



St. John's Lutheran Church

The EAGLE CALL

Volume 41, Number 2
February, 2009

Worship

Saturday
5:00 pm

Sunday
7:45 am
8:45 am
11:00 am

Radio Broadcast
KRNT 1350 AM
Sunday Mornings
8:30 am

Pastors

Rachel Thorson Mithelman
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Robert Speirs
Associate Pastor
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Ramon Runkel
Visitation Pastor
Runkel1060@msn.com

Website

www.stjohnsdsm.org

Creating in Community

February 14, 2009
8:30am - 1pm

Our fourth annual mid-winter celebration of creativity!



Workshops offered in West African drumming with Rusty Eklund, ceramics with our own Deb Anderson, paper art, information technology, and more - including workshops that are parent/child-friendly!

See our website, www.stjohnsdsm.org for a registration form or call the church office, 243-7691, for more information!

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**St. John's Lutheran Church
In the City for Good!
Phone 515.243.7691**

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Office Hours are:

Monday – Friday

9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Saturday

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Next Eagle Call Deadline
February 17 at 12 pm



**A Word from Our Pastors
Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman**

When the 2009 church council met for its annual retreat on a snowy Saturday in January, along with the usual orientation for new members & goal-setting, we spent a significant amount of time in Bible study. We chose Joshua 1:1-9 and Matthew 6:25-34 as our texts, seeking God's guidance for the year ahead, particularly in light of the current economic recession.

These are texts that call God's people to trust God's promises at all times and in all circumstances. Indeed, Joshua 1:9 has long been one of my favorite verses of Scripture: *"I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."*

In the course of our study, I also shared an article from *Sojourners* magazine that offers a clear faith-lens through which to examine the current economic crisis. I have read it many times, and I called the magazine for permission to print a portion of that article here. It is written by Adam Hamilton, senior pastor of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, KS.

"Faith, Hope, and the Credit Crisis"

Paul Krugman, professor of economics at Princeton University and winner of the 2008 Nobel Prize in economics, offered a prescient assessment of the nation's economic condition earlier this year. He noted that the U.S. economy is suffering from a "crisis of faith." He meant by this a growing lack of trust in our economic institutions and the securities that have backed much of our debt.

At the center of this crisis is the use of, and problems surrounding, the extension of credit. It is worth noting that "credit" is a word that is a part of the language of faith. It comes from the Latin *credere* – to believe or to trust. The present active form of this word – *credo*, "I believe" – opens the Apostle's Creed...Our current economic crisis is in part about misplaced trust or faith between debtors and lenders.

Neither the \$700 billion bailout package, nor a Federal Reserve interest rate cut, nor presidential calls for calm seem to adequately speak to the underlying issues that precipitated this crisis of faith. This is a moment when the Bible and people of faith have both the timely word that can calm fears and the most accurate assessment of what fundamentally led to the current economic debacle.

The word of hope is found in the words spoken to people in adversity throughout the Bible. There are the words of the prophets spoken to the Israelites living in exile after losing everything. To them God spoke

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profound words of promise: "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am our God. I will strengthen you and help you" (Is. 41:10)...

Jesus seems to speak directly to our situation in the Sermon on the Mount when he says to first-century peasants, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink...But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Mt. 6:25-33). And how timeless are those words written to Timothy..."Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God" (1Tim. 6:17).

The credit crisis points to the inadequacy of any ultimate credo whose object is anything but God. God is our refuge and strength. And God's sustaining power is not tied to the Dow.

It is crucial that we invite people to put their hope in God, and offer them the assurance that comes from faith in God...In the same way the Christian must not only offer hope, but also an accurate assessment of the ultimate causes for this present crisis, issuing a call to repentance.

The underlying causes of the current economic crisis are not financial, but spiritual. At least five of the seven deadly sins came into play: gluttony, greed, sloth, envy, and ultimately pride all came before the fall...It was not simply the CEOs and Wall Street types who danced to this tune. It was every one of us whose 401(k)s prospered by their efforts...

As we face the consequences of the current economic downturn, and as we reflect upon the spiritual causes that led to the fall, we find comfort and truth in the words of Jesus: "One's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions" (Luke 12:15). Thank God for that! And may the trust of these words guide us to a different future.

Reprinted with permission from *Sojourners*, 800-714-7474, www.sojo.net.

As we continue to grow in mission and ministry in 2009, we can be confident that God will also continue to sustain us through the Holy Spirit. We need not be afraid; for God is truly with us wherever we go.

Financials

A statement of financial position can now be obtained in the weekly bulletin or by contacting the Church Office.

NOTICE: All who give stock or other types of investments to St. John's, please be advised that St. John's has moved it's investment portfolio from Citigroup Global Markets, Inc/Smith Barney to Ameritrade. When gifting please use the following information to make transfers to Ameritrade: **Ameritrade's DTC number is: 0188. Ameritrade's account number is: 788-285389. The name on the Ameritrade account is: St. Johns Lutheran Church.** 'Those making a contribution of stocks or other equities, please notify the finance office. New rules, post 9/11, do not allow brokers to identify donors without prior approval from the donor. Thank you for your generous and continued support of the ministries of St. John's Lutheran Church.

Artist of the Month



Due to the work being done on the North wall of Weertz Fellowship Hall, the artist for the month of February will continue to be Linda Emmerson from Ames. She is experienced in Scherenschnitte, which is the art of paper cutting or snipping.

She creates subject matter ranging from representations of our four seasons, traditional Iowa scenes, nursery rhymes, and scenes from the English countryside. The show will be taken down during the few days of construction and will be set back up when the construction is completed.



Prepare for Worship

February 1, "Fourth Sunday after Epiphany"

In Deuteronomy God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses, who will speak for God. In Psalm 111 God shows the people the power of God's works. For the church these are ways of pointing to the unique authority people sensed in Jesus' actions and words. We encounter that authority in God's word, around which we gather, the word that trumps any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing to follow Jesus.

The readings are Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; and Mark 1:21-28. The hymns are ELW 311, "Hail to the Lord's Anointed," ELW 665, "Rise, Shine, You People!" and ELW 538, "The Lord Now Sends Us Forth." At 8:45 and 11 am the Gustavus String Orchestra from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN, will play prelude, offering, communion, and postlude music as well as for the hymns.

February 8, "Fifth Sunday after Epiphany"

In Isaiah it is The One who sits above the earth and numbers the stars-it is that God who strengthens the powerless. So in Jesus' healing work we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service (diakonia). Like Simon's mother-in-law, we are lifted up to health and diakonia. Following Jesus, we strengthen the powerless; like Jesus, we seek to renew our own strength in quiet times of prayer.

The readings are Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; and Mark 1:29:39. The hymns are ELW 673, "God, Whose Almighty Word," ELW 858, "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," and ELW843, "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness." There will be laying on of hands and anointing with oil for healing at all services this weekend.

At 8:45 Cantorei will sing "The First Song of Isaiah" by Jack Noble White for offering music, and Erik and Jenn Horak-Hult will sing the first movement of Bach Cantata 23, with Sarah Garner on harpsichord and Susan Odem and Jade Fox playing oboes. At 11 Cathedral Choir will sing "Witness," arranged by Jack Halloran for offering and, for communion, "In the Shadow of Your Wings," by John Leavitt, with Sue Odem on oboe.

February 15, "The Sixth Sunday after Epiphany"

In the gospel, a leper is confident in Jesus' power to heal, but in the first reading, the Syrian general, Naaman, is comically hard to convince that he can be healed by such an unlikely foreigner as Elisha, who directs him to wash in a sorry excuse for a river, the Jordan. Jesus' healing power is here among us in the ordinary water of the font, in the ordinary bread, in the ordinary people who make up the body of Christ. We would be well-advised to take the advice of the least powerful among us (like the servant girl in Naaman's household) if we want to find the one who will heal us.

The readings are 2 Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; and Mark 1:40-45. The hymns are ELW 886, "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing," ELW 617, "We Come to You for Healing, Lord," and ELW 618, "Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer." At 8:45 Cathedral Choir will sing "I'm So Glad," by Michael Hassell for offering, and Chamber Orchestra will play a symphony by William Boyce for offering and communion.

February 22, "Transfiguration of Our Lord"

Unlike Mark's account of Jesus' baptism when, apparently, only Jesus sees the Spirit descend and hears the words from heaven, in today's story from Mark, Jesus' three closest friends hear the same words naming Jesus as God's beloved son. As believers, Paul writes, we are enabled to see the God-light in Jesus' face, because the same God who created light in the first place has shone in our hearts to give us that vision. The light of God's glory in Jesus has enlightened us through baptism and shines in us also for others to see.

The readings are 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; and Mark 9:2-9. The hymns are ELW 308, "O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright!" ELW 316, "Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair," and ELW 867, "In Thee is Gladness." At 8:45 Evangel and Boy Choirs will sing "Come to the Mountain" by Kathy Donlon Tunseth, and Cantorei will sing "Christ Upon the Mountain Peak" by Paul Bouman for communion. At 11 am Cathedral Choir will sing "Glorious Sight!" with a text by Susan Palo Cherwien and music by David Cherwien. This piece was commissioned by St. John's, and it received its premier at a hymn festival to dedicate our new organ

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on Transfiguration Sunday, February 22, 1998, eleven years ago to the day.

Ash Wednesday, February 25

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which is February 25th this year. St. John's will have two services with imposition of ashes that day – 12:05 and 7:00 pm.

In the City (and the World) for Good!

St. John's is a center for mission in the heart of the city of Des Moines. Part of our worship is responding to the needs of others, both locally and globally. Below are updates on & ways that you may participate in being "in the city – and the world – for good!"

- It is time for the popular Drawers for Drawers campaign!! The Women of the ELCA sponsor this opportunity to donate new underwear & socks for men, women and children living in local shelters and transitional housing. You will find dresser drawers in many locations around the building with a Drawers for Drawers sign attached. Place your donated "drawers" in the drawers and we'll get them to people who need them!
- We serve the evening meal at Central Iowa Shelter & Services on the 18th & 19th of February. The sign-up sheets for donations of food and labor are in the narthex. If you have never participated in this particular ministry, give it a try! The fellowship is great!
- The second unit of ASAP (After School Arts Program) began on January 22nd! We have 52 children from Moulton and King elementary schools participating in studios on paper art, ceramics, West African drumming, print-making and fabric arts. If you would like to volunteer to assist with the spring unit of ASAP, which begins March 26th, please contact Darla Stiles at 243-7691 or darlasites@stjohnsdsm.org.
- Toothbrushes & toothpaste go in the bins that are outside of the chapel and in the reception area!
- Please remember to shop for the DMARC food pantry carts every week. As the economic recession deepens, it is crucial to keep the shelves stocked. Staple food items such as soup, peanut butter, cereal, rice, tuna, canned vegetables & fruits, etc. are needed, as well as personal care products for men & women.

- Donations to the Good Samaritan Fund are always needed. The number of people who request assistance with rent, bus tokens, gasoline grows every week.
- Thank you, thank you, thank you!!

DMARC: Soup Supper

Save the Date!! DMARC is hosting the 3rd Annual Soup Supper Sunday, February 22nd from 4:30 to 7:00. The event will be held at St. John's! Tickets are \$10.00 and guests will receive soup, fresh breads, home made cookies and a soup bowl made by a local artist. Tickets can be purchased at the door or by contacting Nancy Gooding at 418.8898.

This is a great opportunity for individuals, families or groups to get involved in support of these families in need.

Worship Hosts Needed



Our pool of Worship Hosts for the 5:00 Saturday worship needs to be strengthened with some new volunteers. Share your gifts in reading, greeting and serving communion. We have people who will show you how easy this is. Please contact the church office to sign up!

Telecare

Telecare, offered by Iowa Lutheran Hospital, is a free service for those living alone or homebound. Participants have daily telephone contact with someone who cares. Each day, including weekends, and holidays, a volunteer from the hospital is available between 8:30 and 11:00 am to receive your call. If you are interested in this service, call 263-5262, or 263-5227, and a volunteer will send you a Telecare packet explaining the service in detail.



Small Groups

Questions? Contact Darla Stiles, Small Group Coordinator
243.7691 or darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org

CALENDAR

In the Word—3100 Grand Group

will meet Mondays, February 2 and 16, 1:00 pm.

EAGLES

will meet Tuesday, February 3, 10:30 at church to carpool to Jester Park Lodge for an OWLS program and lunch; Reply to Marty & Dean Ahnen if you can attend by Monday, January 26 to reserve for lunch.

Restaurant Visitation (Christian Involvement),

Tuesday, February 3, at Django on 10th and Walnut, at 6:00 pm.

3D

Wednesdays, February 4, 11, 18, and 25 at 10:00 am.

In the Word—Saturday AM Group

Saturdays, at 8:30 am at Caribou Coffee on Ingersoll, Questions, contact Jim Swanstrom (244-1951) jimswanstrom@mchsi.com.

In the Word—Marker Group

will meet Mondays, February 9 and 23, 7:00 pm.

In the Word—Early Group

taking a break at this time.

Prayer Shawl, Monday Group

will meet Monday, February 16, 1:00 pm in the Fireside Lounge.

Lunch Bunch II

will meet Wednesday, February 18 at 11:30 am.

Lunch Bunch I

will meet Thursday, February 19 at 11:30 am.

Prayer Shawl, Tuesday Evening Group

will meet Tuesday, February 24, at 7:00 pm in the Fireside Lounge.

Recreational Reading

will meet on Wednesday, February 25, in Rose Holm.

Scrapbooking

will meet Saturday, February 28, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm in Room 8.

Be sure to check www.stjohnsdsm.org for small group dates and events.

MORE INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS

EAGLES will meet Tuesday, February 3, at church at 10:30 am to carpool out to Jester Park Lodge for an OWLS program at 11:00 on Iowa's Angel of the Civil War. Jeanne Lillig, President of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, will portray Annie Wittenmyer. In 1862, Annie was appointed to the Iowa State Sanitary Commission. Their responsibility was to oversee the needs of Iowa soldiers, making sure they had proper food, clothing, and medical attention. In 1863, Annie began a new crusade to take care of the children left orphaned by the war. The first Orphan Home opened in the summer of 1864 in Farmington, Iowa. The Annie Wittenmyer Home in Davenport continues to help children and families. Lunch will follow the program at noon. Luncheon registration needs to be in by January 30. Please respond before then to Marty and Dean Ahnen at 256-2696 or ahnen6@aol.com to make your reservation.

Couples Club's will meet Sunday, January 25, 2009, beginning at 5 p.m. at Karen and Dennis Zaabel's home for planning the new year's activities. Guests are asked to bring appetizer or "crock of soup" and choice of drink. Please bring event ideas for the upcoming year. Respond by 1/26/09 if you are attending. The address is 1102 South 50th Place in West Des Moines.

Recreational Reading will meet on Wednesday, February 25, in Rose Holm. The book to discuss is *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali.

Chili Cook-off and Wii Tournament: You won't want to miss some winter fun on Sunday afternoon, March 1. Plan to attend an all-congregational inter-generational winter event sponsored by the Christian Involvement team at church. The Wii tennis and bowling tournaments will begin at 3:00 pm. Put together a team or sign up to be on a St. John's team. Brackets will indicate when and where you play. Also think about entering the Chili Cook-off which will occur around 5:00 pm. The finals to the Wii tournament will take place after the Chili Cook-off so everyone can watch.

Sign ups will begin in February in the lounge for both the chili cook-off and the Wii tournament.



Worship & the Arts

GUSTAVUS STRING ORCHESTRA IN CONCERT WITH IOWA YOUTH CHORUS SATURDAY, JANUARY 31 AT 7:30 PM



The Gustavus String Orchestra returns to St. John's to present a heart-warming concert as part of their winter tour. Co-sponsoring the concert and appearing on it will be the Iowa Youth Chorus. There is no admission charge and plenty of free parking, so invite as many friends and family as you can think of. A free will offering will be received. For details about the string orchestra, their director, or Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN, check out the St. John's website: www.stjohnsdsm.org.

THREE MIDWEEK MUSIC CONCERTS IN FEBRUARY

There are still three "Midweek" Music Wednesday noontime concerts in February before the start of Lent, and they are certainly worth taking in! February 4, "Lyric Winds," the faculty woodwind trio of Kim Helton, flute; Susan Odem, oboe, and Kariann Voigts, clarinet are featured. February 11, Drake University music faculty member mezzo soprano Ann Cravero, will bring her amazing talent to our sanctuary. Then on February 18 the IMTA District Piano Audition Winners will perform their contest winning pieces. This is the third year featuring these young artists, and what an inspiration that always is!

These Wednesday recitals are free, and a lunch follows catered by Crave Italian American in the Fleming Building downtown for only \$6. Midweek Music takes a break during Lent but resumes after Easter on April 15th with the Drake Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Akira Mori.

Night Out at the Theatre

A St. John's Night Out at the Theatre
Sunday, March 1, 8:00 P.M.

AMOS and Stagewest Theatre Company
present

WAR OF THE WORLDS THE MUSICAL! A TRIBUTE TO OLD-TIME RADIO BY GREG EIDEN

This funny musical, based on the 1938 Orson Welles radio broadcast (sort of), has new takes on old-time radio comedy sketches, plus three-legged Martians who dance.

March 1 has been designated St. John's night at War of the Worlds, the Musical. We hope to have a large turn-out from our congregation.

SHOWTIME: 8:00 P.M. **TICKETS:** \$20

FIRST SHOWINGS:

Friday, February 27 through Sunday, March 1
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH
1800 Bell Avenue, Des Moines

SECOND SHOWINGS:

Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7
THE OCTAGON
427 Douglas, Ames

All proceeds to support the social justice work of AMOS, A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy.

TICKETS AVAILABLE from St. John's AMOS Core Team members. Call Bonnie Ekse at 964-5929 or Jim Pullen at 288-2503 for more information.

TICKETS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE by calling 279-3658, OR at www.iowatix.com



Children's Ministries

JANUARY SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY 1

Jesus Feeds the People (Matthew 14:13-21)

Big Idea— God surprises us with just what we need.

Faith Trait—Generosity

FEBRUARY 8

Jesus and the Children (Matthew 18:1-5; 19:13-15)

Faith Trait— Kindness

Big Idea— Jesus takes time for kids.

FEBRUARY 15

Jesus heals a girl (Matthew 9:18-19, 23-26)

Faith Trait— Joy

Big Idea-- Jesus is with us when we're sick.

FEBRUARY 22

The Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32)

Faith Trait— Patience

Big Idea-- Big things can come from small things.

GROWING IN FAITH AT HOME

Read the Bible story Jesus and the Children

(Matthew 18:1-5; 19:13-15) with your child. Children weren't considered very important in the time of Jesus, but Jesus showed the children kindness and took time for them. Take time to show kindness for people you come in contact with on a regular basis who are not often thanked for the service they provide like a bus driver, playground supervisor, or garbage collector. As a family, make cheery thank you cards and give them the cards the next time you see them. They will appreciate your kindness!

EPIPHANY FAMILY EVENT, JANUARY ?



Youth Ministries

RAISE IT UP '09

[raise it up] '09!!! It's that time of year again! 20 St. John's high school students and 6 adults are headed to New Orleans this summer for the ELCA Youth Gathering. That means we need to raise some funds!

SAVE THE DATE: Friday, March 27, 2009—more specific details later!

We cannot have a successful auction without items to auction off. We are looking for donations for the auction! If you can help us, please let us know! Contact Megan Clausen or Lora Simpson (lora.simpson@gmail.com).

SERVING OTHERS

Would you like to spend 3 days this summer serving others and connecting with members of St. John's?

If so, this trip is for YOU and YOUR FAMILY! We will be going to Omaha, Nebraska on July 10-12 to serve others and have fun! We are hoping the cost will be between \$100-\$150 per person. There will be a trip to the Henry Doorley Zoo involved!!! Children under the age of 12 need to be accompanied by a parent or relative. More details will follow, but if you are interested please write your name and email on the clipboard outside the sanctuary or email Megan Clausen.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL

A group of 30 middle school students comprised of St. John's members and their friends spent a day of their Christmas break hanging out with one another. They went bowling at Plaza Lanes, jumped around at Pump it Up, and ate way too much at Stella's Blue Sky Diner. Fun was had by all!!

HIGH SCHOOL

A group of high school students prepared sandwiches and cookies and served lunch at The Connection Café over their Christmas break! You guys are awesome! Thank you!

SPRING BREAK!!! Are you stuck in Des Moines for Spring Break? If so, why not go to Minneapolis, Minnesota with Megan and some other cool people! We will be heading to Minneapolis on Saturday, March 14 and returning to Des Moines on Monday, March 16. We will be doing service in Minneapolis and we will be spending Monday at the Mall of America. The cost of the trip should be around \$75-\$100 plus the cost of food! Email or call Megan by February 1 if you are interested!!!

LYO WINTER GATHERING

Seven St. John's high school students spent the weekend of January 9-11 in Cedar Rapids at the SE Iowa Synod Lutheran Youth Organization's Winter Gathering. There they enjoyed the music of Fuller Still and heard inspiring messages from speaker Justin Vetrano. The met other students from all over the synod. St. John's member, Christina Andeweg is on the executive board as the Conference 10 Representative. Two other St. John's members, Parker Wolfe and Kyle Simpson, joined her on the executive board at Winter Gathering. Parker will be the appointed Conference 1 Representative and Kyle will be the Multi-Cultural Representative on the board. Congratulations guys! St. John's is proud of you!

Web Writers Needed

Share your reflections on scripture through web meditations

The St. John's Web Meditation Writers are seeking new members

to join their team. Whether you consider yourself a writer or not, you're encouraged to check out this opportunity to reflect on the scriptural readings, select verses that speak to you, and offer your thoughts and experiences through writing brief meditations.

If you are interested in learning more, go to "Meditations" on the St. John's web site to view current reflections and the archives of writings. You are encouraged to talk to one or more of these members of the team for additional information. They are Kristin Bensen, Bobbretta Brewton, Pastor Ed Brown, Diane Glass, Bob Krause and Rod Snavelly. You may also contact Diane Glass at 515/989-4532 or diane.glass@mchsi.com.

Members of the Web Writers are asked to write at least four meditations a year. Meditations are sent each week to subscribers both in the St. John's congregation and to interested persons in the community. The Web Writers meet monthly on Sunday at 10 a.m. to review the draft of meditations for the following month and to offer gentle critiquing.

A training session will be held for new members to acquaint them with the format and style of the meditations and approaches for reflecting on scripture and to coach them on communicating their thoughts and life experiences effectively.

Web writers have expressed many benefits from their participation, including a deeper and more focused faith as a result of their reflection on scripture, a strengthening of their writing skills, useful in both their personal and professional lives, and the shared community that has developed from their monthly meetings.

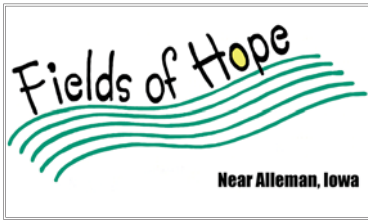
The Mitten Tree



The Mitten Tree was a great success. 196 items were donated. We donated to Des Moines Public Schools, Central Iowa Shelter, Bernie Lorenz, New Directions, Beacon of Life, Harbor of Hope, and YESS. Thank you so much for thinking of this vital ministry. ~ Margaret Townsend



Fields of Hope



The Fields of Hope growing project crop has been harvested and sold. After expenses that were not covered by donations we have a little over \$9000.00 this year to

send to Guatemala. Even though the price of corn has been good, our in-kind gifts and cash donations do not equal previous years. There is still time to add to this sum if you have not already done so.

The project was fortunate to host ambassadors to the United States from five African nations. The guests were in Iowa for the World Food Prize celebrations and seminars. Representatives from the agricultural arm of the Gates Foundation were also at the table. The Africans were interested in how American farmers access information about seed, farming practices and techniques, etc. They were also curious as to why rural and urban American citizens would grow crops to sell and send the money overseas to help farmers in developing nations. The conversation and information exchange was fascinating. It was a learning experience for everyone in the room. Hopefulness and increased understanding emerged from all sides of the discussion.

We have been offered eighteen acres for corn next planting season. If you can add to this seasons' net income, please do so. Send a check to St. John's with the notation of "Fields of Hope" and your gift will be forwarded. Contact Bob or Jean Williams 277.9120 or rwilli1195@aol.com with questions or more information.

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review the draft of meditations for the following month and to offer gentle critiquing.

A training session will be held for new members to acquaint them with the format and style of the meditations and approaches for reflecting on scripture and to coach them on communicating their thoughts and life experiences effectively.

Web writers have expressed many benefits from their participation, including a deeper and more focused faith as a result of their reflection on scripture, a strengthening of their writing skills, useful in both their personal and professional lives, and the shared community that has developed from their monthly meetings.

St. John's Staff Changes

Denise Shadonix, the Business Manager for St. John's, has submitted her resignation to take a job closer to home in Ottumwa. We wish Denise well and are in the process of searching for a new candidate to fill that position. This is a busy time of the church year to lose a key employee so we ask your patience when dealing with staff as all will have

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added responsibilities until the position is filled. Our Nursery Coordinator Meggan Fox has also submitted her resignation. Sheryl Reed assures us that the nursery will continue to be fully staffed in the interim while she searches for a replacement.

We thank Denise and Meggan for their service to St. John's.

Mark Your Calendar!

Cookie Walk * Treasure Sale * Silent Auction
Saturday and Sunday, December 13 and 14



The days are passing quickly as we approach the ever beautiful holiday season and our goal is that we make this weekend the best and most exciting ever! In order

to achieve this, we need your help! We need your cookies! We need your treasures! Treasures may be anything you may not want or need anymore, but would surely make someone...adult or child... happy and grateful. Proceeds this year go to our Companion Parish in Tanzania.

Bring your cookies to the church the morning of Saturday, December 13 and take your treasure items anytime between now and that weekend. Questions? Need help taking items to the church? Call: Lou Johnston or Marci Drannen at 967.4549.

Gathering Christmas Gifts

For several years, WELCA has gathered Christmas gifts for the women and children at New Directions Shelter. The idea is to have an assortment of gifts for women from which the children can "shop" and select and wrap gifts for their mothers. What makes a child feel better than being able to give their mother a gift to open from them!!! Likewise, gifts for boys and girls are provided for the mothers to choose from to wrap for their children. This year, we would like to expand this assortment of gifts to include and women and children at the violence center and the parent's and children at Interfaith Hospitality for homeless families.

This would include a couple of gifts for fathers. To be able to do this, WELCA will need the help of others in our congregation in providing these items. We are just suggesting small, inexpensive items to help make a fun filled Christmas day for homeless families in our community. A container for these UNwrapped items will be available in the office area and also upstairs in or near Neuman Hall. This has been a favorite experience for WELCA for



several years and it is exciting to extend this to include even more of our homeless neighbors. So little can mean so much.

For any questions or more information you can call Janie Clemenson at 274-0924.

For Your Information

FREE YARN TO ANYONE

This donated yarn is available to anyone for any project. Prayer Shawl Ministry is using a different yarn. If interested call Barb Hyler at 262-5261 or Jean McKiney at 243-8311

ATTENTION: SENIORS ON MEDICARE

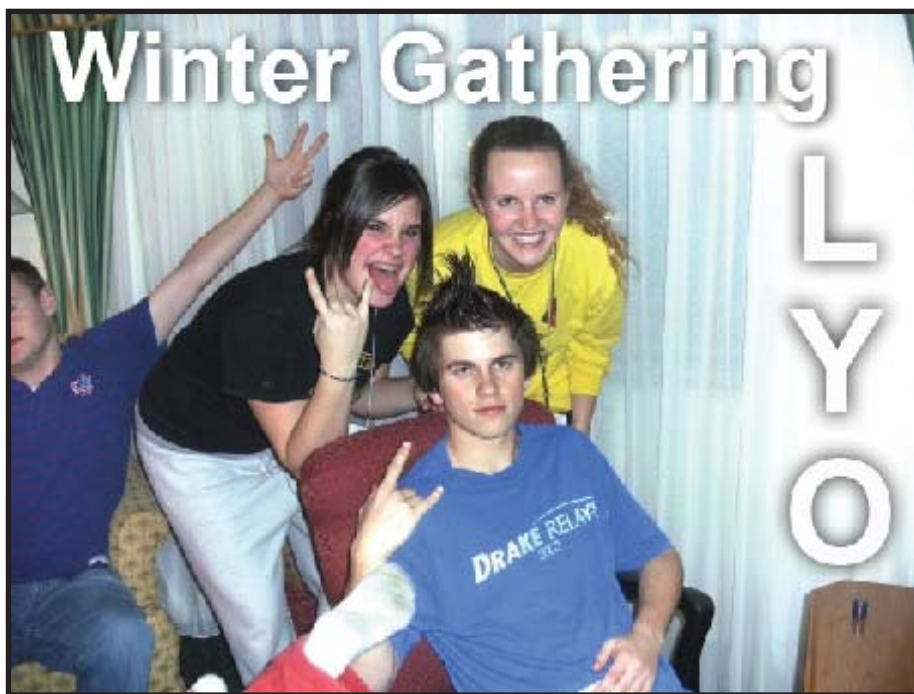
November 15 - December 31, is the time of year to review your Medicare options for 2009. This is especially true for your Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan since enrollees can make changes to their plan during this time period. If you desire free and confidential assistance in this review process call the church office at 243-7691 or SHIIP volunteer Larry Hedlin at 225-8197.

VOLUNTEER OPENINGS

The Iowa Lutheran Hospital Auxiliary has volunteer openings in its critical care waiting room, escort, gift shop, Not New thrift shop and Telecare services. Flexible hours are available and meeting new friends is guaranteed.

If you are interested, please stop into the Iowa Lutheran Hospital Volunteer office on the main floor of the hospital or call 263-5227.

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Several of St. John's high school youth attended the LYO Winter Gathering in Cedar Rapids, IA this last month. As you can see, they had lots of fun.

Read more on the LYO Winter Gathering on page 9.

MARCH EAGLE CALL DEADLINE

The deadline for all March Eagle Call information is due Monday, February 17, 2009. Please send information or articles, in digital format if possible, to Nick Koenigs. Nick's email address is nkoenigs@stjohnsdsm.org. If you cannot send it by email, drop it off at the church office. Thank you.