

Our Mission

To invite and connect people to God and to one another through Christ's love.



We talked about how by providing a program like Thrive we have effectively "connected" kids and adults together and that our "invite" was being always open to new students willing to commit to Thrive. In other words, we were not interested in merely doing "things" to temporarily attract kids thus getting bigger attendance numbers.

Our expectation is that if you are a part of our ministry we really want to build a relationship with you!

Our Vision

To be a Christ-centered community, growing ever deeper in faith, serving others, and sharing the Good News of God's love in the world around us.



Core Value: All Ages

St. John's is committed to be an inter-generational congregation, with attention given to all age levels in ministry, programs and focus. We will not be content when any age level is absent from our community of faith. We see St. John's Lutheran Church as an expression of the larger *family of God*.

"Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the people, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength." Psalm 96:7

JR HIGH CONNECTION

We need to continue to invite families to opportunities like concerts, servant events and other ideas.

We would love to see younger and older adults involved in Thrive (or other programs) and not just parents of junior highers.

Core Value: Every Member in Ministry

Our expectation is that everyone who is a member of St. John's will find a ministry role or task that will enable them to live out their faith, putting their faith into action and fully supporting the mission and ministry of the church through their tithes and offerings.

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one." I Corinthians 12:4-6

JR HIGH CONNECTION

Small groups are key to getting kids to participate in opportunities outside of Thrive.

We feel the best way to encourage service is through the encouragement of a small group. This means the group volunteers together to Guides encouraging individuals in the group to go beyond the Thrive program.

We could also raise money for Ecuador (which Genesis & iWORD do) in Thrive but do it in a low-key way.

Core Value: Grace

St. John's is a congregation which functions in an atmosphere of God's grace and healing, rather than judgment and condemnation. We believe and trust the words of Scripture: **"By grace are you saved through faith, and this is not of your own doing. It is a gift of God."** Ephesians 2:8

JR HIGH CONNECTION

That we allow disagreements in small groups.

That we can (through small groups) cross the social boundaries that exist in jr. high thus living out true grace.

We recognize jr. highers have a hard time not judging each other!

Core Value: Hospitality

We value and welcome new people who are searching for a community of faith and a relationship with Jesus Christ. We invite them into a relationship with Jesus and with each other. We do everything we can to connect them to ministry opportunities and enable them to develop relationships with others, through the love of Jesus.

"Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15:7

JR HIGH CONNECTION

We questioned whether the wording was focused too much on potential new members and not enough on hospitality to all (regardless of their member-status).

Perhaps a Thrive group could act as Thrive Greeters to welcome people to Thrive Learning Events?

Core Value: Liturgical Worship

St. John's provides a diversity of worship and musical expressions through its many worship services. However, there remains a central liturgical core, which provides continuity, meaning and a connection with the roots of our past, as we seek to praise God in the present.

"Ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name; worship the Lord in holy array." Psalm 29:2

JR HIGH CONNECTION

Youth Worship Sunday?

Partner more with senior high?

Small groups could volunteer to usher or greet on weekends.

Provide special music?

Some of this has been or is being done now.

Core Value: Prayer

We are committed to pray unceasingly for one another, for our ministry, for our world as well as for our community. Through a life of prayer, we become even closer in our relationship to God and to one another.

"Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication." Ephesians 6:18

JR HIGH CONNECTION

We asked what the definition of unceasingly was? We were concerned that unceasingly might seem impossible to most. How do you pray all the time?

Or does unceasingly mean we never give up praying? Even for someone you don't like—or when you are mad at God.

Encouraging jr. highers to be praying for their friends and classmates no matter what social group they are in.

Core Value: Small Groups

Small face-to-face groups are one of the best ways to experience Christian community. Within the context of a small group, we are the "*communion of saints*" and seek to build up one another in faith. We rejoice together, suffer together and support one another as partners in ministry.

"That the members may have the same care for one another, if one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."

I Corinthians 12:25-26

JR HIGH CONNECTION

Role of the leader is very important!

Everyone learns from one another.

Guides often report how important it has been to see how their group has grown.

Core Value: Unity in Christ

Spiritual growth and maturity results through the presence of the Holy Spirit, who reminds us that "*We are one in Christ Jesus.*" St. John's is committed to ever-expanding relationships with other churches and congregations. Our own congregational unity is best nurtured through regular worship, spiritual growth and service to others.

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all." Ephesians 4:5-6

JR HIGH CONNECTION

Again, we believe small group are the best way to teach and live out "unity in Christ."

This is not easy to accomplish, especially among 6-8th graders.

Provide opportunities for jr. highers to be around each other as well as with other churches (mainly retreats, concerts, etc.)

We realize that special events have to naturally allow different kids to interact with each other socially or service-wise. In other words, if we force them to be with people they don't know they won't come back again.