



# The Reporter

THE ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION REPORTER, VOL CXI, No. 4, WINFIELD, KS 67156 NOVEMBER 2023

## Board of Directors Elected for 2023-2026 Terms



Mark Schotte



Karen (Clark) Hill



Julie (Hensley) Utt

Alumni Association voting members, in ballots cast in September for the annual election conducted by the Board of Directors Nominating Committee, selected three candidates from a slate of seven nominees for positions on the Board for the 2023-2026 terms of office.

Returning for additional service on the Board are **Karen (Clark) Hill, N'83**, Winfield, KS, and **Julie (Hensley) Utt, S'77**, Winfield, KS. **Mark Schotte, B'79, T'82**, Winfield, KS, is back on the Board after having been off since the 2020-2021 term. The Association thanks outgoing Board member **Gery Pralle, A'59, T'61**, for his many years of service on the Board.

The formation of the new Board for 2023-2024, with the election of officers, took place

on November 11, when the Board organized itself at the first regular business meeting for its new fiscal year, which began on November 1.

Five hundred fifty-four Association Life Members and Annual Members received official ballots in August, together with biographical sketches of the candidates selected for the ballot, and detailed instructions on how to complete the ballot.

Returned ballots accepted as valid for tabulation numbered 208, or 37.5%, a return slightly higher than last year.

In its report to the Board, the Nominating Committee stated that it had sent personal letters to 11 Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Nebraska alumni who had been nominated to

stand as candidates, asking their consent to have their names appear on the official ballot. Of that number, seven responded with "Yes," three with "No," and one did not reply. The seven consenting to stand as candidates were then selected by the Committee to form the slate for the official ballot.

Other Board members are:

Terms expiring in 2024:

**Betty (Wiese) Amey, T'66**, Bel Aire, KS  
**Barbara (Lorenz) Geuy, P'66**, Buhler, KS  
**Tim Smith, L'85**, Winfield, KS

Terms expiring in 2025:

**John Bredehoft, A'68, X'70**, Winfield, KS  
**Dean Von Stroh, A'59, M'61**, Derby, KS  
**Sally (Schnoor) Ray, X'76**, Winfield, KS

**Happy  
Thanksgiving**



The Board of Directors and the Staff  
of St. John's College Alumni  
Association wish you a blessed  
Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas!



Greetings in the name of our soon to be born Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Yes, the holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas are just around the corner. Before you know it, we will be in the New Year 2024. The SJCAA operates on a Fiscal Year that is a slight bit different from the calendar year. We begin November 1st and end October 31st of the next year. So let's take a look back at a few items of interest of the Association's past fiscal year, FY 2022-2023:

November 1, 2022 through October 31, 2023, has been a relatively good year financially for the Alumni Association. The market value of our Scholarship Endowment, as of 10/31/23, stands at \$2,436,041, and the Operational Endowment at \$958,886, for a total of \$3,394,283. The good news is that in the last 3-years, the Scholarship Endowment has increased by just over \$673,000 as a result of some estates being probated, memorials, and other contributions. The Operational Endowment has added just over \$11,700 to the principal during this same time frame.

Our 2022-2023 Annual Fund goal of \$42,015 fell short by a mere \$3,100. This amount was donated by 284 alumni, with average gifts of just over \$136 and a participation rate of 9.5%. The Annual Fund helps fund the day-to-day expenses of the Alumni Association.

Shortly after Nov. 1, 2022, the first of four quarterly issues of The Reporter was published. The cover of the first issue was devoted to the election of the Board of Directors that took place in Sept. 2022, and likewise this issue. The Nominating Committee has just completed the canvassing of the ballots for election to the Board of Directors of SJCAA for 2023. The Committee selected 11 individuals as possible Board members, and letters were sent to these individuals. The field of candidates narrowed itself down to 7 (3 incumbents and 4 others). The ballot and the bio information were sent out to 554 Life and Annual Members. Of this number, 208 ballots were returned, resulting in a 37.5% return. This rate of return is slightly above the average over the last few years. But it still puzzles me as to what happened to the other 346 ballots! The complete list of Board members is on the front page of this newsletter.

Then shortly after Jan. 1, 2023, the Winfield Johnnie Reunion Committee began meeting to plan the events and activities which would take place in June. The Reunion attendance for this past year numbered just over 100 individuals. Now.... as of this writing, the Winfield Johnnie Reunion for 2024 is on the calendar for May 30-June 1-2, 2024. Stay tuned to our web page ([www.stjohnsalumni.org](http://www.stjohnsalumni.org)) and future Reporters for further information on the Reunion. Although this year's Reunion targets the Honored Classes of '49, '54, '59, '64, '69, '79, '84, and the 50th Anniversary Class of '74, anyone who attended St. John's Academy or St. John's College is more than

welcome to attend. So at least begin making your plans to attend, and if you would like to assist as a preacher, liturgist, presenter, etc., please contact the Association soon.

The Financial Aid Committee met in April of 2023 to approve Financial Aid applications for the 2023-2024 academic year that were submitted to the Association. Thirty-eight applications were approved to receive \$1,056 each. Since 1965, the Association has made awards totaling \$1,443,098, and this includes the 2023-2024 academic year. In these financial times you can tell that these awards do mean much to these students. The St. John's College Alumni Association says a special THANK YOU to all who, over the past years, have provided funds to increase the Restricted Endowment. I think you can readily see that the earnings your funds have produced have been put to good work by the young men and women who, for the most part, are going into full-time church work.

Add to all this the fact that Thrivent Choice Dollars from you, the alumni, have brought in over \$6,254. We thank the Lord for you, the alumni, and Thrivent, for this program. I would be remiss if I did not say a big hardy THANK YOU to all who have contributed to the Association, either directly or through Thrivent. God bless each and every one of you for your gifts that allow the Association to continue its work.

I ask you to keep the Board of Directors and the various committee members in your thoughts and prayers as they begin to plan the events and activities of the Association for the coming fiscal year. At their semi-annual meeting on Nov. 11, 2023, the Board of Directors set the agenda for the coming fiscal year (November 2023-October 2024) by establishing some goals, both financial and otherwise, for the Association.

Happy New Year! Well, I know it's not 2024 yet, but November begins a new fiscal year for the St. John's College Alumni Association. So, in a fiscal sense, I bid you Happy New Year greetings one and all, in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Finally, on behalf of the Board of Directors, Beth Smith, Administrative Assistant, and myself, let me be the first to wish each and every one of you a very "Blessed Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year!"

Blessings always,

*Larry R. Junker*



**St. John's College  
Alumni Association, Inc.**  
Winfield, Kansas

Founded by Faculty and Students in 1909  
Serving Johnnies for over 100 years

**Mission Statement:**

*To demonstrate the "Johnnie Spirit" by providing support for Christian fellowship among the alumni and to provide financial support for students attending the colleges, universities and seminaries of the LC-MS who are direct descendants of alumni and former faculty members of St. John's College!*

**Executive Board Members  
2023-2024**

**President.....Julie (Hensley) Utt**  
**Vice-President.....Tim Smith**  
**Secretary.....Sally (Schnoor) Ray**  
**Treasurer.....Karen (Clark) Hill**  
**Executive Director.....Larry Junker**

**Reporter Editor.....Larry Junker**  
**Managing Editor.Wallace Behrhorst**  
**Administrative Assistant.....Beth (Breitenkamp) Smith**

**Office Hours 8:00 am - 3:00 pm  
Tuesday -Thursday**

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**If you have an update to your  
mailing address or email address,  
please let us know.  
Contact us at [sjcaa1@cox.net](mailto:sjcaa1@cox.net).**

**OFFICIAL NOTICE**

The Board of Directors of the St. John's College Alumni Association will hold its next regular meeting at 1:15 pm on May 31, 2024, in Winfield, KS, at the Winfield Community Center at Baden Square.



From the 50s

**Rev. Cliff Winter, M '59**, Wichita, will be the keynoter for the 2024 Saints Alive after 55 retreat in Wichita on July 21-22. The retreat theme: "What's Love Got To Do with It?"

From the 60s

**Celebrating: Rev. Dr. David** and **Charlotte Bueltmann, M'62**, Buffalo, IL: their 60th wedding anniversary.

From the 70s

**Celebrating: Rev. Clyde and Ellen (Becker, T'72) Kieschnick, A'70, M'72**, Abilene, TX: their 50th wedding anniversary. And **Clyde**, who is the pastor of Zion, Abilene, recently, on behalf of the congregation, welcomed 34 new members into the fellowship – among them twelve who reaffirmed their faith, and five adult confirmands.



**Celebrating: Terry and Kathy (Finnigsmeier, T'71) Stricker, X'70**, their 50th wedding anniversary. For

the occasion, they returned to Estes Park, CO, where they had honeymooned; and after a month's traveling and sight-seeing (Rocky Mountain National Park and the Great Sand Dunes National Park, among other sites), they returned to their home in Pittsburg, TX. Both had retired from careers in education in 2017 – Terry as a principal for 43 years, and Kathy as an elementary teacher for 36 years. So, they say: "Life is good and full of many blessings from God." (And all Johnnies say, "Amen!")

**Celebrating: Bonnie (Larson L'78) and Bill Condit**, Winfield: their 45th wedding anniversary.

**Rev. Dr. Tim Saleska, M'76**, Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, is the author of the lead article in the summer issue of the Seminary's magazine, Concordia Seminary. His piece: "Faith in Action." The point: "It makes sense for me to think about my Christian life more in terms of who I am rather than what I do." Also, **Tim** is one of fifteen Concordia faculty and staff who in May were honored at the annual Concordia Seminary Authors Reception for their contributions to published books during 2023. He

contributed the chapter, "What Has Ecclesiastes to Do with Theology?" for the book, *What Has Ecclesiastes to Do With ...?* And more: He also contributed to the 2022 CPH publication, *The Alien and the Proper: Luther's Two-fold Righteousness in Controversy, Ministry, and Citizenship*. And again: The summer issue of Concordia Journal, the professional publication of the Seminary, carries his article, "If You Cannot Preach Like Augustine, Don't Worry about It." The essay is one of three in the issue designed "to provide glimpses into the history of exegesis in interacting with previous trends."

**Rev. Rocky Mease, X'71, X'75**, Derby, KS, was a sectional presenter at the Kansas District's All Worker Conference in Wichita in October. His topic: "Transitional Ministry: Is It for You?"

From the 80s

**Rev. Ted Cook, M'81**, Pittsburg, KS, was the organizer for LCMS congregations in Crawford County Kansas to raise a fund of more than \$10,000 to support efforts by Vis Medical Clinic, Pittsburg, a pregnancy resource center. The funds raised will be matched by LCMS Million Dollar

Life Match for the Clinic's program expansion and support.

Faculty/Staff

**Rev. Dr. Steven Briel, Faculty**, Maple Grove, MN, was honored at a Recognition Day Service during the meeting of the Synod's Board of National Missions for his fourteen years as member/chair of the BNM. He was named the Board chair in 2010 when the BNM was founded as the result of a synod convention resolution. Also noted at the time were his other years of service - namely, two years on the Board for Higher Education, three years as a member of the Board of Regents of Concordia University Bronxville, and two years of membership on the Board for Pastoral Ministry.

**Celebrating: Lee and Kathie Stocker, Faculty**, Nassau Bay, TX: their 60th wedding anniversary.



Milestones in Ministry

*(Anniversary years of service as ordained or commissioned ministers in the LCMS)*

<b>Rev. Richard Wagner, M'48</b> , Austin, TX	70 years
<b>Dr. Charles Ore, L'56</b> , Seward, NE	65 years
<b>Rev. Ted Iverson, M'53</b> , Danville, CA	65 years
<b>Rev. Bernie Ansorge, A'55, M'57</b> , Huntsville, AL	60 years
<b>Rev. Larry Miller, L'58</b> , Santa Barbara, CA	60 years
<b>Rev. Dr. David Bueltmann, M'62</b> , Buffalo, IL	55 years
<b>Rev. Roger Kruger, A'60, M'62</b> , Omaha, NE	55 years
<b>Rev. Dr. William Moorhead, IV, M'67</b> , Omaha, NE	50 years
<b>Rev. Michael Heggen, M'67</b> , Apple Valley, MN	50 years
<b>Rev. Timothy Dorsch, M'67</b> , Enid, OK	50 years
<b>Rev. James Gruber, M'72</b> , Fullerton, NE	45 years
<b>Rev. David Meier, M'72</b> , Maple Hill, KS	45 years
<b>Rev. David Ersland, M'73</b> , Wichita, KS	40 years
<b>Rev. Patrick Sparling, L'86</b> , Columbus, NE	30 years

Mission Advocates

**Rev. Joel Hiesterman, M'73**, and **Rev. David Gruoner, M'73**, have been named "Mission Advocates" by appointment of the Board of Directors of the Kansas District. As such, their task is to make presentations across the District at mission festivals and other gatherings to highlight the accomplishments in mission initiatives undertaken by the District in Kansas and in extra territorial locations such as Guiana and West Africa. Both are emeritus pastors of the District – **Joel** in Philipsburg, and **David** in Manhattan.

Greetings from Colorado

Rita Hensley, sister of **Julie (Hensley) Utt, S'77**, was able to pay a visit to **Alice Miller, Staff**, on a recent trip to Colorado. Alice celebrated her 99th birthday this past August, and the staff at SJCAA would like to wish her a Happy Belated Birthday!



## St. John's College Alumni Association - The Past ... The Present ... The Future

The St. John's College Alumni Association (SJCAA) had its beginnings in 1909, making it one of the oldest Associations within the LCMS' group of universities and seminaries. It has stood the test of time and just recently celebrated its 114th Anniversary.

Back in 2018, a number of the Board of Directors of SJCAA met to talk about the future of the Association. Thoughts were shared about the dissolution of the Association. No specific plans were made, but some points were made that would require future looking into. Some of these points were as follows: Scholarships, Reunions, Alumni Communications (i.e. *The Reporter*), the Executive Director and Staff, the Building, the Memorabilia/Archives, and the Board of Directors.

One of the prime reasons for looking into the dissolution, was the fact that the last class to graduate from SJC was the Class of 1986. Their 50th Anniversary of Graduation will be in 2036, and if these graduates were 20 to 22 years of age in 1986 they will be in their early 70s in 2036. More than likely there won't be but a few hundred graduates still alive who graduated in the last years of SJC. And following that line of thinking, at some point there will be no one alive who attended SJC.

Then COVID came along and halted any thinking about the future of SJCAA. Just recently, President Julie Utt gathered some members of the Board of Directors and some Alumni to begin those talks again in light of the fact that 2036 is just a few years away. After spending a couple of hours, this group of individuals came up with three areas of concentration toward the future of SJCAA. They were as follows:

- #1 – The Endowments that have been established, both Scholarship and Operational.
- #2 – Begin going through documents as to what should be saved and what not to keep.
- #3 – Six things to consider when making any decision for the closing of SJCAA:
  - Current Executive Director's retirement
  - Staffing needs
  - Building Disbursement
  - Alumni Communications (i.e. *The Reporter*)
  - The Endowments (Both the Scholarship and Operational)
  - The Board of Directors

At this time no recommendations were made by this group. They will be meeting many times in the near future before any actions are brought to the complete Board of Directors and of course, the Alumni of SJC.

If any alumnus has any thoughts concerning this, they should be forwarded to the SJCAA Office at the following address: P.O. Box 376 – Winfield, KS 67156. The Alumni of SJC/SJA are asked to keep this group of individuals in their prayers as the future of SJCAA begins to unfold.

### “Lost Johnnies”

*The following Johnnies have been “lost” from our mailing list. If you know of current addresses for any of these alumni, please contact the alumni office at [sjcaal@cox.net](mailto:sjcaal@cox.net), or call (620) 221-1572.*

Michael Borchert, M'77  
 Leroy Brack, X'53  
 Richard Faerber, X'68  
 Fraya Frampton, X'66  
 Carolyn (Zajac) Garner, L'77  
 Susanne Glaeske, P'66  
 Mark Hornig, M'74  
 Susan (Kuntz) McKinney, A'62  
 Joan (Timmermann) Meneghel, A'58  
 Christine (Wuebben) Meyers, P'69  
 Stanton Miles, B'49  
 Rev. Paul Muench, Faculty  
 Lanette Oestmann, X'85  
 Lorraine (Meseke) Paine, P'68  
 Kenneth Silvestri, L'75  
 Lucille (Kroll) Stowers, T'50  
 James Wanagat, A'62  
 Maurita (Schiewe) Wertz, P'69  
 Robert Wobrock, M'52

### Class of 1967 Mini Reunion



Friends from the class of 1967 recently enjoyed five days of vacationing together in Spokane, WA. Those attending were (left to right): **LaVeda (Helmke) Carter, B'67**, Corona, CA; **Terry Sinclair, T'67**, Overland Park, KS; **Donna (Bryant) Befort, P'67**, Moberly, MO; **Ruth (Kahre) Beiter, T'67**, Anaheim, CA; **Marie (Vernon) Dowding, T'67**, Chewelah, WA; and **Judy (Schultz) Ferguson, T'67**, Plano, TX. According to the group, they had a lot of fun, with much laughter and reminiscing!!



**Rev. Merlin L. Reith, M'58**, Blair, NE; on July 21, 2023. Age: 84. He

was the only child of Louis and Meta (Conrad) Reith. After graduating from Linn (KS) High School in 1956, he



enrolled at St. John's to begin his preparation for the pastoral ministry of the LCMS, graduating from St. John's in 1958. He then attended Concordia Senior College, Ft. Wayne, IN, graduating in 1960 with a Bachelor of Arts degree, and in 1964 from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, with the Master of Divinity. Following that graduation and his ordination, he began the first of his 40 years of service as pastor in the LCMS at Messiah Lutheran Church, St. Louis (1964-68); then at Trinity, Port Edwards, WI (1968-74); Trinity, Garden City, KS (1974-81); Faith, Lincoln, NE (1981-85); Zion (West), Omaha (1985-92); and St. Paul, Phoenix, AZ (1992-2004). Throughout his years of ministry, he served the Synod as chair of the Kansas District Circuit Counselors, a member of the Kansas District Board of Directors, and a charter member of the Association of Family Life professionals. As preparation for that Association, he had studied under Dr. Carl Menninger at the Menninger Institute in Topeka. After graduating from Concordia Seminary, he and **Eunice Hopmann, A'45, X'48**, were married. She predeceased him in 1999. Later, he and Marjorie Madej were married (2000). She survives him. Surviving him also are a daughter, Sheila Franks, Lochbuie, CO; a son, Neil, Sun Lakes, AZ; a granddaughter; a step-daughter; three step-sons; and 10 step-grandchildren.

**Darrell W. ZumMallen, X'54**, Edmond, OK; on Oct. 4, 2022. Age: 84. He was a native of El Reno, OK, and lived in Oklahoma for most of

his 84 years. From St. John's he transferred to Oklahoma State University in Stillwater to continue

his studies for a career in mechanical engineering. While a student at OSU, he met Annette when both attended a Lutheran convention in

New York City. In 1958, they were married and lived in Stillwater while **Darrell** completed work for his degree. For several years following his graduation he worked as a mechanic for a private aircraft company. He then began working for TG&Y stores – first as manager of the auto repair department, and later as the company's principal purchasing agent for its full line of automotive products. His association with TG&Y extended over twenty years. He then became the manager of a Lowe's tool department. Throughout the years he also worked with family members in farming operations. He and Annette made their home in Edmond for more than 40 years. His wife survives him. Surviving him also are a daughter, Susan (Jimmy) Wilmoth; a son, Bruce (Cris); a granddaughter; and a grandson.

**Harold R. Gehle, L'56**, Davenport, IA; on July 14, 2023. Age: 87.

**Harold** was born in Dodge City, KS, where his parents, **Rev. Rudolph, A'26, M'29**, and Louise

**Gehle**, were serving at Trinity Lutheran Church. He was a student at St. John's for his freshman and sophomore years, graduating in 1956, and then transferring to Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, IN, to earn a BS degree in Mathematics. Continuing his education, he attended the



University of Iowa, where he received a Master's degree in Industrial Engineering. In 1963, he and Janet Strieter were married, and they made their home in Davenport. For many years, he was the principal mathematician for AMEC at the Rock Island (IL) Arsenal. Among his several interests were gardening, working Sudoku puzzles, and volunteering for church and community projects. Among those now holding him in memory are his wife of 60 years, Janet; son, John (Amy); daughters, Linda (Danny) Knarr and Elizabeth Gehle; four grandchildren; and brothers, Daniel (Barbara) Gehle and **Robert, X'56** (Eve) **Gehle**. He was preceded in death by his parents and a daughter, Susan.

**Dorothy S. (Fehl) Fischer, T'52**,

Jefferson City, MO; on March 17, 2023. Age: 90. She enrolled at St. John's after graduating from high school in Beaumont,



TX, her home town. She served as an elementary school teacher at Trinity Lutheran School in Jefferson City for 35 years, retiring in 1996. She met the love of her life, Ralph Fischer, at Trinity, and they were married in 1954. In addition to her family and teaching, she served as a member of many church groups and organizations, principally the LWML and Stephen Ministry. In addition, for many years she was a docent at the Missouri Governor's Mansion. She also advanced her professional preparation for teaching by earning both a Bachelor and a Masters degree in education at Lincoln University in Jefferson City. Among those preceding her in death include her husband; granddaughter, Ashley Branson; a brother, **Rev. George H. Fehl, M'48**; and sister, **Loyce Wukasch, T'54**. Among the many holding her in

memory are two daughters, Mariel (Ernest) Hale and Shari Fischer; two grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

**Rose Marie (Laue) Christensen, A'51, X'52**, Alexandria, VA; on May

27, 2022. Age: 89. She was the second youngest of six children. Soon after her freshman year at St. John's, she and John E. Christensen



were married. John had joined the Army, and **Rose** began the life of a military wife. They soon were the parents of three – all boys: John Edward, Paul Evan, and David Edgar. In 1977, she began work with the federal government as a clerk typist. She also continued her education, earning a Bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland in 1986. She successfully continued to advance in her career with the military, retiring in 2003, after 26 years as a GS13. Her position at the time of retirement was as manager of the Army's Freedom of Information Office. Throughout her career, she also devoted time and interests to many public and civic services – among them Meals on Wheels, the Red Cross, and agencies which cared for abandoned pets. Always adventuresome, in her 60's she spent ten days rafting down the Colorado River, and in her 70's she traveled to the Amazon. The highpoint of her life was an extended tour of the Holy Lands. She was known for her sharp wit, and as one who was not shy about speaking what was on her mind. A son, John, and a brother, **Martin, A'42, X'43**, predeceased her. Among those surviving her are her sons, Paul (Chong Hui) and David (Lethu); three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and two step-grandchildren.

## Honor Roll of Donors (November 1, 2022 - October 31, 2023)

### Annual Fund

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**Marvin H. Sander, X'58**, Edwardsville, IL; on Oct. 17, 2013. Age: 76. In addition to his degree in accounting from St. John's, he earned both a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in accounting at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville. Throughout his professional career, he was involved in accounting and management services, including at the St. Louis offices of Ernst and Young. He also owned and managed the Sander Tax and Accounting Services in Edwardsville for forty years, and served as the financial counselor and board member of several local financial institutions. Throughout his career, he was an active member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Edwardsville.

**Virginia A. (Baden) Bredehoft,**

**Life Member/Friend of the College,** Independence, KS; on April 24, 2023. Age: 100. Though she was not a graduate of the College, as a



member of the Baden family, founders of St. John's College, she and her husband, **Roland V. Bredehoft**, also a **Life Member/Friend of the College**, frequently and generously demonstrated their support of the College with substantial donations to the College and its Alumni Association. In 1950, she and Roland, also from Independence, were married. They made their home in Independence. Her employment history included many years as a member of the financial management staff of Sinclair Pipeline Company, headquartered in Independence, and as a legal secretary in Woodbury, NJ. After she retired, she and Roland traveled extensively throughout the United States and Germany, visiting especially towns where relatives had made their homes. She was a member of Zion Lutheran Church, Independence, and of other Lutheran churches in locations where she was employed. Wherever she held memberships, she

sang in church choirs and was an active participant in women's parish service societies. She was preceded in death by her husband, Roland, and a brother, Alfred (Bud) Baden.

**Timothy P. "Tim" Tipton, L'75,**

Grand Rapids, MI; on Sept. 15, 2023, after ten-years of battling complications from cancer. Age: 68. In high school, he starred in basketball and continued doing so at both St. John's and Wayne State University in Detroit. After graduating from college, he worked for a number of years as a police officer in Detroit and Grand Rapids. He was well known in those services as an expert marksman. In retirement, he worked in automotive sales. His favorite pastimes were listening to music and cooking. Among those who knew him well, he was recognized for his determination to excel at whatever he undertook, for his kindness, especially to the disadvantaged, and for his keen sense of humor. He is survived by his friend, Margaret, and his son, Jacob.



**Celia R. (Hedemann) Kershaw, X'44**, Dallas, TX; in her sleep, on Feb. 4, 2023. Age: 98. She was born in her parents' home in Sylvan Grove, KS. After graduating from Sylvan Grove High School, she attended St. John's as a student in the Business Department. She then moved to St. Louis, where she found employment in Civil Services. In St. Louis, she met her husband, John Kershaw. They were married there but soon thereafter moved to Houston and then to Dallas, where she worked in the accounting and pension departments of Texas Instruments for 38 years, retiring in 1994 at the age of 70. As a member of Trinity, Dallas, and Our Savior, Rockwell, she was always active in parish life—as congregation treasurer, member of church choirs and the

LWML, and organizer of workshops which produced Braille hymnals for the blind. In the community, she was a volunteer for the American Cancer Society. Her interests were many and varied: playing bridge, gardening (fresh flowers from her garden on the coffee table every week); singing and attending concerts (symphonies and operas); traveling (U.S. national parks, Europe, and China); and planning, preparing, and attending family reunions. She is survived by her daughters, Barbara (Edmond) Chen and Connie Riddell; two grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and sisters, **Jean (Howard) Zessin, P'48**, and Eloise Roskavich. Preceding her in death were her brother, **Lester Hedemann, A'34, M'36**, and sisters **Cordelia (Rev. Nolan, A'38, M'40) Obermueller, P'41**, and Lillian Mersereau.

**Sallie M. (Jarrard) Saleska, X'51,**

**X'71, Staff,** Mequon, WI; on Sept. 22, 2023. Age: 92. About her, family members agree: "Her life was a testament to the enduring



hope that was in her. Her strength of mind and spirit inspired her children, and all those around her." Born in Detroit, MI, where she attended high school, she was a 1952 graduate of Valparaiso University (business major, Spanish minor). She and **Rev. John Saleska, Faculty**, a 1954 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, were married not long after his graduation from Concordia. In the years following, they made their home first in Winfield (1954-78), when **John** accepted the call as professor of religion and psychology, and the appointment as a residence counselor (later also as Dean of Students); from 1978 to 2000, at Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN, again with **John** serving as Dean of Students and a professor of the Bible. In 2000 they moved to Mequon, WI, when he ac-

cepted the call as the director of the Concordia University Bible Institute, the chair which he held until he died in 2017. **Sallie** continued to make Mequon her home. She was always active in the life and ministries of the Lutheran congregations of the communities in which they lived. Her favorite pastimes were reading the Scriptures and "talking theology." Ever curious, she found satisfaction in learning new things about the world around her. To those interests, she added reading, watching old movies, cooking, and especially, sharing a cup of coffee or a glass of wine with friends. Among the many who hold her in memory are her children: **Rev. Dr. Tim Saleska, M'76; Dr. Tom Saleska, T'77; Dr. Tammy Ferry, S'80**; and Thad Saleska; 13 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; two brothers, Jim and Jack Jarrard; and a sister, Joan.

**Richard A. "Rick" Meyer, Staff,**

Winfield; on Sept. 30, 2023. Age: 71. **Rick** was, in one sense of the term, "Mr. Winfield" because of his long-time and



extensive involvement in all matters Winfield – first, at St. John's, and later, as a fully-engaged employee of the City of Winfield. Originally from Austin, MN, after high school there and two years of vo-tech training, he joined the evangelism training staff of Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ (O AFC), directed at that time by **Rev. Fred Darkow, Staff**. **Rick** came to Winfield in 1979 when O AFC headquarters, at the time in Wichita Falls, TX, were destroyed by a tornado, and St. John's offered as setting for relocating the program. When O AFC later transferred its program to a new location, he chose to remain in Winfield as a member of the College's staff—at first as the manager of the printing department and book store, and later as the supervisor of campus operations and



maintenance. When the synod closed the College in 1986, he continued in that position as negotiations were carried on for the sale of the campus properties. When the City of Winfield purchased the campus, he then became a member of the staff of the City's Parks and Recreation Department, a position whose responsibilities included supervision of the maintenance of the College's campus, which was renamed Baden Square when the ownership of that property was transferred to the City. From that point on, he played important planning and operational roles in other City of Winfield operations – among them the Walnut Valley Festival, the Cowley County Fair, the Winfield Isle of Lights Christmas display at Island Park, Kanza Day Celebrations, the K&O Steam and Gas Engine Shows, Special Olympics, William Newton Hospital Auxiliary, and – as the saying goes – “much, much more.” A longtime member of Trinity Lutheran Church, he was the congregation's treasurer for more than 25 years. Long known also for his skill as a cook, he served countless dinners at Johnnie Reunions and at church potluck and funeral dinners. He was preceded in death by his parents. Among family members surviving him are a sister, Cheryl, and a number of nephews and nieces.

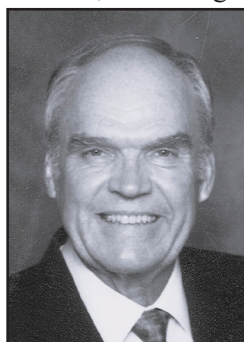
**Delores J. (Muller) Bahr, P'54**, La Marque, TX; on April 22, 2022. Age: 88. A life-long Texan (born in Goliad), she was also a life-long Lutheran who devoted her career to elementary education. From St. John's she transferred to the University of Houston, where she completed study for a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. She then began teaching in the public school system of La Marque, and continued to do so throughout her career. Her favorite pastimes were hunting with family



members, playing dominoes, and making snacks for her grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband, Howard Bahr, and a son, Brian. Among those surviving her are her sons Wayne (Donna), Bullard, TX, and Steve (Cindy), Santa Fe, TX; daughter, Sharon Bahr, Cypress, TX; seven grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

**Rita M. (Baker) Williams, X'53**, Parkerfield, KS; on June 15, 2021. A graduate of Arkansas City (KS) High School, she attended St. John's for her college freshman year and then left to marry Robert E. Williams in October 1954. They made Arkansas City their home for more than 30 years before moving to Lampe, MO, where they made their home for another 30 years. In 2016 they returned to Arkansas City. By profession, **Rita** was a fiber artist who spun and wove fabrics for sale at outlets in Arkansas City and Silver Dollar City. She is survived by her husband; daughters, Michele Krawczyk and Dana Williams; a son, Regan Williams; two grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

**Martin W. Henrichs, L'57**, Valparaiso, IN; on Dec. 30, 2022. Age: 85. **Martin** grew up in Humboldt, KS. After graduating from Humboldt High School, he attended St. John's for two years and then transferred to Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, IN, to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree, and later a Master's degree in Education from Indiana University. For more than 40 years he taught social studies at Calumet (IN) Junior High School and at Roosevelt High School, Gary, retiring in 1996. A self-declared “news junky,” it was his practice to write letters to newspaper editors and magazine publishers in order to state his views in support of, or in opposition to, the positions expressed in their publica-



tions. He also was the author of a book, *Logical or Ludicrous: You Decide*, a detailed statement of his views and opinions challenging readers to get the facts and recognize bias in the news before forming their opinions. Throughout his career, he actively supported the programming of Lutheran Hour Ministries, and served on the LHM's Indiana District Board of Directors and as the District's president. An accomplished musician, he served as a church organist for more than 60 years. His wife, Judy, survives him. Surviving him also are two daughters: Marlise Fletter and Starla (Peter) Griffin; four grandchildren; two stepdaughters; one stepson; and five step-grandchildren.

**Frederick W. “Fred” Behrens, B'75**, Marysville, KS; on March 23, 2023. Age: 74. His parents were Rev. Donald and Viola (Duensing) Behrens, at the time serving a Lutheran congregation in Kimball, NE. **Fred** graduated from high school in St. Francis, KS, and then attended St. John's, graduating in 1975. He worked at several jobs before settling in Marysville in 1978. He and Mary Colleen Lally were married in Marysville in 1974. Not long after making Marysville their home, he began working as a sales representative for Farmer Union Insurance, a career he followed until retirement in 2014. Along with his employment with Farmers Union, he was the owner-operator of a motel and a small auto dealership, both in Marysville. He was a fancier of muscle cars – especially Mach 1 Mustangs and Corvettes – and a rabid NASCAR fan. He rarely missed the games of the Kansas City Chiefs. In 1968 he was drafted into the Army, but was soon given his release after suffering a non-service related injury. He was elected to membership on several boards of the American Legion Post in Marysville.



For a number of years, he was the guardian and caretaker for a sister, and at that time he also served on the Board of Directors of Twin Valley Developmental Services. His favorite pastime, whether at work, on the job or elsewhere, was talking to people – friends and strangers alike. His wife, Mary, and two daughters survive him.

**Bertha W. (Mueller) Sievers, T'54**, Glen Carbon, IL; on Jan 20, 2018. Age: 82. She was raised in Adair, OK, attended public elementary and high school there, and after graduating as a teacher education student from St. John's, returned to Adair to teach at Bethlehem Lutheran School. She considered herself primarily a homemaker, even though she taught at public and Lutheran schools for more than 40 years – at Trinity, Worden, IL, and Livingston (IL) Public Schools. In addition to her many years in education, she served at Lutheran congregations as a member of choirs, the LWML and Ladies Aide, and as an American Legion Post Auxiliary member. Her favorite pastimes: helping others in need, and gardening. She was survived by her husband; two sons; seven grandchildren; and 16 great-grandchildren.



**Nancy A. (Jones) Johnson, P'74**, Lamar, MO; on Oct. 15, 2022. Age: 69. **Nancy** was the middle child of five siblings, living on the family farm outside of Cumberland, IA. Nancy met her future husband, **Herbert “Iver” Johnson, T'73**, while attending St. John's. They married in 1974 and began their life together in Southern California where **Iver** was stationed



in the Navy. They lived in five different states before finally settling in Lamar in 1993. In addition to working as a Parish Worker, **Nancy's** other jobs included working as a secretary at the North Andrew School District, several banking jobs, including US Bank in Lamar, and part-time at the hospital gift shop. She also volunteered with the Cox Barton County Auxiliary. **Nancy** was a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Lockwood, MO, where she sang in the choir and was a long time member of LWML. She enjoyed quilting, road trips with her girls, traveling with her sisters-in-law, and long road trips with her husband to LWML conventions. Among those who survive her are her husband; daughters, Heidi Johnson and Anna (Greg) Strong; one granddaughter; and three foster grandsons.

## **Zelpha J. (Johnson) Franzmann,**

**X'77**, Tomball, TX; on Aug. 31, 2023. Age: 66. A graduate of Haven (KS) High School, she was a business (accounting) student at St. John's, and



majored in accounting at Kansas State University. She began a career in accounting as a field auditor and as a staff accountant, at the same time also preparing for and passing the examinations to be a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). She subsequently moved to Dallas, where she held the position of accountant for a hotel management firm. As a member of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Carrollton, she met Chris Franzmann at an adult singles Bible study. They were married not long after that. They were the parents of five: Katie, William, Hallie, John, and Caroline. She was an organist and pianist, and a member of church choirs. While early on she sent her children to a private school, she soon shifted strategies, deciding that she could home

school them. This change soon brought her into contact with home school interest groups in Dallas and Houston, and to her selection to serve as board member and president of several such groups. After her children were grown, she returned to a career in accounting with employment at Northwest Anesthesia. While pursuing many interests successfully, she let it be known that the love of Christ must prevail, and that there is great power in prayer. Her husband, Chris, survives her. Surviving her also are her five children; a granddaughter; and siblings: **Sherry Waggoner, T'73; Iver Johnson, T'73;** William Newton; Mark Johnson; Jeanne Miles; Thomas Newton; **Starla Stoppel, X'77;** Garth Johnson; **Adola Stocker, T'86;** and Theresa Higbie. She preceded her mother, **Irma (Krenz) Alpers, X'50**, in death.

## **Irma (Krenz) Newton Johnson**

**Alpers, X'50**, Wichita, KS; on Sept 23, 2023. Age: 94. Born in Kingfisher, OK, she was the fourth oldest of eleven children. She attended St. John's for her freshman year



of college, and in 1951, she and Johnnie classmate, **William E. "Bill" Newton, Jr, M'48**, were married in St. Louis. A graduate of Concordia Seminary, **Bill** accepted a call to Christ Lutheran, Augusta, KS, in 1958. Not long after his installation there, however, he died. They were the parents of five: **Sherry Waggoner, T'73;** William (Jann) Newton; Jeanne (Kent) Miles; Thomas (Jeannette) Newton; and **Starla (Mark, L'76) Stoppel, X'77**. After **Bill's** death, **Irma** went back to college to complete a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. Upon degree completion and graduation, she accepted a call to teach at St. Paul Lutheran School, Haven, KS. There she met Harold Johnson, a widower and parent of five:

**Iver (Nancy, P'74, now deceased) Johnson, T'73;** Mark (Colleen) Johnson; **Zelpha (Chris) Franzmann, X'77** (now deceased); Garth (Sherri) Johnson; and **Adola (Kirk, X'86) Stocker, T'86**. They were the parents of a daughter, Theresa. In 1988 Harold died. **Irma** moved to Kansas City, MO, to teach, and there she met and in 1992 married Rev. Arlin Alpers. He predeceased her in 2003. Together with raising an extended family, **Irma** continued her education to earn a Master's degree in Administration. She was a Parish Worker, a Principal, taught parenting classes, was a Stephen Minister, supported the work of Lutherans for Life, assisted in producing books for Braille ministries, and taught Bible study classes at a retirement center. As time permitted, she did gardening, traveled widely to include trips to Germany and the Holy Lands. Also preceding her in death were a daughter, a granddaughter, four brothers, and three sisters. She is survived by her children and stepchildren, 44 grandchildren, and 54 great-grandchildren.

## **Mary H. (Hill) Gohlke, P'51,**

Farwell, TX.; on Aug. 19, 2023. Age: 92. Born in Littlefield, TX, she called Texas her home for all of her life, except for the two years as a



student at St. John's. **Mary** was an active member of St. John Lutheran Church in Lariat, where she founded and taught at the congregation's preschool. Her other services to the parish included assisting in making Braille Bibles for the blind, and supporting other service efforts of St. John's organizations. She was a skilled seamstress and known for her jellies and jams as well as for her gardening. She is survived by a son, Gerald (Jeanette) Gohlke, Littlefield; two daughters: Cheryl (Mike) White, Orange, TX, and Linda (David)

Askins, Edwardsville, IL; nine grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; and brothers, Eugene Hill, Wynnewood, OK, and Rev. Robert Hill, Hooks, TX.

## **Frances C. (Mueller) Gerken,**

**X'48**, Durham, NC; peacefully, on Sept. 10, 2023. Age: 93. From Nebraska (born in York, grew up in Thayer), after graduating from high school, she was a student at St.



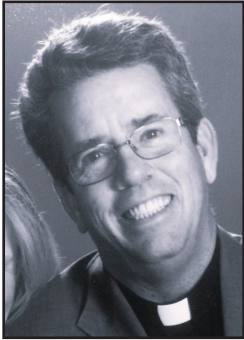
John's for her freshman college year (1947-48). While employed in the office of the president of Concordia Teachers College (now, University) in Seward, she met fellow Johnnie, **Philip Gerken, A'44, M'45**. After his graduation from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, they were married in 1951 to begin a union which would extend over the next 71 years, until 2022 when he died. **Frances** served with **Phil** during his years in the pastoral ministry – in Omaha, NE, Jacksonville, FL, and Rockville, MD. In 1977, they moved their home to Washington, DC, when **Phil** started a new career as a real estate broker. They lived there until 2010 when, for reasons of health, they moved to Durham, NC. An organizer and leader in her personal life, **Frances** carried those traits over into her services as a pastor's wife, and into her later career as a businesswoman working in the insurance industry and as a purchasing agent for several electronics companies. She is survived by her daughters, Carol (Les) Walton, Paula (John) Szabo, and Mary Gerken; five grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by an adult son, John, and an infant son, Joseph.

**Garnet J. (Gihring) Oekerman, A'49, L'51;** on Dec. 1, 2021. Age: 90. **Garnet** and her husband, William, met at Zion Lutheran Church



in Portland, OR, and were married in 1954. He predeceased her in 2008. They were the parents of three boys, Mike, Carl, and Ken.

**Rev. Timmothy W. "Tim" Heath, Sr., T'79, L'82**, Holton, KS; on Aug. 28, 2023. Age: 63. Not long after graduating from St. John's, he and **Susanna Mangold, T'82**, were married. For the next several years he filled classroom positions as a teacher and principal at Lutheran schools in Florida, Missouri, and Arkansas, as well as working as an elementary school counselor for the Wichita public schools. He then made the decision to redirect his career path and attend a seminary as preparation to serve as an LCMS parish pastor. He applied for, and was admitted to, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN, graduating with the MDiv degree in 2004. After ordination, he served at congregations in Wyoming, Kansas, Louisiana, Wisconsin, Florida, and most recently, Holton, KS. Surviving him are his wife **Susanna**; children: Corrine (Rev. Christopher) Lockie, Racine, WI, Rev. Timmothy (Hannah) Heath, Jr., Owego, NY, and Jonathan (April) Heath, Topeka, KS; and 10 grandchildren.



**Robert E. "Bob" Schroeder, B'54**, Whitewater, KS; on Jan. 5, 2023. Age: 88. Born and reared in Newton, KS, he attended Newton schools and graduated from Newton High School in 1952. During his senior year at Newton High, he played on the basketball team which won a state championship. Not long after graduating from St. John's with a degree in Business Administration, he and Shirley Ann Oblander were married, a union continuing forward for more than 65 years. For most of his adult career he worked in the

mobile home industry, advancing to the position of purchasing manager prior to retirement. During the years following their marriage, **Bob** and Shirley lived in Kansas, Colorado, Arizona, and Nebraska – their home address determined by the location of his employment. He established a reputation as a hard worker, setting an example for those with whom he worked and those whom he supervised, and as a fair and patient boss. Among his many interests were watching sports, photography, and assembling and operating model trains. He was preceded in death by his wife, and sisters, **Margie Michalk, T'56**, and Donna Heil. Among those surviving him are his daughter, Susan (Ed) O'Mara; two grandsons; two great-grandchildren; and siblings, **Delores Mock, T'52**, Carolyn Strong, Delbert and Richard Schroeder, and Janet Olbricht.

**Darlene L. (Hagerbaumer) Long, T'53**, Winfield, KS; on Sept. 11, 2023. Age: 90. Darlene graduated from Hooper (NE) High School in 1951, from St. John's College in 1953, and she also received a degree in Elementary Education from Southwestern College, Winfield, in 1970. She married Clyde Long in 1956. They made their home in Winfield where she worked as a teacher for Winfield USD 465 before having children. She returned to teaching in 1971, and taught for another 24 years in Winfield. She was an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church, William Newton Hospital Auxiliary and the Winfield Country Club. She is survived by her daughter, Sherri (Bob) Flippo; son, Mark Long; one granddaughter; and two brothers.



**Rev. Victor H. Lehenbauer, A'46, M'48**, Chula Vista, CA; on June 11, 2023. Age: 95. He graduated from

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 1951. His first call was to the Nebraska District. He then went on to serve in the Central Illinois and Texas Districts. In 1966, he relocated to the Pacific Southwest District, where he served in Poway and Banning, CA, and Las Vegas before retiring in 1993. Throughout his years in ministry, he served as a Circuit Counselor, Convention Delegate, LWML Advisor, and with various community groups.

**Elizabeth C. "Liz" (Wulf) Welch, X'48**, Wichita, KS; on Sept. 3, 2023. Age: 94. **Liz** married her first husband, Lloyd Lassmann, in 1952, and the couple had six children before his death in 1967. **Liz** then married Rupert Welch in 1975, and they had 24 years of marriage before his passing in 1999. She is survived by her children; Steven Lassmann, Jennifer (Bud) Henderson, Letitia Gilliland, Andrew Lassmann, Sharon Malcom, and Paula Davis; four grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.



**Barbara O. (Prather) Walton, T'82**, Perry, OK; on Aug. 31, 2023. Age: 63. **Barbara** taught at several Lutheran schools after graduating from St. John's. She is survived by her husband, William, son Kurt, daughter Dorothy, and her mother Othilia. She was predeceased by her father, Mike, and her sisters Mary and Judy.



Dr. Berno Ebbesson, Ponca City, OK; on Aug. 20, 2023. Age: 81. Berno attended elementary schools and high school in Winfield, KS,

and went on to graduate from Southwestern College in Winfield, and KU Medical School in Kansas City. He is survived by his wife, **Janet Lang, L'64**

**Eileen L. Jourdan, P'82**, Omaha, NE; on July 21, 2022. Age: 76. **Eileen** is survived by siblings: Norma, Allen, Tom (Mary), **Darrell** (Cathy), and **Debbie** (Bruce); and sister-in-law, Janelle. She was preceded in death by her parents, Erna and Arnold, and siblings, Delores, Marvin, Don, and Kenneth.



**Alida M. (Pape) Worm, T'54**, Wichita, KS; on Dec. 13, 2020. Age: 85. **Alida** was a retired Para from USD 259. She was an award winning quilter, and greatly enjoyed her children and grandchildren. She is survived by her husband, Charles, four children, ten grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.



**Wendell J. Hoins, A'47, M'49**, Omaha, NE; on June 29, 2023. Age: 93. **Wendell** was retired SMSgt, USAF. He was preceded in death by his parents, Albert and Frieda (Ahrens) Hoins; and his wife, Ethelyn, in Nov., 2021



ST. JOHN’S COLLEGE  
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**Would you like to become a registered member  
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***Scholarships Available***

Financial Aid guidelines and application forms  
for the academic year 2024-25 are available on the  
Association’s Website ([www.stjohnsalumni.org](http://www.stjohnsalumni.org)).  
Financial Aid is available to students who are or  
will be attending one of the colleges, universities,  
or seminaries of the Lutheran Church-Missouri  
Synod, and must be a direct descendant of an  
alumnus of St. John’s College (i.e. their parents,  
grandparents or great-grandparents must have  
attended St. John’s), or a past member of the  
faculty or staff of the College. Applications will  
be accepted until April 1, 2024, and students will  
be notified in May of 2024 of being a recipient

of financial aid from the Alumni Association.  
Students who are currently receiving aid must  
re-apply each year.

So, parents, grandparents, and great-grandpar-  
ents, here is where you come in. Please encourage  
your son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter,  
to attend a college, university, or seminary of the  
LCMS. And since you are an alumnus of SJC,  
please tell them to go online to get an application,  
fill it out, and return it to the Alumni Association  
office by April 1, 2024. The St. John’s College  
Alumni Association would love to assist them in  
getting their college/seminary education.

***Reunion Help Wanted***

The 2024 St. John’s College Alumni Association Winfield Johnnie Reunion is set for May 31st –  
June 2nd. The honored classes for the reunion will be the following years: 1949, 1954, 1959, 1964,  
1969, 1979, 1984, and the 50th Anniversary Class of 1974. The Reunion Committee is seeking indi-  
viduals for the following positions: two (2) preachers from the 50th Anniversary Class of 1974 for  
the Saturday *Service of Celebration and Remembrance*. The Committee is seeking one (1) pastor for  
the Saturday Morning Prayer service. Additionally, the Committee is seeking a choir director and a  
keyboard player from any of the honored classes for that Saturday *Service of Celebration & Remem-  
brance*. And last but not least, an emcee for the Saturday evening banquet. If anyone is interested or  
desires more information, please contact the Alumni Association office at (620)221-1572, or email  
at [sjcaal@cox.net](mailto:sjcaal@cox.net). With help from these individuals, the Reunion Committee anticipates a very suc-  
cessful Winfield Johnnie Reunion in 2024.

*It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to  
sing praises to your name, O Most High;  
to declare your steadfast love in the  
morning, and your faithfulness by night.  
Psalm 92:1-2*

**2024 Johnnie Reunion**

The dates for the next Winfield Johnnie Reunion are **May 31 - June 2, 2024.**  
Honored classes are: 1949, 1954, 1959, 1964, 1969, 1979, 1984, and the  
50th Anniversary Class of 1974.