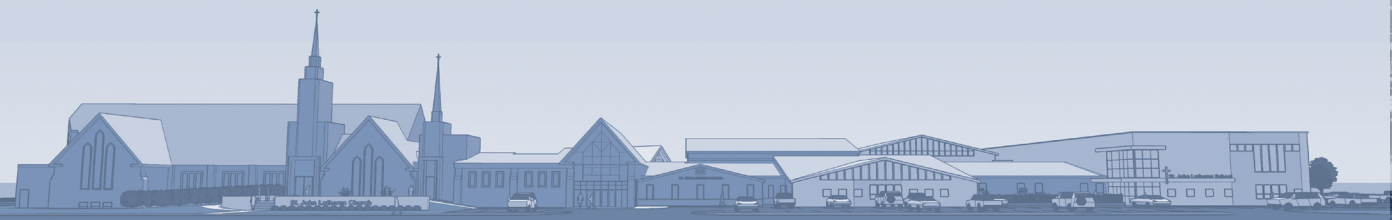


# ONE LEGACY



*Where would we be today if our St. John family in the past had not taken bold, united steps of faith to position us as God's people to change lives eternally?*

**February 22, 1920**

St. John Lutheran Church is formed by six families meeting in a house on Drace Street



**1928**

Shift from German to English services begins

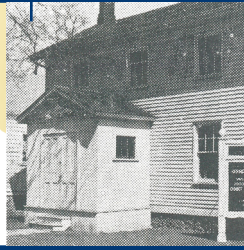
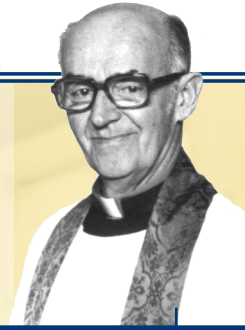


**1920**

First Ladies Aid of St. John

**August 24, 1935**

First permanent house of worship is dedicated at Walnut & 2<sup>nd</sup> St.



**September 6, 1931**

Pastor Charles Zeisser is installed as first resident pastor

## A LEGACY OF BOLD FAITHFULNESS

If one judges by newspaper and historical accounts, 1942 was a very dark year. The U.S. had just entered World War II, and the world situation was terrifying. The war was going poorly for the Allies. The Japanese army was making huge advances in the Pacific and east Asia. It had trapped more than 24,000 sick and starving American and Filipino troops on the Bataan peninsula and was about to force the surrender of Corregidor. Early in the year, General Rommel had led the Nazis to victory in North Africa and the German U-boat offensive was creeping closer and closer to the American east coast. World domination by the Axis powers loomed as a very real possibility.

Rochester, Michigan was a village of about 3,700 people in those days. Another 5,000 people lived in the surrounding township. It wasn't a wealthy area; many in the township were farmers, and in the village, most worked for wages in the local factories or the auto plants in Detroit and Pontiac.

In this community, as in many others across the country, virtually no family was left untouched by the specter of war. By 1945, one out of every 10 people in Rochester and Avon Township

would serve in uniform (not one out of every 10 eligible men – but one out of every 10 people). It was a rare family unit that did not have at least one member in harm's way somewhere in the world. One Rochester couple had all five sons serving in the military at the same time.

In the midst of the gloom and uncertainty of war, the Light of Jesus continued to shine in the community through our St. John family. The congregation was 22 years old in 1942, numbering 205 baptized souls and about 135 communicant members. Worship services were held in a small house on the corner of Second and Walnut Street in downtown Rochester.

Growth had been slow, but the congregation experienced its own "Pentecost moment" when it gathered for worship on Palm Sunday, 1942. On that morning, 16 people – from eight different family groups - were baptized. That number may seem small in retrospect, but at the time, it represented a huge increase in St. John's membership in a single day! To put this into context, today this would be the equivalent of baptizing 213 people in one weekend!

By the summer of 1942, Rochester residents were learning to cope with gasoline and sugar rationing. "Making do," or "doing without" were



**July 1, 1942**

Congregation votes to support establishment of a Day School

**July 12, 1943**

Walter Zwintscher is called as first teacher/principal



**March 20, 1942**

Sixteen baptisms on Palm Sunday

**October 17, 1942**

The St. John congregation purchases the Brewster farm at the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> St. (University) and Helen

**November 8, 1945**

Converted barn on Brewster farm is dedicated for use as school and fellowship hall

the orders of the day. Citizens were encouraged to spare every possible resource for the war effort. But our St. John family was gearing up for a fight against a different kind of darkness.

After much prayer, on July 1, 1942, the congregation approved a motion to establish a Christian day school. They set aside \$700 to equip the upstairs room of the temporary facility as a classroom, and to employ a teacher - who would also serve as organist and choir director - at a salary of \$90 per month. In a separate vote, the congregation pledged its moral and financial support and urged all communicant members to sacrificially increase their contributions by 15 to 25 cents per week in support of this new mission in Jesus' name.

This was a huge step forward in faith and a large financial commitment, given that the congregation had a very limited balance in the treasury at the time.

The launch of the school did not go as planned. The Rochester Village Council declined to permit the school to occupy the second floor of the congregation's building at Second and Walnut, so other accommodations had to be found - and quickly. For the first school year, classes were held at what is now Gethsemane

Lutheran Church on Auburn Road. Men of the congregation removed the pews from the church sanctuary after services on Sunday and set up the space as a classroom. Each Saturday night, they put the pews back in place for weekend services.

In the meantime, our St. John family looked with God-led vision toward a new location for its church and school ministry. On August 5, 1942, the voters authorized the purchase of the Oscar Brewster farm at the corner of Fifth (now University Drive) and Helen Streets. The property contained a farmhouse suitable for a parsonage, a large barn, and most importantly - room to build a new church and school in the future. This was no easy decision, and came after much prayerful consideration and long hours of debate. It meant that the congregation would go back into debt during very uncertain times. It would also mean just a few years later with that same debt remaining they would take an even bigger step of faith by embarking on a \$130,000 church and school expansion project—the equivalent of a \$10.6 million project in our context today! What were they thinking?!!

Yet the faithful legacy of God's people was richly rewarded. The bold, prayerful decision to start a



# J E S U

**March 12, 1950**

New church and school building is dedicated on W. University property

**November 22, 1959**

New school wing is dedicated

**May 19, 1968**

Memorial pipe organ is dedicated



**December 4, 1954**

First live radio outreach is broadcast on WPON 1460 AM. Continues for 40+ years

**September 17, 1967**

New sanctuary is dedicated

Christian day school has since made it possible for thousands of children to hear the Gospel message on a daily basis. Thousands more have since been baptized into a living relationship with Jesus. The purchase of the Brewster Farm property laid the foundations for the church and school campus that we are now blessed to continue building on today, and has positioned us to reach out to our community and world through a wide variety of ministries that continue to make an intergenerational impact for eternity.

The year 1942 may have been a dark one for the world, but in Rochester, Michigan, the Lord established a beacon of hope.

## A LEGACY FOR TODAY

Now some 75 years later we are beyond blessed to be part of that legacy of God's faithfulness for the future! This is where the ongoing fulfillment of Jesus' prayer that we "would be one...so that the world would believe" (John 17:21) comes into full view! When God takes hold of His people with a clear vision for what He desires to do in and through them, amazing things happen! Our church and school family history shows that

clearly again and again.

Where would we be today if our St. John family in the past had not taken similar bold, united steps of faith to position us as God's people to change lives eternally? There is nothing more important and there has been no greater time than now to walk together as ONE and make a difference in Jesus' name.

When it comes to sharing the life changing, eternity assuring Gospel of Jesus Christ, bold sacrifice becomes a matter of personal Spirit-motivated joy. As Jesus said, "Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:12-13) Jesus revealed to us that bold love comes at a high cost, yet no step of faith motivated by love is too great when eternity is on the line for those with whom we share! And let us all be reminded...it is!

It is no secret that the Rochester area of today is changing rapidly. Seen as a highly desirable location, our local neighborhoods are growing and being rapidly revitalized by the new families moving into our community. The demographics of the area are also showing an increase in ethnic and religious diversity. At the same time, local schools are experiencing congestion, traffic is



**September, 1972**

Preschool program is established at St. John Lutheran School

**1975**

St. John begins satellite school program with St. Stephen, Waterford

**1986**

Building renovations and additional school wing are completed



**September, 1969**

Kindergarten program is established at St. John Lutheran School

**February, 1974**

Senior Ministry begins with the first meeting of the Fifty Plus Club

**1979**

Gleaners begin making quilts for Lutheran World Relief

**1986**

St. John Lutheran School receives "National Exemplary Private School" Award

increasing, and home prices are skyrocketing while excitement for the future continues to grow. It is a great time to live where we live, in one of the wealthiest areas in the nation.

Yet tragically, many people and families in our area are unchurched, de-churched or under-churched. These are the multitudes of families who may have even attended a church at one time yet were turned away by its staleness, lack of relevance, or perceived inauthenticity. In other words, many people have heard about Jesus but lack a personal saving relationship with Him. They may be aware of His existence yet be unaware that His eternal message is for them. They live in neighborhoods all around us, spiritually hurting and eternally dying while we are positioned as God's people to share an endless supply of healing in Christ through His Word.

Many of those moving into or living in our neighborhoods may not be Lutheran and likely have no idea what being Lutheran means. Most importantly, they like all of us, are simply people seeking a personal, loving relationship with Jesus that brings hope and peace to their hectic family lifestyle. At their core, they crave a spiritual community where they will be

welcomed, enabled and challenged to grow. We have truly been strategically placed by our God to make an eternal difference in the lives of these same families in our community and beyond!

We must respond!

## **A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE**

From the beginning, our St. John Lutheran Church & School mission has focused on people, not buildings. Yet it is the need to better connect with people of all ages and circumstances that is moving us into this project. These added and improved campus facilities will provide places to visit between services, places to meet, pray and discuss God's Word, places dedicated to expanded school and children's ministry, areas for high school students, young adults, parents and seniors to gather, build relationships, and celebrate life in Jesus. These are connectivity areas where we can be used by God to encourage, teach and love others while making an impact for eternity.

The new Master Site Plan seeks to honor the prayerful legacy of those who had the God-led vision to establish our ministry campus at



1988

Stephen Ministry begins

St. John Foundation is established to provide stable, long-term funding of the mission

September 26, 1991

First service is held by daughter congregation Living Word, later located north of Rochester

September 8, 1992

MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) ministry begins



1989

Rev. Gregory Lorenz is ordained and commissioned as a missionary to Guatemala

July 12, 1992

First contemporary style worship service is established

September, 1995

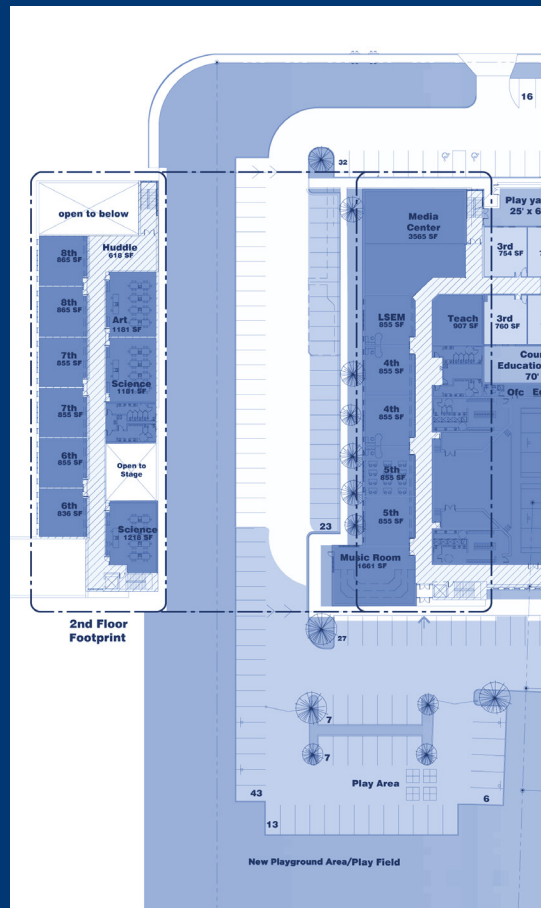
Retired Principal Roy & Eileen Kaiser leave to serve as missionaries in Bangkok, Thailand

1011 University Drive in the heart of Rochester over 75 year ago, and to maximize our ministry impact with excellence for the future. It is no secret that our St. John campus facilities have become increasingly tired and outdated with the passage of time. Meanwhile an undeniable and exciting revival has been occurring among us as the Lord has been having His way among us more and more! In answer to Jesus' prayer "that we would be one", a renewed church and school ministry of restored life and vitality has emerged that is outpacing our aging facilities. It's time to get our physical house in order to better provide for the ministry needs of today and leave a legacy for the future!

### IS IT WORTH IT?

The life changing message of Jesus is too important not to take a bold step of faith...a small one really, when you think of what is on the line for today and our future as a church and school ministry. We find ourselves as God's family positioned and poised to make an eternal difference to a dying world, one life at a time. What will we do?

## MASTER SITE PLAN DETAILS:





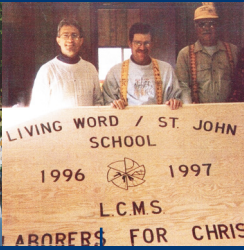
June 8, 1997

Inaugural Praise in the Park celebration



April, 2001

St. John sends first team of teens and adults on Mexicali mission



May, 2002

First ESL (English as a Second Language) class is held



December, 1995

St. John begins mission partnership with Gifts for All God's Children

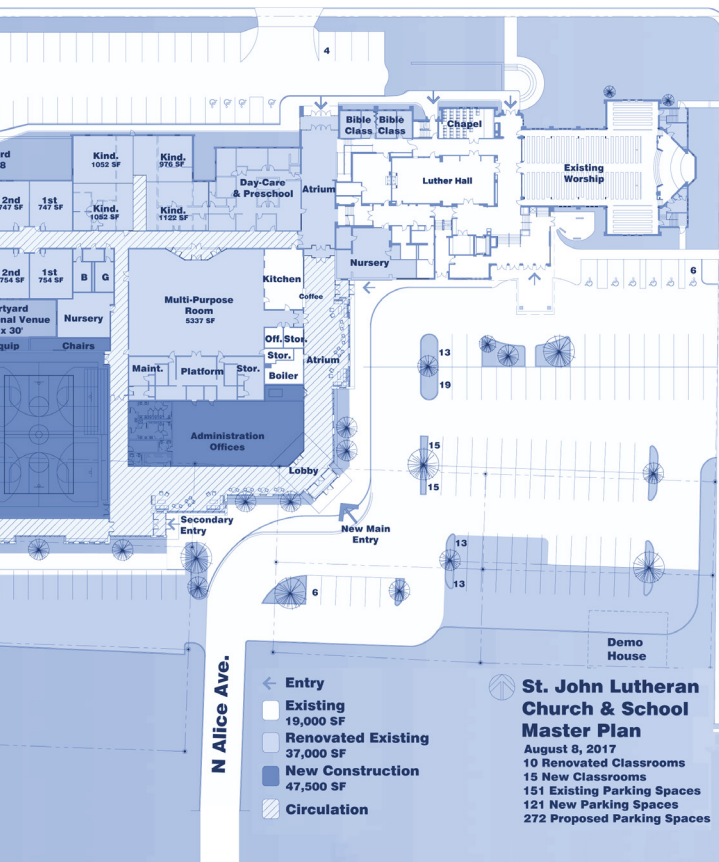
September, 1997

North school campus opens at Living Word

May 20, 2001

Rededication of church wing is held following expansion and renovation, while interim worship was held at RHS

W. University Dr.



Based on extensive research, data, demographic, and ongoing planning, the Master Site Plan is a long-range plan designed to be phased as we grow. Some of the major specifics of this exciting project include existing facility maintenance, space and infrastructure, including:

- Dilapidated campus-wide heating and cooling systems
- Aging pipes and infrastructure
- Campus-wide roof issues
- Cracked and settling parking lots and driveways
- Crumbling brick facades
- Insufficient security and ADA accessibility
- Ineffective general facility and campus maintenance





# MISSION

**2002**

Outreach begins to area Arabic speaking immigrants through partnership with People of the Book Lutheran Outreach (POBLO)

**2007**

Mission partnership with St. Paul in Pontiac is established

**October, 2010**

Hope Warming Center mission partnership is established to assist with homeless in Pontiac



**ST. JOHN  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH**

**July, 2003**

First Alaska mission team from St. John teaches VBS in Hoonah

**July, 2005**

Family of God mission partnership begins to help homeless in Detroit

**September, 2007**

The first of multiple mission trips to Kenya, helping establish a Christian school

ographic study and  
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ng plan will address  
d design challenges

nd cooling (HVAC)

rainage

ity compliance

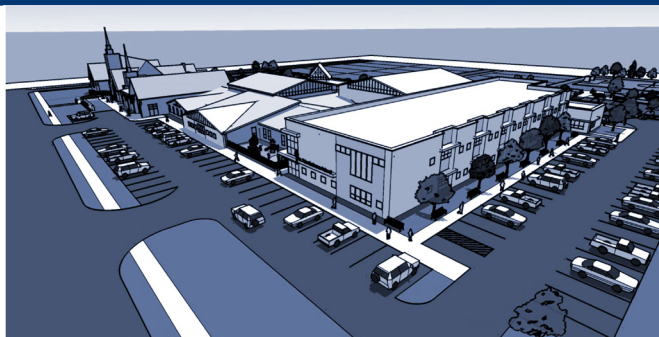
flow

- Outdated finishes in many key areas
- School classrooms at capacity
- Lack of specialized classroom spaces (science lab, art room, etc.)
- Current gymnasium usage and inadequate size
- Lack of a large centralized campus gathering space
- Non-cohesive church and school office design and flow
- Overdue sanctuary pipe organ refurbishment
- General curb appeal

The Master Site Plan also positions us for current and future growth:

- Addresses current and future demographic projections

- Doubles our school possibility of adding
- Renovates and recon
- Includes the addition purpose rooms
- Adds a new state-of
- Includes new large athletics and Moder
- Consolidates and rel
- Frees up current gym church and school a
- Relocates and expan
- Creates a centralize relocated area for v





# MANY

**May, 2013**

ONE IN JESUS...REACHING MANY mission and vision is established based on John 17:20-23

**November 13, 2016**

St. John family approves moving forward with Master Site planning and capital funding initiative

**October 15, 2017**

St. John family joins with 15,000 others from throughout Michigan for 500th Anniversary of the Reformation Celebration in East Lansing



**January, 2014**

Mission partnership with Feed My Starving Children begins (150,000 meals packed by 700 volunteers)

**September 29-30, 2017**

ONE Legacy initiative launches with 24-hour prayer vigil

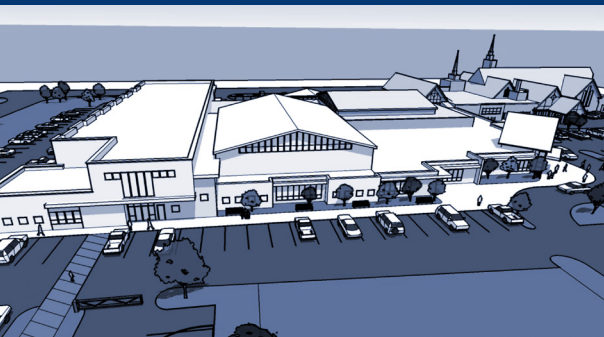
**October 21-22, 2017**

After weeks of prayer, ONE Legacy pledges are received

enrollment capacity and includes the day care  
 figures existing classrooms and hallways  
 on of science, art, language and multi-  
 the-art media center/library  
 er gymnasium/auditorium space for  
 n Praise worship expansion  
 locates church and school offices  
 mnasium as a renovated multi-purpose  
 ctivity center and fellowship hall  
 ds children's playground(s)  
 d area for daily shared life activity and  
 weekend fellowship designed to better

bring our entire campus together

- Provides additional spaces for Bible studies, small groups and community support classes
- Expands and maximizes onsite parking potential
- Provides updated infrastructure, including plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and security
- Remodels numerous rooms in the church wing, providing more attractive, comfortable, and practical space as well as improved audio/visual capabilities
- Adds a more welcoming street-side plaza entry for the sanctuary with improved signage
- Improves overall campus functionality, flow, security and aesthetics



# ONE LEGACY

## *As you contemplate your involvement in the ONE Legacy initiative:*

First ask the questions, “Who am I?” “Whose am I?” “What is my purpose?” “Do I manage my life or does my life manage me?” “What does my calling as a family member in Christ mean?” Getting answers to these basic questions must come before asking questions about the level of your financial pledge.

Second, ask, “Lord, what would you do through me?” “How would you have me use the resources with which you’ve entrusted me?” There is no short cut for this step. It means spending generous time in prayer and God’s Word, in full expectation that God will answer you and guide you.

Third ask, “Is there a part of my life that could be reshaped to better match up with my calling in Christ?” “Does my life match my priorities?” “What are the options I have to make an impact?” “How has God matured and blessed me to live out His plan?”

Finally, consider the specific details of His leading—what, when and how you will give.

The end result is not just a choice about what your gift will be, but a discovery of a new level of trust in Jesus as your Savior.

**“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”**

**–Ephesians 3:20-21**

To learn more about the ONE Legacy initiative visit:  
[stjohnrochester.org/one-legacy](http://stjohnrochester.org/one-legacy)