant permission to build a new one" -- priceless!

~Kris (Boldt) Walters, Class of '79

Some of my memories are walking to the church to sing for funerals and practicing our Christmas programs. Ice skating on the pond, playing 4-square in the basement of the school. We had to wear dresses to school then in the winter we could wear pants underneath .. playing basketball and softball and cheerleading. And learning God's Word , which I believe has brought generations of my family to the school and church. Thank you Mr. David Nell and Mrs. Judy (Free) Winsky for teaching God's Word.
~ Donna Gady, Class of '78

I'm so happy that God led you to call me to teach here at St. John's. Having the privilege of sharing God's Word with all of my precious students over the years was truly a blessing! Watching their faith grow and witnessing it in action is amazing! Also, I'm so grateful for all of the wonderful people that God brought into my life: my students, their parents, my fellow teachers, Pastor and Mrs. Carmichael, Pastor and Mrs. Harbach, Tracy Heyer, Lisa Hoffe, the choir members, and so many more congregation members who do so much for the church and school.

My Favorite memories: The Christmas service each year; Christmas parties; Field trips – in May 2007, the Blue Angels flew right over LaCrosse Queen boat ride. It was so cool! Grades 1-4 Easter sunshine visits; performing our Grandparent's Day plays (some of the students are natural performers and really ham it up!); Playing games with my students at recess; Singing hymns and fun songs with them; Reading awesome novels aloud to them; Coaching/watching the student play different sports; Wednesday night choir rehearsals then singing our choir selections in church.

~Julie Zeamer Beach

Dear Christian Friends,

Congratulations and God's richest blessings as you celebrate the milestone of celebrating 50 years of providing a Christian Education to the children of your congregation. We were humbled and honored to receive an invitation to join you. Unfortunately, we are unable to attend and join you in person. We wanted to let you know that we have always had St. John's in our thoughts and prayers as you carry out your ministry. Jodi and I were blessed to have been touched by the Christian love and support we experienced while we served among you. St. John's will always have a special place in our hearts. A favorite Bible passage of ours, summarizes our gratitude of the time we had among you.

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" Philippians 1:1-6.

We wish you God's blessings as you reflect on the blessings of the past 50 years of providing a Christian Education to your youth. May we all give thanks and praise to God for the gift of His saving grace that has been taught at St. John's Lutheran School for five decades. What a privilege we have to share and marvel at the Easter morning message of the empty tomb, that we will celebrate in a few short weeks! He Lives!

In Christian Love and gratefulness,
Mark & Jodi Murphy

I wish we could be there in person to celebrate with you. We praise God that he has so richly blessed St. John's School over the years. Our prayer is that God would continue to bless you with wonderful teachers, students, and members! God bless you and keep you,
~Pastor Matthew & Brittany Steinfeldt. (Matthew –Class of '07)

I remember coming to school on Tuesday and Thursday mornings to do resource work, first with grades 5-6, next 7-8, and then 3-4. I enjoyed it very much.
~Sandra Unnasch

One of my favorite memories is when we had the Activities Fair. In the early years, we had it in the Nodine Fire Station. Then in later years, we had it in church, as this was before the gym was built. Each classroom performed a couple of songs, complete with props made by the kids. The upper grade classroom usually did a play. Performing in the play is one of the great memories I have. We were in the front of church on those brown risers, which were new at that time. There was a green curtain stretched across a cable to separate the altar area from the stage. For my 8th grade year, our class sang "Friends are Friends Forever, if the Lord's the Lord of them." I am still good friends with some of those classmates and they have become a life-long blessing.
~Tirzah (Schroeder) Warren, Class of '93

As a student, I remember in 8th grade in the 70's the girls took turns answering the phone and we had to start the roaster in the entrance for anyone that brought food to be warmed up for lunch. Also we had to wear dresses every day to school. It was great fun to play softball and other recess games in dresses. But in the winter when it was freezing, we could wear pants under our dresses.

Downstairs was our place to play for recess if weather was bad. We always tried to beat Mr. Nell in four square. In the old school we had one toilet for girls and one toilet for boys (boys downstairs).

I remember the first time Dave Winsky came to see Miss Free at school.

I remember cheerleading in Dakota gym for basketball games. Doing somersaults on the hard floor. Riding with Miss Free to softball games in Caledonia and after we stopped for ice cream. The top of my cone fell off in Miss Free's car.

As a parent and grandparents now, we love the basketball games, field trips, old activity fairs they had, plays, track days. For three years, I cleaned in the old school.

In the 90's, Craig played basketball for St. John's at the MLC Tournament in New Ulm, against now NLF player Larry Fitzgerald. He was on the Pilgrim Lutheran School team. Nodine Patriots won that game!

~Janice Erdmann Boldt Goede, Class of '74

I remember walking to church from the old school in the cold during December for Christmas Eve practices, and then wearing our coats in the church for practice because the church was so cold. Who could forget Arbor Day - No class all day, raking the big field by the old school, and then pushing the hay wagon by hand to the church and raking there, as well, and finishing up with a softball game? The big all-day field trip that the older grades took at the end of the year, taking a coach bus to our destination 3 - 4 hours away. Then there was the bat that started flying over us in the lower grade room at the old school, and Miss Metzger and Mr. Karnitz trying to capture it as kids were screaming and diving under their desks! Having recess in the basement of the old school, and in the spring there would be a stream of water you would have to jump over and try not to get your shoes wet as you played. Moving to the new school - (I got to attend the new school for 7th and 8th grade) - what an exciting adventure!! The 7th and 8th graders being allowed to announce the arriving buses at the end of the day on the PA system. And the cold winter day that we went outside for recess at the new school - most of the older kids had already went out, and a bunch of us girls were standing outside near the playground door. Mr. Karnitz came out, slipped on some ice, landed in the snow, and split his pants! We giggled (a lot!), and he went home to change his pants! So many wonderful memories! May God continue to bless St. John's as Christ's ministry of teaching his precious lambs is carried out! Debbie (Schams) Pretzer; 8th grade class of 1986 – 1987

In 2004, we moved our family to Nodine, MN, and were excited to see what God has planned for us. 18 years later, we have too many memories to write down, and have incredibly thankful hearts for the pastors, teachers, and people that have become our St. John's family! May God continue to bless many more families using this school and the people here!

~Mark & Heidi Kutz, Josh, Ben & Katie

Playing fox and goose in the snow with Mrs. Beach and the jump rope contest

~Katie Kutz, Class of '17

Not being able to play basketball outside because of the goat poop. ~Ben Kutz, Class of '14

Playing "Capture the Flag" ~Josh Kutz, Class of '12

While I taught PreK at St. John's, I loved our Dinner with Dad and Movie with Mom events. It was also so fun to walk to Jerry & Joan Zenke's with the class to ride the train! Another favorite was when Linda Moor would bring "Mary, the horse" over to school and let the preschoolers ride Mary around the playground!

As a parent, it was fun going on my kids' field trips. There are just a few favorites – The LaCrosse Queen with Mrs. Beach when the Blue Angels were flying overhead. Devil's Lake, Villa Louis, and Pikes Peak in Prairie du Chien with Mr. Z. Airport and LaCrosse fire station with Mrs. Winsky. 7-8 field trips to Minneapolis with Mrs. Kutz.

~Heidi Kutz

I remember singing, "I'm But a Stranger Here," for Pastor Carmichael's funeral in 2nd grade.
~Carter Crabtree

- Playing King of the Hill on the "Piles"
- Losing the ball "over the fence"
- Square dancing in phy-ed class
- Learning the dance to Achy-Breaky-Heart in phy-ed
- Coming in to Mr. Z's late after a piano lesson went long (hahahahahah)
- Listening to A-Ha and Trans Siberian Orchestra in 5th and 6th grade
- "Eeeeeeeverybody use the bathroom...Eeeeeeeeverybody grab a drink" (Mr. Kutz)
- "I need you to be ***insert long pause*** better..." (Mr. Kutz)
- "Help. Yourself." (Mr. Kutz)
- "I know you're physically *capable* of going to the bathroom"... (Mr. Z)
- Putting the hamster cage lid on wrong and the hamster escaping
- Random farm animals wandering into recess time
- Using the "secret passage" in church to go upstairs to practice your piano piece in the sanctuary
- COMING BACK THE DAY AFTER YOU GRADUATED JUST TO PLAY CAPTURE THE FLAG
- Being scared to do the exercise dance in front of 5&6 grade class so you just did jumping jacks the whole time
- PINK SLIPS
- Getting sunburned at the LALSAC track meet
- Duck Dynasty Day during Spirit Week
- Singing Shurley English jingles (all.the.time.) and then realizing high school English was a breeze if you just sang them softly to yourself in class
- LALSAC and MLC tournament championships
- Walking in the hall and hearing 3&4 grade practice their recorders
- First day of first grade not wanting to walk past Mrs. Winsky's room because she felt bad that she had "moved on"
- Brianna Zenke's return to the gym, teammates and school families after being hospitalized for diabetes
- SunShining Visits listening to our children tell older generations of Jesus' resurrection story and singing (and sometimes playing hymns!) with them
- Realizing at bedtime Sunday evening that you didn't clean school/cleaning at 10pm
- Poor Mrs. Schaper's allergic reaction to the donkey
- Lock-Ins for Mr. Kutz's class

We have been part of the St. John's family for 31 years with our boys, Garret and Gavin, being part of St. John's school for 18 years. The memories are more than we can count. In recent times, it has been made evident that there is a strong bond among St. John's families. From the 20-somethings that spend weekends with each other, to the families going to Luther High School games in support of past Patriots, to hearing Gavin tell Elijah Wieser, a 6th grader, to enjoy grade school, that is St. John's to us!

~Shellie Proudfoot

I don't know where to begin! We had six children attend school at St. John's—so many memories! I will just list some things that come to mind (more general, not specific anecdotes):

Some of my favorite memories are the field trips: Norskedalen, Oxbow Park, Fort Snelling, the Capitol, the museums in the Twin Cities, the cathedral in St. Paul, Villa Louis, the Bunnell House, the Pickwick Mill, the La Crosse Queen, the Winona National Bank, Southwind Orchard, Woodlawn Cemetery, the elk farm near Houston... It was fun to go with the kids and learn about places not far away, but places that we probably wouldn't have visited on our own.

I am also grateful for the theater experience our kids had with Prairie Fire. That was such a great opportunity for them to stretch outside their comfort zone and do something out of the ordinary. They enjoyed the directors so much and grew creatively. I hope that opportunity continues for St. John's students for many years to come.

On a different note, we appreciate how the 7th-8th graders learned to help set up and take down chairs, and how that ministry of service is modeled and taught to students. This was also evident with Arbor Day and helping with school cleaning.

I'm glad the kids went on sunshine visits just before Easter, to share the joy of Jesus' resurrection with congregation members who are home bound or residing in care centers.

St. John's School is more like a family that supports and cares for one another. We are grateful that our children had the opportunity to learn from Christian teachers and grow in a Christian environment.

Thank you to all the teachers and staff, past and current! May God continue to bless St. John's School in the years to come!

~Allison Harbach

Dear Members and Friends of St. John's School,

I rejoice with you today as you celebrate 50 years of God's Grace in Nodine. I was privileged to enjoy over 18 of those years. I saw amazing things. I saw dedicated teachers always committed to the growth of students and the benefit of the school. I saw so many dedicated parents (and grandparents!) doing everything from helping students with homework, to supporting school projects, to thanking teachers, to sweeping floors and vacuuming carpets- and serving concessions at basketball games....Popcorn....Yum!

I saw so many hardworking students in the classroom- and in the All Purpose Room. (Are you sitting at a table or chair right now? You can thank a 7th-8th grader for that!)

And I remember all the significant learning (and maybe a few laughs) in Catechism Class. Who would have thought that "honey buns" would come up that often while studying God's Word?

Best of all I saw how our Loving Savior guided and provided for the school. No matter what was going on His faithfulness never wavered. When Jesus said "Feed my lambs" He really was serious about that- and He has been coming alongside those with a heart for children ever since. May that same Good Shepherd continue to bless your work, keeping you focused on Him and motivated by Him!

~Pastor Dennis Harbach