



St. John's Lutheran Church

The EAGLE CALL

Volume 43, Number 9
September, 2011

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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The Eagle Call is published monthly by St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA 600 6th Ave, Des Moines, Iowa 50309-1606.

God gives...We share!

God gives... sun, moon, stars, oceans, trees, deserts, mountains, fields, streams, rivers, animals, birds, fish, beauty, music, poetry, story, dance, laughter, tears, song, color, sound, passion, friends, parents, children, companions, spouses, colleagues, strangers, witnesses, Jesus, Spirit, Word, community, love, consolation, joy, mercy, hope, life...

We share... through words, worship, work, resources, mercy, justice, peace-making, reconciliation, love, listening, prayer, compassion, tears, laughter, story, song ...

St. John's has been in the city for good for 146 years!

Celebrate all that God gives, and all that we are privileged to share with others, as we lift up our whole-life, year-round stewardship emphasis in September!



- Beloved Community begins on Wednesday, Sept. 7, 5:30 p.m.
- Rally Sunday, Sept. 11, God gives... We share!
- Bible Sunday, Sept. 18, sharing the Word with 3-year-old, third grade, and seventh grade students!
- Pancake Breakfast for all, Sunday, Sept. 25, 8 to 11 a.m.

God Gives, We Share...

14⁶ years in the city for good!

St. John's Lutheran Church

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

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Summer Office Hours:
Monday – Friday
9:00 am – 4:00 p.m.
Saturday
9:00 am – 12:00 p.m.

**Next Eagle Call Deadline
September 19 at 12 p.m.**



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

When Jesus arrived in the villages of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "What are people saying about who the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some think he is John the Baptizer, some say Elijah, some Jeremiah or one of the other prophets." He pressed them, "And how about you? Who do you say I am? Simon Peter said, "You're the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

Matthew 16:13-16

On Sept. 7 what we call Beloved Community, our Wednesday evening opportunity for fellowship, worship, study and music-making will resume. I sincerely hope that you will be in attendance, even if you have not attended in past years. Over delicious meals prepared with love, new friendships have been formed and joys and concerns shared. The meal flows into a time of worship, and after worship we disperse – children and adults alike – to either study and/or sing.

Studying and singing are not only favorite activities at St. John's, but are both found at the heart of a maturing, questioning, growing faith. In Bible study, as well as the study of text and melody, we are always seeking to answer the question Jesus asks the disciples: "Who do you say that I am?" Through study and song we attempt to put faith into words, words about God that someone else – a spouse, a child, a co-worker, a friend, a stranger – is waiting to hear. Faith comes from what is heard, Paul writes in Romans, chapter 10, and what is heard comes through the Word of Christ.

In his book, *Testimony*, subtitled, *Talking Ourselves into Being Christians*, Dr. Tom Long tells the story of the time that Fred Rogers, of children's television fame, was invited to address the prestigious National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Accustomed to hearing speeches from diplomats, top administration officials and key opinion makers, some of the members joked that with "Mister Rogers" at the podium it would certainly be a "light lunch." Long continues:

...when Fred Rogers stood up to speak, he said that he knew the room was filled with many of the best reporters in the nation... Rogers then took out a pocket watch and announced that he was going to keep two minutes of silence, and he invited everybody in the room to remember people in their past – parents, teachers, coaches, friends and others – who had made it possible for them to accomplish so much. And then Mister Rogers stood there, looking at his watch and saying nothing. The room grew quiet as the seconds ticked away... but... before Fred Rogers tucked away his watch, one could hear all around the room people sniffing as they were moved by the memories of those who had made sacrifices on their behalf and who had given them many gifts.

Long goes on to say that the same thing is true of how we came to faith in Jesus. If we truly take the time to think about it, we soon realize that we did not get our faith from a how-to book, and we certainly did not think it up on our own. We came to faith because someone spoke to us about God and Jesus Christ. Perhaps it was a parent, a grandparent, a Sunday School teacher, a youth group advisor – but someone told us, in words we could understand, who Jesus is. And because someone spoke to us, faith began to grow. Whether that faith is "grasped firmly or held onto by our fingernails," as Long says, we have faith because someone told us who Jesus is, because someone – in their own unique, haphazard way – answered for us the question:

Who do you say that I am?

I urge you to resume the studying and singing from which we took a brief respite over the summer so that, for the world's sake, we can add our own unique, imperfect but heartfelt, answers to the question Jesus asks; because, my friends, the world is, literally, dying for us to speak up, to say and to live who Jesus is for us all.

Blessings.

Council Update

Stewardship Emphasis Begins Sept. 25



At each council meeting, we have been talking about year-round stewardship. All everyone has belongs to God, and each of us is a caretaker. We understand it is important what we give to God, but it is also important what we do with what we keep, including our time and our talent. To me, it is exciting to see how our congregation is taking the Gospel to the community

in our daily lives through our work, activities and outreach; that is why we are again using the theme "God Gives, We Share" for our fall stewardship emphasis.

This fall we are kicking off our stewardship effort with a breakfast on Sept. 25. So come hungry to Weertz Hall between 8 and 11 a.m. Your stewardship packet will be available for pick-up. For those who attend Saturday night worship services, we will have hors d'oeuvres available after 5 p.m. worship on Oct. 1. The stewardship packet will include your estimate of giving card and an opportunity for you to reconfirm personal information as well as how you may want to share your time and talent. We are upgrading our database, so everyone's record needs to be converted to the new system. Please help us out by reviewing and returning your information.

Each of the following Sundays, we will be highlighting some of our ministry teams, so please stop by to learn more, join or show your support. These groups offer many opportunities for involvement, from Bible study to outreach, from worship assistants to office work, from global concerns to social events and so much more). Giving a part of your self is so rewarding, and the community we are building together is a wonderful benefit.

You may bring your completed information sheet and estimate of giving card any Sunday in October and place it in a stewardship basket in the Fireside Lounge. Or bring it on All Saints Sunday, Nov. 6, for our worship celebration, followed by brunch in Weertz from 8 to 11 a.m.

In Christ,
Kris Gregersen
President, 2011 Church Council

Faith Garden

Garden Hose and Panty Hose

The St. John's Faith Garden team met on July 31 between Sunday morning services to discuss how the team and the garden are doing. Two people care for the garden at a time on a rotating schedule of one week on duty, followed by three weeks off. The entire team shares garden updates by e-mail.

Thinking ahead to next year, we decided to:

- have the soil tested and build up the needed nutrients.
- find the sunniest spot for an additional garden plot. (We think the eggplants have been living in too much shade; the team will plant more shade-tolerant vegetables in that space next season.)
- research which vegetables are most requested by food-pantry patrons.
- choose vegetables that are expensive in grocery stores, but easy for us to grow.
- investigate economical watering methods.

Needs for now and the future are:

- more volunteers, especially people who live nearby. (One of this summer's gardeners has been driving 13 miles one-way to the plot.)
- monetary donations for garden supplies. (If you wish to donate, please mark the reference line "St. John's Faith Garden." Thank you to those who recently have made contributions to the garden fund.)
- monetary donations for a rain barrel to hook up to the garden hose.

And what about the pantyhose? Well, we need them to tie up tomato plants and cucumber plants to stakes, cages or fences. Save your runny hose, please!

The garden had to be watered almost every day during the 2 1/2 weeks in July and early August when the high temperature exceeded 90 degrees nearly every day. Thank you to the long-suffering volunteers who were responsible for the garden during the heat wave. Whew!



In the second week of August, we made the first donation to the Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) from the St. John's Faith Garden – nine cucumbers. In the photo, Pastor Bob Speirs hands them over to volunteers at the DMARC central warehouse. By the time this *Eagle Call* goes

to press, we hope to have made several more donations of tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and "cukes." Pastor Bob marvels at how the garden has exploded and declares, "It's great fun!"

If you wish to help with the St. John's Faith Garden in any way, please contact Diana Sickles at dsickles@mindspring.com or 255-5055.

Prepare for Worship

**Sunday, Sept. 4, Time after Pentecost,
Labor Day Weekend**

Conflict is a part of relationships and life in community. Jesus' words in today's gospel are often used in situations having to do with church discipline. In his epistle to the Romans, Paul reminds us that love is the fulfilling of the law. We gather in the name of Christ, assured that he is present among us with gifts of peace and reconciliation.

The readings are Exodus 12:1-14, Psalm 149, Romans 13:8-14 and Matthew 18:15-20. The hymns are ELW 522, "As We Gather At Your Table," ELW 648, "Beloved, God's Chosen," verse 1 of ELW 691, "Accept, O Lord, the Gifts We Bring," as the offertory and ELW 359, "Where Charity and Love Prevail." At both 8:45 and 11 a.m., the offering music will be Larry Christensen singing "Create in Me a Clean Heart" and Mary Rice Hopkins in medley with "Only by Grace" by Gerrit Gustafson and "That We May Be Filled" by Handt Hanson and Paul Murakami. The communion music will be the hymn, "I Come with Joy," ELW 482.

**Sunday, Sept. 11, Time after Pentecost,
"Rally Sunday"**

In this Sunday's second reading, Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

The readings are Genesis 50:15-21, Romans 14:1-12 and Matthew 18:21-35. The hymns are ELW 710, "Let Streams of Living Justice," ELW 711, "O Day of Peace," ELW 721, "Goodness is Stronger than Evil" as the offertory and ELW 720, "We Are Called." At 8:45 a.m. Asphalt & Stained Glass will sing "Unfailing Love" by Richard Bruxvoort Cooligan for offering and "The Lord is Kind and Merciful" by Jeanne Cotter, based on Psalm 103, the assigned psalm for the day, during communion. At 11 a.m. Cathedral Choir will sing "Our Father, We Have Wandered," harmonized by J.S. Bach, for offering and the Cotter setting of Psalm 103 for communion.

Sunday School teachers and youth leaders will be installed and commissioned for their ministry at the 8:45 a.m. service.

Sunday, Sept. 18, Time after Pentecost

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables, in which Jesus says the reign of God is like workers who get paid the same no matter when they start. When God changes his mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

The readings are Exodus 16:2-15, Philippians 1:21-30 and Matthew 20:1-16. The hymns are ELW 669, "Rise Up, O Saints of God," ELW 765, "Lord of All Hopefulness," ELW 721, "Goodness is Stronger than Evil," as the offertory and ELW 583, "Take My Life, that I May Be." At 8:45 a.m. Cantorei and at 11 a.m. Cathedral Choir will sing "Blessed Is He that Considereth" by Michael Wise, with Jennifer Horak-Hult, Erik Horak-Hult and Chris Frantsvog taking the solo trio parts at 8:45 a.m. and Susan Stageberg, Mary Giese and Paul Stageberg doing them at 11 a.m. The respective choirs will lead the congregation in Jeanne Cotter's setting of Psalm 145, "I Will Praise Your Name."

New Bibles will be given to third graders at the 8:45 a.m. service.

Sunday, September 25, Time after Pentecost

Jesus' parable about two sons, who don't do what they say, reveals surprises in the reign of God, such as prostitutes and tax collectors going before others into God's kingdom. Paul urges us to look to Christ as the model of humility, looking to the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

The readings are Exodus 17:1-7, Philippians 2:1-13 and Matthew 21. The hymns are ELW 526, "God Is Here!" ELW 772, "Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways," offertory ELW 721, "Goodness is Stronger than Evil," and ELW 538, "The Lord Now Sends Us Forth." At 8:45 a.m. Cantorei and Cathedral Choir will combine to sing "At the Name of Jesus" by Rene Clausen, which quotes from the Philippians text. Likewise, for communion they will sing "Show Me Your Ways" by Walter L. Pelz, accompanied by Larry Christensen, guitar, and Sue Odem, oboe. Offering and communion music at 11 a.m. will be by a male vocal quartet.

Midweek Music Returns

**Midweek Music 2011-12
First Noontime Concert Wed., Sept. 28**

Those who are familiar with the St. John's Midweek Music series will no doubt expect to hear that an outstanding lineup is in place for this fall – and this is understandable, given the consistent high quality of this offering. However, this season ranks with the all-time best with regard to the variety of styles and the mixture of old favorites and fresh offerings. We really will showcase some of the area's most accomplished musical performers.

The series begins Wednesday, Sept. 28, at 12:05 p.m. with folk singer and guitarist Seth Hedquist. A list of performers for the entire season is printed on the St. John's website and on bookmarks that you will find at the visitor's center in the Fireside Lounge, on the kiosks, and at the reception desk.

These 25-minute Wednesday noontime programs are offered free-of-charge to the wider community in the Sanctuary from 12:05 to 12:30 p.m. Those who can stay afterward will enjoy a hot, home-cooked lunch served in Weertz Hall for only \$6.

A New Season

A New Season Begins for Choirs, Musical Ensembles



It is no secret that the choirs and musical ensembles at St. John's are something special, and they have provided inspiration, color, beauty and depth to our worship for decades. The choirs will start rehearsals on Wednesday, Sept. 7, in connection with the

first Beloved Community event of the fall.

St. John's choirs include:

Joyful Noise (for Kindergarten, first- and second-graders). Rehearsals will be in Room 7 adjacent to Weertz Fellowship Hall from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. We will need some extra adult shepherds to help focus these very talented youngsters, so let Larry Christensen know if you can be scheduled at least part of the time.

Kisasa Choristers (for third through sixth-graders). This choir, directed by Sarah Garner and accompanied by Lisa Samuelson, will meet on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:25 p.m. in the Fuller Room. This gifted ensemble sings approximately once a month at the 8:45 a.m. service, for the Jester Park Service on Sunday, Sept. 2, this year, and for festival services, including All Saints, Christmas Eve and Easter as well as for the Maundy Thursday liturgy during Holy Week. A musical by Kisasa is also in the works for spring 2012.

Cantorei. This choral ensemble of about 15 adult singers perform twice a month at the 8:45 a.m. service. They rehearse Wednesdays during Beloved Community from 6:35 to 7:25 p.m. in the Sanctuary choir loft. Cantorei, directed by Larry Christensen and accompanied by Doug Holmgren, also sings for the 8:30 p.m. Christmas Eve service (a professional brass quintet will also perform).

Cathedral Choir. This ensemble, also of about 15 singers, will sing this year at the 11 a.m. service three times a month. Then once a month they will combine with Cantorei at 8:45 a.m. for the sheer joy of making music together in a larger group. To that end, Cathedral Choir will rehearse from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on Wednesdays overlapping with Cantorei's practice. In addition to Sunday morning liturgies, Cathedral Choir has a long tradition of singing for festivals and holy days such as All Saints, Christmas Eve, Good Friday and Easter Morning with full orchestra and organ. Masses, cantatas and the performance of larger chorus with orchestra are another facet of Cathedral Choir's liturgical repertoire.

There are no firm boundaries for ensemble memberships. Cathedral Choir and Cantorei combine for some Sunday services, festivals and concerts, and additional singers often join us for special musical works – including singers from Temple B'Nai Jeshurun! If you cannot make a regular commitment, think

about joining in the music-making for such special occasions. In addition, singers and instrumentalists are encouraged to form their own duets, trios, quartets and ensembles as they find opportunity.

Instrumental ensembles normally rehearse Sunday mornings between the 8:45 and 11 a.m. services. They include:

St. John's Chamber Orchestra. This is a group of string and wind players that rehearses from 9:55 to 10:45 a.m. Sunday mornings in the Multi-Purpose Room (MPR) on the third floor. They accompany liturgies (including annual Oktoberfest Service at Jester Park), hymns, cantatas and masses and form the basis of the full orchestra used on All Saints, Christmas and Easter. A stipendiary quartet of "String Scholars" provides a strong core, leadership, encouragement and on-the-job instruction to the other players. The first practice is Sunday, Sept. 18, at 9:55 p.m.

St. John's Brass Quartet/Quintet. This group also practices on Sunday mornings in the "Chambre du vent" – our fancy name for the blower room behind the sanctuary organ! This group joins on hymns and also occasionally combines with the chamber orchestra for some services.

Contact Larry Christensen, Director of Music, Worship and Arts, for more information.

Celebrating Sixty-One



Larry Christensen recently asked Kathy Kroll, long-time member of St. John's Cathedral Choir, to write an e-mail about her 61 years in Cathedral Choir. Although her words cannot possibly encompass all of her faithful service to St. John's, they are still, as Larry says, "a fantastic witness" that we want to share with you.

I am in my 61st year in the St. John's Cathedral Choir. I was 15 when I started and turned 76 on July 17 (this year). We only had two choirs then – Junior and Senior. Bernice Gfeller directed the Junior Choir, and her husband Ken Gfeller would be there and walk around to make sure everyone behaved, so there were (behavior) problems even way back then.

One time Ken was behind me listening to me and said, "Meet me after choir rehearsal." He took me to Bernice and said, "I think this gal can do some solos for you." I was 14 at that time. Then when I turned 15 that summer, he asked me to sing in Cathedral Choir. Of course, I couldn't sing on Sundays for a month or more (because you had to be 16 to be in Cathedral) and you had to be there for two (consecutive) weekly rehearsals if you missed a rehearsal before you could sing again on Sunday.

Of course, as the years rolled on, a lot of those guidelines went by the wayside. We know how that is; you do what you have to do to keep the music rolling!

Small Groups

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

CALENDAR

Quilting: Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. in Room 308.

EAGLES: Sept. 6-8, trip to southwest Wisconsin.

St. John's Moms: Saturday, Sept. 10, 10 a.m., Nursery; maternal fellowship and tot play group.

Saturday Morning Bible Study: Saturday, Sept. 10, 8:30 a.m. Location to be announced. Contact Ellen Fisher, ellenfisher123@yahoo.com, or Rod Snavely, rsnavely@aol.com.

Hardanger: Mondays, Sept. 12 and 26, 9 a.m., Neumann.

St. John's Networking Group: Monday, Sept. 12, 5:30 p.m., Gateway Market.

Lunch Bunch I: Thursday, Sept. 15, 11:30 a.m.

WIRED Yoga: Thursdays, Sept. 15 through Oct. 27, 5:45 to 6:45 p.m. (fall session), Fireside Lounge. Contact yoga instructor Corinne Lambert, callingwisdom1@hotmail.com (556-3679).

Photography: Sunday, Sept. 18 (date changed from usual fourth Sunday), 10 a.m., Neumann. Theme: "Seven days, seven photos."

Lunch Bunch II: Wednesday, Sept. 21, 12:30 a.m.

Scrapbooking: Saturday, Sept. 24, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Room 8.

Couples/Singles: Saturday, Sept. 24, 6 p.m., Des Moines River dinner-cruise. Meet at the dock across from the Botanical Center (come at 5 p.m. to watch Regatta finals). Cost: \$25 per person. RSVP by Sept. 18 at the latest to Kris or Kathy Gregersen, kkgregersen@gmail.com.

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

More information on upcoming events

EAGLES will be traveling to southwest Wisconsin for a three-day trip on September 6-8. Some of the sights they will be visiting are the Grotto at Dickeyville, Pendarvis Cornish Village, Swiss Historical Village at New Glarus, Little Norway at Mt. Horeb, Cave of the Mounds at Mt. Horeb, Circus World at Baraboo, Frank Lloyd Wright's Studio Taliesin at Spring Grove and House on the Rock at Spring Grove. For more information, contact David Stewart at stewjd428@gmail.com (265-6897).

St. John's Moms will meet Saturday, Sept. 10, 10 am in the nursery at church for maternal fellowship & tot play group. Facilitators are Kirsten LaBlanc, k.lablanc@gmail.com (491-0907), and Rachel Corron, rpcorron@gmail.com (313-6645).

The St. John's Networking Group will meet Monday, Sept. 12, 5:30 p.m. at Gateway Market. Contact Ellen Fisher at ellenfisher123@yahoo.com (274-5236).

Lunch Bunch I will meet Thursday, Sept. 15, at 11:30 a.m. New members are most welcome! Anyone interested in joining the group should reserve a space by calling Margaret Roby at 288-6304.

Photography will be Sunday, Sept. 18, 10:00 a.m. in Neumann. This has

been changed from the usual fourth Sunday, due to the Stewardship breakfast that day. The theme for September is "seven days, seven photos." For one week in September take a photo every day to share. If you have questions about the St. John's photography small group, please contact Rod Snavely at rsnavely@aol.com.

Lunch Bunch II will meet Wednesday, Sept. 21, at 12:30 a.m. Anyone who is interested in joining this group should contact Janet Figg at 279-6326.

Scrapbooking will meet Saturday, Sept. 24, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Room 8. Bring pictures and materials to work on. This group is open to anyone who enjoys scrapbooking. Questions? Contact Darla Stiles at darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org.

Saturday Morning Bible Study will begin Saturday, Sept. 10, 8:30 a.m. Contact one of the facilitators for the location, Ellen Fisher at ellenfisher123@yahoo.com (250-9916), or Rod Snavely at rsnavely@aol.com.

The Couples/Singles Group will enjoy the fall weather on the Des Moines River when they take the dinner-cruise on Saturday, Sept 24. The boat will depart at 6 p.m. for a 90-minute cruise. Meet at the dock on the river across from the Botanical Center. Cost is \$25 per person, payable at the time you make reservations. There also will be a cash bar. The Couples/Singles Group is sponsoring this event but it is open to all people (singles, couples, young and old). We need a crowd, but the maximum is 70 people. Kids can come, but there is no discounted price for them. Also, the Des Moines Regatta is on the river that afternoon, so come at 5 p.m. to watch the finals. RSVP by Sept. 18 at the latest to Kris or Kathy Gregersen at kkgregersen@gmail.com.

Recreational Reading will meet on Wednesday, September 28, 4:30 pm in Rose Holm. Check the bulletin announcements for the current book the group has chosen to read and discuss or contact Carol MacDonald for details, macpac00@mchsi.com.

WIRED Night Out will meet on Thursday, September 22, 5:30 pm at the North East corner of the Sculpture Park for a guided tour by our own Mari Slattery, then will enjoy fellowship over dinner at Americana's. Cost: \$2 per person for tour plus dinner. For reservations, e-mail Jacque Warming, jrwarming@msn.com or darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org or call Darla at 243-7691.

WIRED Yoga will begin a new fall session Thursday, Sept. 15, 5:45 to 6:45 p.m., in the Fireside Lounge

at church, and it will continue every Thursday at the same time through Oct. 27. It is designed for both new and experienced yoga participants. If you would like to attend, please contact the yoga instructor, Corinne Lambert, at callingwisdom1@hotmail.com (556-3679).

WIRED Retreat and luncheon, Sunday, October 23, 12:30 – 4:00 led by internationally known author, Joyce Rupp. This retreat, based on Joyce Rupp's latest book, *Open the Door*, offers inspiration and encouragement for personal growth. The Joyce Rupp retreat will be limited in the number of participants. The event is now open to women in the community as well as St. John's members. If you have not already signed up and wish to attend, please sign up in the fireside lounge as soon as possible or e-mail Darla at darlastiles@stjohnsds.org or sign up on our website, www.stjohnsds.org. Cost is \$30 for lunch and the retreat. You may send your check made out to St. John's Lutheran Church (with Joyce Rupp WIRED Retreat in the memo line) to: St. John's Lutheran Church, Attention Darla Stiles, 600 6th Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50309.

Women of the ELCA

The Women of the ELCA welcome all women of the congregation to attend one of our meetings. We meet monthly for group worship, education and fellowship. If you wish to serve the church by: serving funeral lunches, Midweek Music lunches, Lenten lunches, making coffee for coffee hour between services, gathering items for charity, giving attention to shut-in members, etc., then we are the group for you. If you have questions, call our membership chair, Mitzie McCloskey, at 277-1200.



WELCA officers for the year 2011-2012 are: Margaret Townsend, president; Judy Munger, vice president; Jean Batten, secretary; Kathy Kroll, treasurer; Gretchen Lindsey and Joyce Hanson, mission in action co-chairs; Mitzie McCloskey, membership; Evelyn Cole, Lois Group leader, Karen Shoenenberger and Roma Youngquist, Sarah Group leaders; Evelyn Cole, historian and communications chairperson.

Lois Group will meet Thursday, Sept. 1, in Neumann at 12:30 p.m. **Sarah Group** will gather at Marlene Fardal's home at 3609 Skyline Drive in Des Moines on Thursday, Sept. 8, at 9:30 a.m.

The Women of the ELCA have Children and Family Urban Ministries as their outreach project for September. The congregation also is invited to participate in supplying the following needs: School supplies, such as back packs, pencils, crayons, notebook paper, markers, glue sticks, drawing paper and juice boxes (100% juice).

Children's Ministries

Rally Sunday

All families are invited to Rally Sunday on Sunday, Sept. 11, from 10 to 11 a.m. in **Weertz Fellowship Hall**. This year's theme is God Gives, We Share.

The Growing Together Ministry Team is busy planning some interactive activities that will give you opportunities to give and receive just like the Rainbow Fish, make choices on a prayer menu and take a prayer home, view a slide show of how our brothers and sisters in Mramba

Parish in Tanzania share their gifts with others, enter a video booth to share what you are thankful for, walk through a stewardship maze, and munch on a special treat to remind you of your own abundance and God's call to share what we have with others! Register for Sunday School and get a sneak peek at the SPARK curriculum we'll be using in Sunday School this year!



Sunday School starts Sept. 18

All children age three through sixth grade are invited to register for Sunday School. Registration forms are available on the kiosk at the west entrance to the sanctuary. You also can find a registration form on the St. John's website. Our Sunday School program is based on a strong biblical foundation, dedicated to the mission of **learning** from the Bible, **living** the Good News, and **age-appropriate study** of Bible stories in ways that engage learners. Children will experience God's word through interesting and engaging discussions, games, art, music, and other activities.

Dates to Remember

- **Sept. 11:** Rally Sunday (10 a.m. in the Fireside Lounge at the back of the Sanctuary).
- **Sept. 18:** Sunday School begins. Bibles will be given to 3 year olds and third graders at the 8:45 a.m. service. Sunday School teachers will be installed at the 8:45 a.m. service.

We still need Sunday School teachers and helpers!!!

Could you commit to teaching or helping one Sunday a month? **You need not be a parent!** You need **not** have teaching experience or be a theologian. A teacher's guide is provided that gives you a brief description of the Bible story to be explored. The guide explains how to relate this to children in a Lutheran-based, age-appropriate way, and gives you choices of activities to share with your class. If you choose to answer this call, don't be surprised if **YOU delight in growing in your own faith** as you share God's love with the children of St. John's! **If interested, contact Sheryl Reed at 243-7691, ext. 193.**

KDZ@SJLC

This is a program for three through five year olds that meets during Beloved Community on Wednesday evenings. Connections are made between worship, education, and the Lutheran church year to help learners link their faith to their daily lives through music, movement, puppets, crafts, stories, games, and field trips throughout the church. Our first class will be Wednesday, Sept. 7, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Room 5. If you are interested in being a helper in this class, please contact Sheryl Reed (243-7691, ext.193).

Youth Ministries

Super-Fun Fall Schedule

Wednesdays

5:30-6:30 p.m. Beloved Community, Weertz Hall
 6:30-8 p.m. Confirmation (Grades 7 & 8), Multi-Purpose Room (MPR)
 Confirmation (Grade 9), Room 307
 8-9 p.m. JIF: Journeys in Faith (All High School students), Do Drop Inn (DDI)

Sundays

One Sunday a month there will be a service project for all ages! Be sure to watch your e-mail and the Sunday announcements for when the projects will be held.

High-school students will meet for various activities one or two Sundays each month. These activities will be planned by the students and will be advertised through e-mail and the Sunday announcements sheet, which is found on tables outside the Sanctuary. There also may be some Facebook invitations, so be sure to check often. Be on the lookout!

Mark Your Calendars

On Sunday, Sept. 18, at about 10 a.m., the middle-school and high-school students who participated in our summer service trips will give a presentation in Weertz Hall. Everyone is invited

Arkansas Trip Reflections from Megan and Pastor Bob

From Megan Clausen

We headed out on our adventure the morning of Saturday, July 30, in two SUV-type crossover vehicles, and we were sure not to be missed – the vehicles were maroon-purple color and dark teal (very flashy for a mission trip to Arkansas).

The students were equal parts apprehensive and excited, but about an hour into the drive most were asleep or chatting quietly. Our journey to our overnight destination of Bentonville, Ark., was quiet and uneventful. We checked into our hotel and ordered pizza. It was a great night to just hang out and get to know each other. At this point, we were all blissfully unaware of what the week would hold.

We woke up the next morning and headed for sustenance at the Waffle House. With our bellies FULL and a few hours to kill before we had to be in Booneville, we headed to the original Wal-Mart—the Walton 5 and Dime. Everyone enjoyed looking around and learning about the evolution of Wal-Mart.

We loaded up and began the several-hour journey to Booneville for our week of service. We took a scenic route through the mountains and, after a little bout with car-sickness, we made it safely to our destination.

Once we arrived in Booneville we noticed right away that this community was very different from our own, but also very different from any place we had gone to serve before. We have normally been in very urban cities. Booneville is town with a population just over 4,000. We learned that our group would be split up, and we would be serving in three different groups. Some would be doing work projects for the week, while others would be working with local children at the Boys and Girls Club. We also met students from Texas and made many new friends with a group from Mankato, Minn., who had all come to serve at the same site.



Monday morning we were ready to serve. It was well above 100 degrees, and we were outfitted in our jeans and t-shirts for work projects. One group headed off to scrape old paint off of an elderly man's deck and repaint it for him, and the other two groups left to clean up after a tornado that had demolished a small community nearby. There was little relief from the hot sun, but at the end of the day the students didn't talk about the heat or the gallons of sweat they had lost. They discussed how great it was to help people.

The rest of the week continued like this: hotter every day. One afternoon the temperature was around 117 degrees. The students served and cleaned and played with little kids and barely ever complained about the heat. Everyone got along wonderfully, and relationships were built. Their faith was stretched, and I believe it grew quite a bit. Ask the students for their stories – they are much better than mine!



We ended with a trip to Jacque Warming's lake home in Missouri. We spent time on the lake, ate delicious food, and told our stories! It was a great way to end our time together. As the students put it, "It was the perfect ending to the perfect week!"

The students who attended were Ann Strom, Kat Lunde, Amanda Speirs, Olivia Simpson, Elizabeth Macro, Kyle Simpson and Rolf Stageberg.

From Pastor Bob

Last fall St. John's Youth Director Megan Clausen came into my office and asked...so what do you think about rural Arkansas for our next mission trip with the high-school youth this coming summer? "We've been to Boston and Chicago, and so I think a change in location would be kind of fun and

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interesting,” Megan said. “I like the idea I told her at the time ... let’s do it.”

Arkansas would definitely be different and take us out of our comfort zone, including mine, I thought. So the plans were made, registrations to the Youth Works organization sent out, fund- raising events planned and carried through, vehicles rented and, before we knew it, Megan, Greg Anderson and I, along with seven of our high-school youth, were on our way to Booneville, Ark.

Now, I have to admit I have at times wondered about the practicality and purpose of mission trips and who they’re really supposed to help. On the surface, mission trips seem like a good idea – to go off and offer our time, resources and enthusiasm to those who might benefit from and appreciate some support and attention. It is indeed one expression of living out our Christian faith. After all, didn’t Jesus send out his disciples into the world on mission trips to proclaim the good news of Christ in acts of mercy, love and good works? On the other hand, does the work we do, the time and money that is spent, really make a difference in the lives of the people we meet and work with? Is that really the point of these trips?



Wouldn’t it be just as beneficial and practical to work in our own communities, in our own city, and save time, money and effort and focus on our own needs? Maybe that’s the rub ... to get us to live with and work with others with whom we don’t necessarily have a common identity, to

think about, experience and learn something about them in their own domains and cultures, if even for a short while, and to take us outside of our own sphere of comfort. In a number of ways, we become the object of the mission trip, rather than the folks we are sent to serve.

From my perspective, these trips have been beneficial because they have opened the eyes and hearts of our youth to the plight of others, whom they have only perhaps heard of on TV or read about in newspapers or magazines. On this particular trip, one of the communities that a few of our young people worked in, for instance, had suffered the devastating consequences of an F-4 tornado ... a tornado with winds in excess of 200 miles per hour. It is one thing to hear about the destruction such an act of nature can bring to a community, but quite another experience to witness up close and personal the damage

caused to people’s property and the devastating effect of the storm on their lives.



The outcome of such an experience for our youth was to be able to genuinely empathize with those suffering, to get our hands dirty along side of them in cleaning up debris and helping in even a small

way to restore order. We also listened to their stories of despair and grief, wondering what the future would hold, and heard their plans of how they will courageously and faithfully pull their lives back together and rebuild the community in which they work and live.

In the evening, we would then have a time of worship with the rest of the church folks who had gathered; new friends were made, phone numbers and Facebook sites exchanged. Afterwards, we went off into our own church groups where we would reflect on the day’s work, what we did, who we met, our highs and lows, and any insights that we could glean from the experience. It was gratifying and heartening to hear how much fun and satisfaction they were getting from serving others and working with each other.

And that’s yet another important aspect of these mission trips for me, to use them as a way to build relationships and a stronger sense of community and faithfulness in our own setting. To a degree, I believe that our young people learned a little more about each other during this week; relationships and trust in each other deepened, which I hope will continue to thrive as they worship and serve the church together in the years to come.

Thanks again to all who have supported our efforts in our Youth Ministry program, we have a great group of high-school youth, an excellent youth leader and dedicated adults who accompany these trips. It is my pleasure to serve and work with them all.

Pastor Bob



WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE AN ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THE EAGLE CALL?

E-mail businessoffice@stjohnsdsm.org and request the eEagle Call. Help us save on the cost of postage, use less paper, and see each issue in **FULL COLOR**.

Hospitality & Outreach



We Live in an Information Society – For Better or Worse We're Up to Our Necks in It!

I am definitely dating myself, but I remember life before zip codes, let alone the plus-four digits added most recently. One used to be able

to tell where a long-distance call came from simply by the area code; now they are too numerous to track. You were surprised when you answered the phone to discover who was calling. Now you check caller-ID and decide if you want to answer.

We are in an ever-increasing world of data, information that changes more rapidly than we can adapt to it. We are inundated, swamped. So, if it is difficult to keep up with numbers for friends and family, imagine managing a roster as long as St. John's, which is several thousand people. Just try keeping up with their household moves, cell phones, dropped land lines and ever-changing e-mail addresses – personal and work related.

So, in a continuing effort to keep our St. John's family records current, we need your help. Our plan is to reach as many members as possible to update our records. We have spent hours going over our list of members and contacts to evaluate their accuracy. This will give you an idea of what we found:

- Children listed in age from infant up to age 36. Now something tells me many of these "children" have grown up and possibly moved. Just a hunch.
- There are many blanks in our e-mail list. The most interesting are those who request an e-mail version of the newsletter, but fail to provide the e-mail address. We also need a periodic review for accuracy. Each month we get "bounce-backs" from those who have switched providers, but fail to notify us.
- There are many members, a few hundred, in fact, that we have not heard from in years. Some may have moved, may have joined other congregations, or may just be taking a break of sorts.

We would love to hear from these individuals and families, so we can update our records but also to remind them we are here when they need us. As a church family, we feel an obligation to be accurate in our record-keeping. Just as an example: not a week goes by that we do not receive inquiries regarding dates of baptisms or deaths, old friends who have lost track of former neighbors, and those seeking ancestry information.

Once a member on our list, you will always be on our list – in one way or another. Remember the "permanent record" we were all threatened with as a child? (Okay, those of us over age 45, maybe.) You will always be on the permanent record of St. John's. Your spiritual journey, as documented here, will be available whenever you or your family may need it. But, our notations can only be as accurate as the information provided to us. If you have had changes in your contact information, your adult children have moved, or if you simply want to make sure our records are

accurate, you need not wait for us to contact you (in fact, we'd love it if you initiated the communication). Feel free to contact Katie Tippins at katietippins@stjohnsdsm.org or 243-7691.

Scholarship Follow-Up

St. John's Sets Up Scholarship for TZ Women to Become Church Leaders



A group of St. John's women recently established a scholarship to send a woman from the Pare Diocese in Tanzania to Usangi Leadership Training College, where a dedicated staff of educators and church leaders are training the next generation of Tanzanian church workers. Students there become lay evangelists, church musicians, parish workers and even pastors. The college's last class included only one female.

More than \$2,700 was collected after an enlightening slide show and talk by Pastor Mary Jo Maass, who teaches English at Usangi seven months of every year and was home this summer on break. The money donated thus far was enough to pay two years of tuition, fees and living costs for one woman. The funds will be carried back to Usangi by Pastor Maass when she returns to Usangi in September.

Thanks to all who generously shared their gifts! The fund was named the Johanna Scholarship, because Johanna is the female version of (St.) John. The sister who will receive this scholarship has yet to be selected, but she will be followed through her years at school. Donors will be updated periodically on her progress.

Here's a little history about how St. John's first connected with the Usangi Leadership and Training College: The last St. John's Companion Parish travelers, who visited Mramba in February, spent a day there and coordinated their visit with Pastor Mary Jo, who is on the roster of the Southeast Iowa Synod.

The group learned that the college community of over 40 students, faculty and staff learn together, work together, eat together and worship together. Students range in age from 18 to 40. Tuition and fees are often paid by their home churches with the understanding that the students will return to serve the local congregation.

Pastor Simon Fue, the principal of Usangi, told the St. John's group that interested candidates for the college often cannot attend for lack of tuition and fees. This is especially true for women. The college and the Pare Diocese encourage women to take leadership roles in the church, but it is sometimes hard to convince local congregations to support the women due to

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the traditionally patriarchal society in which they live.

The group met one woman there who was just finishing her studies to be a pastor, and Pastor Rachel commended her for sticking with it as a minority of one in a class of men. The young woman then reported just how challenging it had been in her culture to attain this education.

Upon the St. John's group's return to Iowa, they decided to rally the women of St. John's and ask them to fund the Johanna Scholarship.

In the City (and the World) for Good!

In the twilight of life, God will not judge us on our earthly possessions and human success, but rather on how much we have loved.
(John of the Cross)

We received an e-mail from Mark Hanson, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, on Friday, August 12th, regarding the ELCA's response to the drought and ensuing famine in the Horn of Africa. It reads, in part:

In the Horn of Africa, the lives and livelihoods of millions of people have been devastated by the worst drought in 60 years. Crops have failed and water is scarce. Desperate families are abandoning their homes seeking aid. Hundreds of thousands of people have already made their way to refugee camps in Kenya and Ethiopia. More than twelve million people are in need of help now...For those who have made their way to the Dadaab camp in Kenya and the Doolo Ado camp in Ethiopia, the ELCA is helping provide safe water and nutritious food. Both campus were established with the support of the ELCA through ELCA World Hunger; the camps are managed by...the Lutheran World Federation. Thanks to the generosity of ELCA members like you, we have committed \$1.25 million for drought relief work in the Horn of Africa through ELCA Disaster Response...

Please, friends, make a financial gift to the World Hunger Appeal of the ELCA through St. John's, or go directly to the ELCA website, www.elca.org to make a donation on-line. As Bishop Hanson says above, "more than twelve million people are in need of help now."

And just a "head's up" regarding one aspect of our stewardship emphasis this fall (which begins with a fabulous pancake breakfast for all on Sunday, Sept. 24!) At their July meeting, the Congregational Council approved a special appeal to be extended - alongside our regular stewardship materials - encouraging you to make a donation to the new Central Iowa Shelter & Services facility. St. John's was one of the seven founding congregations of what was originally known as Churches United Shelter many years ago - and we were acknowledged as such at the recent groundbreaking event for the new shelter. Now we encourage you to support the new Shelter because, quite simply, this is what it means to be "In the City for Good!" (Stewardship packets will be available at the end of September.)

It is true, you know: *In the twilight of life, God will not judge us on our earthly possessions and human success, but rather on how much we have loved.*

Photos of the Month

Members of St. John's in attendance at the ground breaking for the Central Iowa Shelter and Services.



SEND US YOUR PHOTOS



Do you have photos from a St. John's event or group activity?
Do you have a photo that says "St. John's"?

If so, send them to scottl@stjohnsdsm.org or drop them off at the church office. You never know, you may end up in the next issue of the Eagle Call.

Return Service Requested

September 2011
Volume 43, No. 9

Mark Your Calendars!

Beloved Community begins on
Wednesday, Sept. 7, 5:30 p.m.

Rally Sunday, Sept. 11,
God gives... We share!

Bible Sunday, Sept. 18, sharing the Word with
3-year-old, third grade and seventh grade students!

Pancake Breakfast for all,
Sunday, Sept. 25, 8 to 11 a.m.

OCTOBER EAGLE CALL DEADLINE

The deadline for all Eagle Call information is **Monday, September 19, 2011**. Please send information or articles in digital format if possible, to Scott LaBlanc, scottl@stjohnsdsm.org. If you cannot send it by e-mail, drop it off at the church office. Thank you!