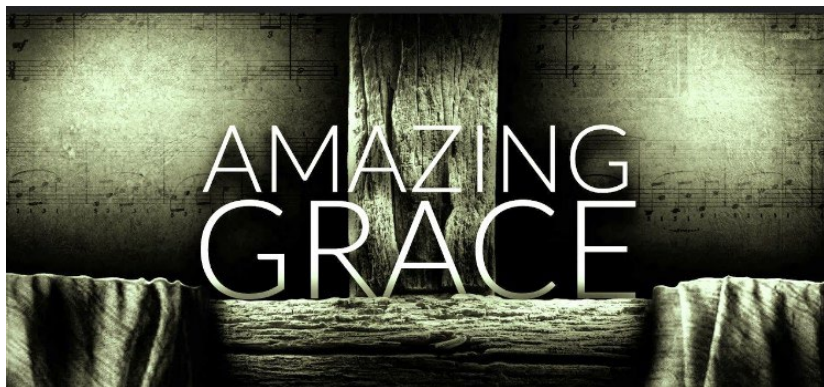


Amazing Grace: Celebrating
250 Years of the Beloved
Hymn (1773-2023)



September 10, 2023
8 a.m. Emmanuel
10 a.m. St. John's at Montello City
Park

Pastor Peter Zietlow

Pastor's Greeting: Today we celebrate and explore this Amazing Grace through the well-loved hymn and Scripture. For all who long for God's promise amid grief, despair, guilt, and shame, "Amazing Grace" is one of the world's most hopeful hymns. It sings the Good News! It reminds us of the depth and breadth and height of God's love and promise, bringing comfort to all.

Stand for Confession

P: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

C: Blessed are whose sins the Lord does not count against them.

P: Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

C: Almighty and merciful Father,

We have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.

We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts. We have offended you and sinned against your holy law. We have done those things that we should not have done, and we have not done those things that we should have done. Have mercy on us, Lord! Spare us, forgive us, and restore us, According to your promises in Christ Jesus.

(silence for meditation and reflection)

P: God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.

C: Amen.

Be seated.

**Congregational Hymn: Amazing Grace, Hymn 576,
Verse 1**

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

P: When John Newton, a former sea captain, wrote the lyrics of “Amazing Grace” for a sermon on New Years’ Day 1773, he could see the “prodigal son” in his early life. His own father tried on several occasions to help him, but Newton was a hardened prodigal, a self-confessed “wretch” (a word he borrowed from Romans 7:24), distant from the heart of his father as well as the heart of God. Still, John Newton discovered that God in Christ’s deep and abiding love does not give up on anyone. In his opening stanza, he lifts up the story of the prodigal restored to sonship in Luke 15 and the blind man who received his sight in John 9. Both aptly describe his being blessed in the mercies of Christ’s saving grace.

C: How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.” Luke 15:17-18

Reader 1: Surprised by Grace. The prodigal’s first surprise comes in his father’s haste of grace toward him. For even while this prodigal is a far distance from home, his father sees him and quickly runs to him with great compassion to embrace and kiss him.

But there’s more to this surprise. By the time this returned child can barely get the words of confession out of his mouth, the father has already sent for the best robes to replace his tattered rags, sandals for his bare feet and a ring as the emblem of his restored sonship. This child is surprised by grace. And it is far greater than he could

possibly imagine. In God's kingdom, all prodigals are restored to being the children of their loving Father.

C: I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see. John 9:25

Reader 2: A man, formerly blind, makes this bold confession before critical religious authorities. It was risky because of the consequences he would suffer for it—being shunned, silenced and cast out. But it was worth the risk because of its bold promise. His confession was rooted in the One whom he is confessing, Jesus Christ, who graced him with sight—not simply physical sight but the sight of faith. Notice that this man never denies his past blindness (and, therefore, his sin), or his association with the One who is being branded by his critics as a sinner. Instead he confesses Christ as the Source of his sight.

Jesus Christ will himself be shunned, silenced, cast out and even put to death on a cross for our blindness and sin. But he risks it all so that none of us will be put to shame—a promise for this sighted man and for all who dare to trust and confess that Jesus is the Christ.

Congregational Hymn: Amazing Grace, Hymn 576, Verse 2

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

P: When Newton was captain of a slave ship, a violent storm threatened to shipwreck his vessel. He prayed for God's grace while at the helm and would later describe it as "the hour I first believed." Embraced by the grace that God loved him in the midst of his terrors, he openly confessed his past scandalous life, trusting Christ above all. This grace that saved Newton's life applied also to his dearest friend and colleague, William Cowper. Cowper was a remarkably

gifted spiritual poet, but he suffered from mental illness that caused him to fear that God had rejected him. The last worship service that Cowper would ever attend because of his recurring illness was the one at which Newton first introduced the words of his hymn “Amazing Grace.” Cowper later published the song in “Olney Hymns” in 1779.

C: For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8

Reader 3: We may sometimes boast of our own works, gifts, and accomplishments. Having a good record of achievements is helpful when it comes to finding work or having credit or being trusted by others. But such success, where it exists, can also lead us down a dark path and to a false sense of pride. It can even present a false image of who we are, covering over the deeper truth of our failings. Faith, however, is an act of humility. We come empty-handed, for we have nothing of ourselves to claim as worthy except that we are gifted by God’s grace. Faith is trusting that our Lord makes us worthy. Faith is bold enough to boast in that promise, and faith will be put to good use for this world. Through faith, we dedicate our own lives for the care and redemption of all that God has made. We share the love and mercy that we ourselves have received through Christ. Go use your gifts to spread good news to all.

C: But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:10

Reader 4: Paul knew what his life had been like. In his religious zeal, he persecuted the church and even oversaw the stoning of Stephen. But God wasn’t finished with him. In God’s grace and mercy, Paul would be chosen, and he would become an apostle of the church. Through this gift of grace, he would extend the church’s outreach to many lands and nations. The grace of God through Christ would rescue

him, nurture him and set him free on a new path of life in the promise of salvation.

At times our own weaknesses, failings and sins may haunt us. They may even defeat our sense of personal worth and make us feel useless. But God does not give up on us, and God's grace is not in vain. Through Christ, we are prized as God's chosen ones. Through the Spirit, our whole being is enlightened, engaged, and moved into a new and promising life. And through our faithful witness, others may come to cherish how new life can truly be.

**Congregational Hymn: Amazing Grace, Hymn 576,
Verse 3**

**Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.**

P: John Newton had been through a lot of trials over the years, so for his sermon on New Year's Day 1773, he selected the text from David's prayer (1 Chronicles 17:16-17), and borrowed David's phrase, "brought me thus far" for his hymn, adding only the word "safe"—for he knew the dangers and dire straits of the sea, but he also trusted the God who would see him home. That is why the original title of "Amazing Grace" when published in print was "1 Chronicles 17:16-17, Faith's Review and Expectation."

**C: Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that
you have brought me thus far? 1 Chronicles 17:16**

Reader 5: King David's humble reflection trusted that all he had become in life only be credited to God's abundant grace. God shepherded David from the time when he was a shepherd of flocks in the field to this day when he was shepherding God's people as their king. And God would watch over all the generations to come from him with

blessing. Jesus would be listed in that lineage, the very Son of David who came to grace us all.

While in a Nazi prison cell, renowned theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer asked himself, “Who am I?” While he knew himself to be a man of many weaknesses, fears and misgivings, others saw him as a man of faith and courage. He came to the realization that he was God’s and God was his.

We may all wonder from time to time, “Who am I?” What we trust is that the Lord is there with us, even in our doubts, shepherding our lives with his grace.

C: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. Psalm 23:1

Reader 6: Through faith, we know that Christ, our Good Shepherd, is always with us, even when we pass through “the valley of the shadow of death” (Psalm 23:4). It is not uncommon for this psalm to be read or sung at funerals as we do in this church.

In life, and in death, we come up against the limits of our mortality. But in baptism, we are graced with the promise that we need never face these limits without God’s protective care and love. We are joined with Christ as we die to sin and death, but we also are raised up with him now to new life. We are given the promise that we will not perish but will find eternal life and passage Home.

Congregational Hymn: Amazing Grace, Hymn 576, Verse 4

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

P: Newton inscribed two verses from Scripture over his fireplace to remind him of God’s providential and freeing grace. The first of these is Isaiah 43:4. It speaks of God’s

election of his chosen people. Newton believed, in spite of his many sins, that he was chosen by grace in Christ. The second text over fireplace was Deuteronomy 15:15, which refers to freeing slaves. Newton, the former slave ship captain, could perceive not only his own freedom from slavery to sin, but also the truth that slaves should be set free. Later in life, he would work for the abolitionist movement. Through his friendship with the politician William Wilberforce, he addressed the House of Commons on the Slave Trade Act, which abolished the slave trade in May 1807, seven months before Newton died. His reference to the Lord as his shield is part of the Armor of God in chapter 6 of Ephesians.

C: With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Ephesians 6:16

Reader 7: Battles are fought in our daily lives. That is why we need the whole armor of God to defend us. Our faith is a particularly important part of that armor. Faith grasps the promise of Christ whenever criticisms and judgments come flying our way like “flaming arrows.” The evil one, who seeks to lie and deceive the faithful into despair, will certainly capitalize on and even employ the judgment of God’s own law to leave us defeated and without hope.

But Christ is our sure defense. Faith trusts that Christ will not let the flaming arrows penetrate his Shield. Christ is also our best offense. He has already won the victory for us over sin, death and the devil on the cross. Faith holds that shield firmly, rendering the powers of evil darkness futile. Through faith, we do not fear evil but work to set free all who are enslaved in its darkness.

C: So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth: it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:11

Reader 8: When someone you trust says, “You have my word,” you can count on this promise.

God’s message to the exiles in Babylon was that kind of promise. It stands in sharp contrast to other prophetic messages that called the people of Israel to account for their transgressions, leading to the exile as God’s judgment. But now God is about to do a new thing. God’s Word will bring them home.

After being in exile for so long, the prophet’s audience had become deaf to this message of hope. They doubted that God was interested in them or could even deliver them. But God fulfilled this promise. Like the rain and snow that come down from heaven, watering and fertilizing the earth so it may grow and feed people, so God’s word of promise will grow and nurture the despairing exiles, setting them free. He has sent us his Word, Jesus Christ, also to grace us beyond despair and doubt. You have his word.

**Congregational Hymn: Amazing Grace, Hymn 576,
Verse 5**

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

P: The first two lines of this stanza referring to a dissolving earth and a sun refusing to shine are from John Newton’s reading of the end times in 2 Peter 3:10: “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be destroyed with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.”

But near the end of his own life, Newton found the text of Deuteronomy 32:10 a fitting summary of his time on earth and the way he wanted to be remembered: A man who totally wasted his life was, by the grace of God in Christ, shielded, cared for and guarded as a precious child of God.

C: He sustained him in a desert land, in a howling wilderness waste; he shielded him, cared for him, guarded him as the apple of his eye. Deuteronomy 32:10

Reader 9: Moses sang these words about how much the people of Israel had grieved the Lord but had, nonetheless, found grace in God's long-suffering devotion to them. They were loved because of God's own promise to Abraham of descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky. Likewise, they did not deserve the land they were to enter, but it was God who provided for them and made them prosper. How much of our own lives have we wasted away in meaningless pursuits? How many regrets come to mind when we replay the failings we have made along the way? How much do we consider that judgment is the only thing we deserve? The miracle of God's grace is how it cares for us even in spite of ourselves and is truly an unearned and undeserved gift through Christ, who so graciously blesses us and whom we so gratefully trust.

C: Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. Revelation 21:1

Reader 10: In St. John's vision, grace restores what was broken in human history. All that had been ruined in the sinfulness of the past is replaced with a new creation, the place of the redeemed. And the sea, where the forces of evil once contended against humanity, is now gone. This vision, however, is not a call to be complacent, to abandon the earth or ignore the struggle against evil. The creation, including each one of us, cries and yearns for the day of freedom. Jesus did not disregard people but healed those he encountered, and he often employed beautiful images from nature to help the faithful see the world through eyes of promise and newness. The vision for us today

comes from this faith and hope in Christ. The work of loving grace remains to be done in our own cities and rural places, even as the bustling new city and paradise itself are filled with joy and peace. Lord may your kingdom come, also now in us.

Offering and Prayer

P: Heavenly Father, May we see and trust your grace over all our sin, and even more boldly confess you. May we always trust that you know us better than we know ourselves and remember always that we are yours. May your mercy and love fill the emptiness of our lives and all the humble longing for your grace. Lord, by faith we hold firmly to your Shield. Preserve us from all attacks of the evil one and keep us in your grace. Set free the lives of all enslaved by sin. Give us courage to confess you as Lord and so affirm your wondrous Good News. Give us your peace and let its light shine over all our darkness May we love as you have loved us. In Jesus' name, **C: Amen.**

P: Join together in The Lord's Prayer.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen**

**Communion at Emmanuel only. Page 183 in the Hymnal.
Hymn 669 "In This Holy, Blest Communion."**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Week: September 10-16, 2023

Today	11:00 a.m.	Fun, food, and games at City Park
Monday		Patriot Day
	6:30 p.m.	Adult Choir
	7:30 p.m.	Adult Bible Study
Wednesday	10:00 a.m.	MCC Devotion
	10:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Study
	3:45 p.m.	Public School Catechism Class
Thursday	6:00 p.m.	GriefShare
Saturday	8:00 a.m.	Men's Breakfast & Study Club SJ Lower Level
	4:30 p.m.	St. John's Worship

Next Sunday: September 17, 2023

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

THE CHURCH GOD WANTS: A CHURCH THAT'S QUICK TO FORGIVE

8:00 a.m.	Emmanuel Worship
8:30 a.m.	St. John's Sunday School
8:45 a.m.	Adult Bible Study at St. John's
9:00 a.m.	Adult Bible Study at Emmanuel
10:00 a.m.	St. John's Worship

ACH Deposits* August	Plate Offerings August	Total Offerings August	Budget Needs August	August Expenses
\$4891.71	\$14218.00	\$19109.71	\$33939.58	\$27696.22

*ACH Deposits are the offerings made online or via direct withdrawal.

*Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **2 Corinthians 9:7***

Attendance

Date	EM	SJ
9/2/23	-	10
9/3/23	-	-

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

- For the sick and others facing trials, including: Gale "Blackie" Boyd, Bob Buehrens, Michael Cox (Marjorie Fabian's brother), Terry Coyle Jr. (Sue Brown's nephew), Vicki Davis (Marilyn Riemer's sister), Edith Duesterhoeft, Reinold Eckelberg, Ken Elmer (Sally's husband), Earl Ewert, Judy Fandrey, John Gaedke (Dan Finger's uncle), Donna Gatzke, Dennis Gray (Mary Dahlke's brother), Dennis Gromowski (Josh's father, Harvey Rudolph's neighbor), Kelleen Gruzca (Judy Fandrey's daughter), Kim Hanko (Judy Fandrey's daughter), Del Henke, Drake Hunter, Jerry & Darlene Hunter (Bonnie Chapman's parents), Xzander Jahr, Kris Kemp (Diane Hintz' daughter), Bob Klapper, Dale Kozlowski, Jeff Krueger (Diane Hintz's son), Debbie & Steve Parrish, Melissa Prater, Karen Radke, Roxanne Schmanke, Bob Sluga (Sherry's husband), Annette St. Onge, Tom Stempniak, Dominick Thoman (the father of Janessa Roberts, Harvey Rudolph's neighbor), Betty, James, & Suzanne Weber, Paul Weldon, Willie Wollschlager (Prospective member Dustin Wollschlager's father) (added this week: Wilie Wollschlager)
- For the Family of Florence Dahlke, who went home to be with The Lord on Thursday, Sept. 7th, at the age of 101.
- For Befriend A Mission Month (see p.16)
- For Christian Education

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, September 17th 8:30AM: St. John's Sunday Morning Bible Study begins.

Tuesday, September 19th 6:30PM: Joint Council Meeting at Emmanuel.

Tuesday, September 26th 6:30PM: Worship Meeting

Sunday, October 1st 11:00AM: St. John's Voter's Meeting.

ST. JOHN'S USHER'S SCHEDULE

Saturday 9/16/23 & Sunday 9/17/23	Saturday 9/23/23 & Sunday 9/24/23
James Wachholz, Zeb Zuehls, Thomas Wojtalewicz, Kenny Wojtalewicz, Chuck Bietcher, Jesse Schable	Paul Van Treek, Matt Borzick, Ken Borzick, James Henke, Hidden Van Treek, Nolan Van Treek, Brody Henke, Milo Henke

ST. JOHN'S SCREEN SCHEDULE

Sunday 9/17/23	Sunday 9/24/23
The Zuehls Family	The Henke Family

MEDITATIONS Daily Devotional This Week:

There is never a wrong time to begin using the ***Meditations***. Start today. This week we leave the Old Testament and take up the Gospel of Matthew. The basic weekly theme of "God Blesses the Work of His Church" covers verses from a not so basic chapter explaining a crucial but often difficult act of true love, care, and concern.

LWMS FALL RALLY at Good Shepherd, Beaver Dam, on SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21. *Have you ever wondered what we do at an LWMS mission rally?* CHEER! That's right! LWMS women are the cheerleaders for WELS missions! Our entire rally focuses on missionaries and our WELS home & world missions and how we can help with our prayers, encouragement, & gifts! Featured *speaker Professor John Brug* will update us on our sister synod in Ukraine by exploring the history leading to the present crisis and sharing its impact on the church. **PLAN TO ATTEND!** *Register at 9:30 a.m.* Enjoy morning refreshments, mission displays, and "lend us your hand" to create an encouragement poster for our Befriended mission, East Fork Lutheran School, Whiteriver, Arizona. *Service Project:* Bring monetary gifts to the rally to help East Fork purchase needed technology & physical education items. Bible study 10:25 a.m. Business Meeting 11:10 a.m. Lunch 12:00 noon. Devotion/Speaker 12:55 p.m. Come for the whole day or just part of it! Anyone with a heart for missions—women, men, even kids—all are invited! Car pool signup in the Information Room or contact your LWMS reporter: Helen Stelter 608-297-7116 or Linda Wachholz 608-369-2635.

WHAT IS BEFRIEND A MISSION MONTH? The Lutheran Women's Missionary Society supports WELS missions by prayer, encouragement, & giving. During our September BAM month at St. John's, we make a special effort to *shower our support* on our assigned missionaries by increasing our prayers, sending a few more notes & emails, & giving a little extra for missions. These joy-filled means of support have no age limitations! We can *ALL be a friend!* As LWMS shares awareness of WELS missions, we hope *YOU will join us by sending a note, signing a card, saying a prayer, or giving a little something extra to missions.* . ***Our home mission assignment is The Way Lutheran Church in Fredericksburg, Virginia.*** These home missionaries would appreciate hearing from you! Share God's love and encouragement!



Pastor Matt & Emily Rothe & Family

(serving The Way Lutheran Church)

1104 Anderson Street

Frederickburg, VA 22401

Email:

MattRothe@TheWayChurch.com

FALL MISSION OFFERINGS are being collected by LWMS during September at both churches. *Please use the collection container at the church where you are a member—in the church entrance both at Emmanuel and at St. John's.* WELS mission projects that will benefit from your gift are these Beaver Dam Circuit projects: Home Mission—Children's Ministry Outreach and World Mission—New World Mission Fields. Other projects will be decided at next summer's LWMS convention. **Your offerings are important to our supported missions and are welcome from everyone with a heart for missions!** *DEADLINE: Sunday, October 1.*

SEND ONE SISTER (SOS) PIE & ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Come celebrate Befriend A Mission Month with the women of the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society on **Sunday, September 24**, in the lower level following church. Enjoy pie before lunch!! Your **freewill offering** will help women who apply for SOS funds to attend their first LWMS Convention, by assisting them with registration, meals, and lodging expenses for the 61st LWMS Convention, coming in Summer 2024 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Help us send first-time attendees to the LWMS International Convention to hear firsthand about God's amazing work in our WELS home & world missions! It could be YOU, Ladies!

Who can apply for SOS funds? Any confirmed woman or girl at St. John's or Emmanuel is eligible to apply for SOS funds due to our congregational memberships in LWMS. All who apply will receive *some* financial assistance! SOS applications will be available at the Social, in the Information Room, or anytime from Reporter Linda Wachholz (608-369-2635) or Reporter Helen Stelter (608-297-7116). **Application Deadline: Monday, January 15, 2024.**

Note: Christa Van Treeck received SOS funds to attend the 2023 Convention in LaCrosse this past June. Ask her about her experience!

**BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES
EMMANUEL & ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCHES**

The words of Amos, one of the shepherds of Tekoa . . . Amos 1:1a Amos was a layman, a typical Israelite, a shepherd, a fig picker. But God had different plans for him. As a layman, head to Bible Study both for yourself and the good of others! And in the study of the Word, God will make you ready for whatever opportunities He grants you!

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDIES

Grand Themes and Key Words

Exploring Important Bible Terms Bible Discovery Series

Emmanuel 9:00 a.m. St. John's 8:45 a.m.

Sunday Morning Bible Studies begin on September 17th at both Churches.

SUNDAY SCHOOL AT ST. JOHN'S

8:30 a.m. in the school.

WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDY

Modern Moral Dilemmas

Scripture addresses today's issues.

St. John's: Mondays 7:30 p.m.

Wednesdays 10:30 a.m.

Both will be in the conference room.

**MEN'S BREAKFAST &
STUDY CLUB**

Meets the third Saturday of the month, beginning September 16th.

8:00 a.m. in the Lower Level of St. John's.

September 16th: "Help, We're Running out of Germans!"

presentation by Mark Jeske

(The presentations are videos from past Men Of His Word Conferences.)

If you can't make the dates, email Matt Kath at

scsecretary@stjohnsmontello.org

and he'll send you a link to the video and study guides.



Green Lake: (Starts Sept. 11) Mondays 6:00pm

Princeton: (Starts Sept. 12) Tuesdays 6:00pm

Montello: (Starts Sept. 14) Thursdays 6:00pm

Please text Mark at 608-697-1600 for information and if you plan to attend.

MENS' BREAKFAST & STUDY CLUB

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH 8AM

LOWER LEVEL ST. JOHN'S

TOPIC:

**"HELP, WE'RE RUNNING OUT
OF GERMANS!"**

**VIDEO PRESENTATION BY
PASTOR MARK JESKE**

Our world and our church have changed greatly since the immigrations of large European families to America in the late 1800's. Now, amazing opportunities to spread the gospel are there for congregations willing to embrace and implement change.

Help us stay in touch!

Scan the code below using your smartphone camera and fill out the prompted information. Don't have a smartphone? That's ok! Fill out an attendance card located at the end of each pew and place it in the offering plate located at the entry of each church.



Welcome to our visitors!

Find & Like us on Facebook

Visit our website: www.stjohnsmontello.org

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Email: principal@crystalonelutheranacademy.net

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Little Lambs Director: Barbara Stelter: 816-853-9029

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