



The EAGLE CALL

Volume 41, Number 1
January, 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

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Robert Speirs
Associate Pastor
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Ramon Runkel
Visitation Pastor
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Website

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For all that has been, thanks.



For all that will be, yes.

~ Dag Hammarskjold

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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

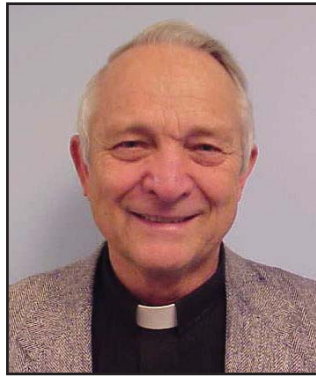
9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Saturday

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Next Eagle Call Deadline

January 19 at 12 pm



A Word from Our Pastors

Pastor Ray Runkel

“Blessed by the Saints”

The Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany seasons are cold, but still evoke memories that are rich and full of so many blessings, blessings that bring joy and wonderful feelings each year at this time. I think of my parents who had me during the early years of the Great Depression – and of grandparents who loved, cared for, and supported their families. (I know I had some great ones that cared and blessed me and others.)

As you know I have been blessed by Carla (my wife 1956-2008) and Mary Jane (my wife as of August 2008). Each time I hear Carla's favorite hymn, *Cold December Flies Away*, I'm reminded of the cold, overpowering brokenness that we face. However, all evil and even death are overcome by God's rich grace and power. As the hymn says, Christ "brings unending joy of our hope, highest hope, of our hope's bright dawning, Son beloved of heaven." (ELW 299) Mary Jane's presence has helped me refocus on life with a deeper appreciation for each day. I am reminded almost weekly that I "look 20 years younger." She has and is blessing me and it shows.

One of the most surprising blessings came years ago from an elderly Wisconsin Synod pastor. He served in the small Wisconsin town where I lived and served an ALC congregation. I heard that his parish was doing things to "get rid" of him. I went to see what I could do to support him and his wife, knowing he might not even speak to me. (Perhaps you know the Wisconsin Synod does not usually associate with the more liberal Lutheran churches or with pastors outside of their own group.) He came to the door. (I did not expect to be welcomed.) However, he invited me in and welcomed me, and we had a most pleasant visit. I will not forget, that although he was under attack from his church council, he turned to his wife and said to me, "Mama and I have never had it so good!!" He was so excited to be able to preach and teach and share the gospel and all the rest. The negatives really did not matter to him. I came away blessed by his strong faith and willingness to serve in spite of all the difficulties he faced.

As I reflect on all the blessings the saints have shared - including the pastors of St. John's and Good Shepherd, the people of St. John's and Good Shepherd, and most of all, those older saints of St. John's - I am thankful that they have shared their faith, hope, and love in Christ with me. This season is so wonderful and powerful because we experience God's continued presence even in the most difficult moments. Maybe it is especially in those most difficult moments that God's blessings are with you & me.

A Happy & Blessed New Year in Christ,

Pastor Ramon Runkel



Tree Decorating 2008



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 parish administrator. 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.

2008 Contributions – A contribution must be received on or before December 31, 2008 to be applied to your 2008 contribution statement. Backdated checks can NOT be accepted. Checks postmarked (stamped by the USPS) by December 31, 2008 but delivered after that date are the only exceptions.

Announcement

As most of you know by now, we have 2 sets of containers in our church for collecting numerous items that are distributed among various shelters or other places of need. But it also should be known that any of these items are also available to any one who has a need, whether a walk-in to our church or a fellow member. These items are donated from generous hearts who hope they can be of use. Thanks to all of you who contribute to these needs in our community.





Prepare for Worship

January 4, "Epiphany of Our Lord"

Epiphany means "manifestation." On this day we celebrate the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles – that is, to all nations. The word and sacraments are for us the great epiphany of God's grace and mercy. We go forth to witness to the light that shines brightly in our midst.

The readings are Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12, and Matthew 2:1-12. The hymns will be ELW 275, "Angels, from the Realms of Glory," ELW 301, "Bright and Glorious is the Sky," and ELW 665, "Rise, Shine, You People." At 8:45 the Joyful Noise will sing "Twas in the Moon of Wintertime" for the pre-service music. For offering Cathedral Choir will sing "Arise, O God, and Shine," arr. by Mack Wilberg. At 11 am, Rika Uchida, Drake University piano instructor, will play for offering and communion.

January 11, "Baptism of Our Lord"

Our re-creation in baptism is an image of the Genesis creation, where the Spirit/wind moved over the waters. Both Mark's gospel and the story in Acts make clear that it is the Spirit's movement that distinguishes Jesus' baptism from John's. The Spirit has come upon us as upon Jesus, calling us God's beloved children and setting us o Jesus' mission to re-create the world in the image of God's vision of justice and peace.

The readings are Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; and Mark 1:4-11. The hymns will be ELW 310, "Songs of Thankfulness and Praise," ELW 455, "Crashing Waters at Creation," and ELW 543, "Go, My Children, with my Blessing." At 8:45 Evangel and Boy Choirs will sing "I'm Goin' on a Journey" for offering and Cantorei will sing during communion. At 11 am Cathedral Choir will sing "Lo, The Heavens Were Opened," by Daniel Burton for offering and "In the Beginning Was the Word," Michael Ryan-Wenger during communion. The laying on of hands and anointing with oil for healing will be part of all liturgies this weekend.

January 18, "Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday"

Martin Luther King, Jr. is remembered as an American prophet of Justice among races and nations, a Christian whose faith undergirded his advocacy of vigorous yet

non-violent action for racial equality. He preached non-violence and demanded that love be returned for hate. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, he was killed by an assassin on April 4, 1968.

The readings will include a portion of King's "Letter from the Birmingham Jail." The hymns will be ELW 633, "We've Come This Far by Faith," ELW 841, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," and ELW 768, "Lead Me, Guide Me." At 11 am Cathedral Choir will sing "True Light" by Keith Hampton for offering and "I Surrender All," arr. Moses Hogan during communion.

January 25, Third Sunday after Epiphany

Jesus begins proclaiming the good news and calling people to repentance right after John the Baptist is arrested for preaching in a similar way. Knowing that John was later executed, we see at the very outset the cost of discipleship. Still two sets of fisherman brothers leave everything they have known and worked for all their lives to follow Jesus.

The readings are Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; and Mark 1:14-20. The hymns are ELW 677, "This Little Light of Mine," ELW 696, "Jesus Calls Us; O'er the Tumult," and ELW 540, "Go, Make Disciples." Offering music at 8:45 will be by Alison Bachman, and Cantorei will sing "You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore," by Cesareo Gabarain for communion. At 11am Cathedral Choir will sing "Lord of the Dance" arranged by Larry Fleming for offering and the Gabarain piece for communion.





In the City (and the World) for Good!

St. John's seeks to serve God's mission by sharing the Good News of God's love in word and deed – from downtown Des Moines to the other side of the world! Below are updates on various aspects of that mission, more than a few words of thanks, and ongoing opportunities to serve.

• **Do you need some last minute Christmas gifts for friends & family?** Equal Exchange coffee, hot chocolate mix, tea, and Divine Chocolate bars make wonderful gifts - and because they are fairly traded, they benefit friends & neighbors all over the world! You will find all of the above on the baker's rack in the narthex.

• **Thanks to all who helped provide our Serenity Seeker's group with a Christmas gathering on December 11th!** Serenity Seeker's is a group of clients from the Family Violence Center and mentors/allies that meets at St. John's on the 2nd Thursday of every month. If you are interested in knowing more about involvement with this group, contact Pastor Mithelman.

• **It is our turn to serve through the Interfaith Hospitality Network at West Des Moines Christian Church the week of January 18-25, 2009.** Please see the article on page 5 for what is needed and how to volunteer.

• **Thank you for your generous response to the Angel Tree and Mitten Tree requests for gifts for people in our community!** We were able to provide gifts for 20 guests from the Connection Café and the 3 families housed through the Interfaith Hospitality network, as well as numerous children and their families in need of hats, scarves & gloves.

• **We serve at Central Iowa Shelter & Services on January 18th & 19th.** You may sign-up to participate on the clipboards in the narthex. Please also watch for opportunities in the community to advocate for a new shelter – sooner, rather than later - that will house more people and provide more services to those struggling with homelessness.

• **Tanzania in July?** See the notice "below the fold" on the back cover!

Interfaith Hospitality Network

St. John's will be assisting WDM Christian Church in hosting homeless families in transition January 18-25, 2009.

We have opportunities to be overnight hosts any night that week. (8 pm until 6:30 am) We'll also be preparing and serving supper from 5:30 until 8:00 pm on Tuesday and Thursday, January 20 and 22.

If you have interest in helping with this important ministry, please see the sign up sheet in the Narthex, or contact Jennifer Early at 274-6872 or earlyjr@mchsi.com This is a great opportunity for individuals, families or groups to get involved in support of these families in need.

A.S.A.P.

After School Arts Program resumes on Thursday, January 15. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Darla Stiles at darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org or call 243.7691.

Couples Club Christmas Event





Small Groups

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

CALENDAR

3D

Wednesdays, January 7, 14, 21, 18 at 10:00 am.

In the Word—Saturday AM Group

will meet 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, January 12 and 26, 7:00 pm.

In the Word—3100 Grand Group

will meet Mondays, January 5 and 19, 1:00 pm.

In the Word—Early Group

is meeting on Mondays in January, 6:30 pm at the Earlys. They will be studying the Gospel of Mark. The group is open to new members.

EAGLES

will meet Friday, January 9 at noon in Neumann for a potluck and planning session.

Couples Club

Sunday, January 25, 2009, beginning at 5 p.m. at Karen and Dennis Zaabel's home to plan the new year's activities.

Prayer Shawl, Monday Group

will meet Monday, January 19, 1:00 pm in the Fireside Lounge.

Prayer Shawl, Tuesday Evening Group

will meet Tuesday, January 27, at 7:00 pm in the Fireside Lounge.

Lunch Bunch II

will meet Wednesday, January 21, 11:30 am.

Lunch Bunch I

will meet Thursday, January 15, 11:30 am.

Recreational Reading

will meet on Wednesday, January 28, in Rose Holm.

Scrapbooking

will meet Saturday, January 24, in Room 8.

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

MORE INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS

Prayer Shawl Gathering—Monday afternoon group will meet Monday, January 19 at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Lounge. The Tuesday evening group will meet Tuesday, January 27, at 7:00 pm in the Fireside Lounge.

EAGLES will meet Friday, January 9, at noon in Neumann to enjoy a potluck (please bring a dish to share—table service and a beverage will be provided) and will plan their year's activities. Respond to Darla at 243.7691 or darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org if you can attend and/or with any ideas you may have for tours or trips.

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, January 28, in Rose Holm. The book to discuss is *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan.

Scrapbooking will meet on Saturday, January 24, between 9:30 am and 3:00 pm in Room 8.

Chili Cook-off and Wii Tournament: Mark your calendars for Sunday afternoon, March 1, 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.

COUPLES CLUB CHRISTMAS EVENT





Worship & the Arts

MIDWEEK MUSIC FOR JANUARY

January 7

"Ballyhoo Foxtrot Combo," John Benoit, *Band Leader*

January 14

Ray Songayllo, *pianist*

January 21

"Tropical Steel," steel drum ensemble, Stan Dahl, *Director*

January 28

Sherida Josephson and Charles Miranda, viola duets

PIANIST RIKA UCHIDA GIVES SNEAK

PREVIEW CONCERT AT ST. JOHN'S

Pianist Rika Uchida is preparing for her annual Drake



faculty recital, and, like most performers, wants to give it an outing prior to the big event. She will be presenting portions of her program at St. John's on Sunday morning, January 4th, between services at 10 am in the Sanctuary. This is a rare opportunity to hear such a recital without leaving the comfort of your home on a winter evening, and we are very fortunate that

Ms. Uchida asked if she could do her program for us. She will also present two selections within the 11 am liturgy.

GUSTAVUS STRING ORCHESTRA CONCERT

AT ST. JOHN'S JANUARY 31



Is there any warmer sound than a string orchestra? Take the chill off January without a Caribbean cruise at a concert by the Gustavus String Orchestra under the baton

of Warren Friesen, Saturday evening, January 31st, at St. John's. The 7:30 pm concert will also include a choral set by the Iowa Youth Chorus under the direction of Kristen Stanton, so add the excitement of soaring, young voices to the draw. This concert has been arranged and is supported by Friends of the Arts at St. John's, and is, as always, open to the public.

A free will offering will be received. St. John's is responsible for home stays for the orchestra members on Sunday evening (yes, the group is in Des Moines through Sunday), so if you can house at least two student musicians contact Larry Christensen or David Giese.

"CREATING IN COMMUNITY" IN FEBRUARY

Some early publicity listed January dates for our annual Arts Ministry event "Creating in Community." That event has been rescheduled for Saturday, February 14th. Watch for details or check the St. John's web site www.stjohnsdsm.org.

Artist of the Month

The artist for the month of December Linda Emmerson from Ames. She is experienced in



Example of the art of Scherenschnitte.

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 up from January 3rd to the 30th. the profits being returned to St John's.



Children's Ministries

JANUARY SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

January 4

The Wise Men visit (Matthew 2:1-12)
 Big Idea—God guides everyone to Jesus.
 Sunday School resumes with a special Sunday School session. **All kids (age three-5th grade) and their parents** are invited to come to the **chapel** to hear about Epiphany and receive a *Magi Passport*. Then you'll be sent out on a journey to seek *the* treasure!! On your journey, you'll participate in some activities that will help you learn more about the season of Epiphany.

January 11

Jesus is Baptized (Matthew 3:13-17)
Faith Trait - Generosity
Big Idea - We are baptized with water and God's Word.

January 18

Jesus Sees the Fishermen (Matthew 4:18-22; 9:9-13; 10:1-4)
Faith Trait - Cooperation
Big Idea - Jesus' friends work together for God.

January 25

The Shepherd Cares for His Sheep (Matthew 18:10-14)
Faith Trait - Compassion
Big Idea - Jesus cares about every one of us.

GROWING IN FAITH AT HOME

Read the story about Jesus' baptism (Matthew 3:13-17). Talk with your child about what an important moment it was for Jesus to be baptized. What stories can you share about baptisms you have witnessed? These could include the baptism of family member, friends, your child, or even your own baptism.

NEW NURSERY COORDINATOR

Please welcome our new Nursery Coordinator, Amber Jackson-Elwer!

Amber Jackson-Elwer has been a member of St. John's since the fall of 2007. A lifelong resident of

the Des Moines area, she was raised in the ELCA and is very happy to call St. John's home. Amber is a graduate of Des Moines Area Community College and is currently a part-time student in the Graphic Design and Fine Arts programs at Grand View University. She is an experienced caregiver and very much looks forward to getting to know the families utilizing the nursery! Amber has been married to John Elwer for over 3 years and is the very proud mother of 11 month old Mark.

ADVENT PROGRAM, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14





Youth Ministries

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Have you ever wanted to know how the social networking websites, Facebook and MySpace, work?

Have you wanted to set up your own account and been intimidated? Do you already know how Facebook and MySpace work and have insight to share? If so, this class is for YOU!!! The Youth Ministry Team is sponsoring an informational class on Saturday, January 24 at The State Historical Building. It will be from 9-11am with breakfast provided by Baratta's. Please bring your laptops because the Historical Building has WiFi and we will be available to help you set-up your very own Facebook page! Don't have a laptop? NO big deal. Come anyway! This event is FREE!!! Please sign-up on the clip board on the youth kiosk outside the sanctuary.

SAVE THE DATE!

SAVE THE DATE! [raise it up] '09 (youth auction) will be Friday, March 27. More details to come!!! We will be raising money for our trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans, Louisiana!



MORE YOUTH NEWS

Middle School and High School: Watch the mail for events in January and February!

GREAT JOB to all of the high school students that helped with the Christmas Party for the Lutheran Services of Iowa clients! You did wonderful and they had a great time!!!

HIGH FIVES to all of the middle school and high school students that prepared food for sand served at the Connection Café on Thanksgiving weekend!! You are all AWESOME!!!

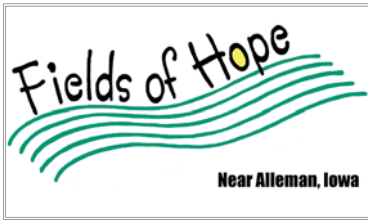
*Peace,,
Megan*

Advent Program (cont.)





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.

St. John's Web Writers

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 Snavely. 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.

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

Continued on Page 11



Continued from Page 10

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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TZ09...



Are you interested in meeting your brothers & sisters in Christ in our companion congregation, the Mramba Parish in the Pare Diocese of northern Tanzania?? A second St. John's journey to Mramba is being planned for July, 2009. Watch for more details in the January announcements.

JANUARY EAGLE CALL DEADLINE

The deadline for all February Eagle Call information is due Monday, January 19, 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.