



THE VOICE

OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

October 2009

Volume 49, Number 9

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The *Voice* is a monthly publication of St. John's Lutheran Church of Northfield, Minnesota. Articles for the *Voice* must be submitted by the 15th of each month to the Church Office or by e-mail to:

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Mon. - Thurs.

9:00 a.m. to noon and
1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Friday

9:00 a.m. to noon and
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Tenth graders to affirm their baptism Oct. 11

St. John's gives thanks to God that the following young people in our congregation have indicated their desire to publicly affirm their baptism by participating in the Rite of Confirmation on Sunday, Oct. 12, at the 10:45 a.m. service: **Michael Anderson, Kristin Beck, Erik Berthelsen, Katie Bull, Rachel Crippen, Peter Duba, Bethany Emmanuelsen, Colton Kastner, Rachel Langehough, Adam Neuger, Molly Polzin, Connor Rowley, Isaak Tjaden.**

When they affirm their baptism, these young people will renounce all evil, profess their faith in the Triune God, and commit themselves more fully

to participate in the life of the congregation and to live out their faith in the world. This rite follows a six-year education and reflection program at St. John's beginning with Catechism (CAT) classes in grades three, four, five, and six; weekday and Sunday classes in grades seven and eight; and Sunday classes, retreats, and a mentor relationship in grade nine. The program concluded with an all-day retreat with the pastors and Mike Sherman at Gustavus Adolphus College on Saturday, Sept. 26.

Those being confirmed and their parents and mentors will meet for a

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God's work. Our hands. We are stewards!

Crisp October mornings remind us that we have come to summer's end and fall beckons. Homework, football, apple pie (with ice-cream for the indulgent) and ceaseless deadlines are the order of the day at this time of year. For the Stewardship Committee, October also signals a new year around the corner and we turn our focus to St. John's' annual Stewardship emphasis.

This year Pastor Crippen has suggested the theme, "Extending God's Love: God's Work. Our Hands." Over four weeks, beginning Oct. 18 and concluding Nov. 8, we will once again examine our call to fulfill this mission both as a church and in our personal lives. Where tithing is concerned, it is therefore worthwhile to examine both our hearts and our budgets and

consider the extent of our commitment in financially supporting the work of St. John's.

We are to cheerfully give from the bounty with which we have been blessed. As Paul states in his second letter to the Corinthians, "Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Whether we give one-tenth or a mite, let us do so after having prayerfully considered how we might embolden the work of extending God's love with our gifts.

Finally, as we consider our pledges for 2010 it behooves us to think on God's faithfulness to us when we do give. A

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Prayer and Care Ministry

*Pray without ceasing.
1 Thessalonians 5:17*

Prayer Ministry

Gathered in the Word: A time to explore prayer and Scripture together using a simple format and held in a contemplative setting. Watch the service folder on Sunday for *Gathered in the Word* prayer times in August. *Gathered in the Word* meets in the Stephen Ministry/ ChristCare room upstairs.

Prayer Chain: Prayer requests are welcome for any concern or thanksgiving. Requests are kept confidential and not included in Sunday morning prayers unless specifically requested. Contact Mary Cisar with a prayer request or to become a prayer chain volunteer: macisar@gmail.com or 663-1097.

*Bear one another's
burdens, and in
this way you will
fulfill the law of
Christ.*

Galatians 6:2



*Providing one-
to-one care and
encouragement*

The Grief Journey

Douglas Smith, a nationally recognized speaker and author, spoke at St. John's last month about different styles of grieving and different ways of healing. The journey experienced after the death of a loved one often leads to different destinations. Some may experience greater wholeness, and for others, perhaps greater brokenness. Many need to express feelings and seek support, while others are more likely to immerse themselves in activity. Smith also reminded us that yes, we need to grieve about yesterday, and all the opportunities that are past, and we do. However, there are some things we need to be doing today. We need to respond to the voices that are around us today. We must do our best in the words of Paul to "come before winter". We must open the door to the future in our lives.

There are things in our lives that will never be done unless they are done now. There are opportunities that only come once and then they are gone and there is no recapturing them. There are people who won't be here next spring and we don't always know who they are; a parent, a child, a spouse or partner, maybe a neighbor, a good friend, even someone at St.

John's. Each day there are voices calling to us saying, "Come before winter". And, according to Smith, tomorrow may be too late

People who grieve may turn for help to a grief counselor like Smith, or to a grief support group. They may also turn to a Stephen Minister. As we experience the loss of a loved one we may wonder just when we might expect to "get over" our grief. But do we really want to "get over" the memories, thoughts, uniqueness of the one we loved? Of course we don't. Through grieving, we meet daunting challenges, make critical choices, and reshape our lives. A Stephen Minister may be helpful in the process through actively listening and reinforcing the gifts which we possess. A caring relationship with a Stephen Minister reminds us that we are not as alone as we thought we were. If you or someone you know would benefit from the care of a Stephen Minister contact Joan Halvorson, 645-8445 or a pastor, 645-4429.

*Blessed are they who
mourn, for they shall
be comforted.*

Matthew 5:4

Bereavement Ministry

Grief Support Group begins meeting this month. The Northfield Hospice Grief Support Group meets this month on Wednesdays from 6:30-8:00. Contact Amanda Pettis, 646-1037, for more information.

Grief Booklets: book series is available for those grieving the loss of a loved one. Contact a pastor if you'd like a copy for yourself or for a family member or friend.



The following St. John's members died in this month last year. We list them so that we can remember these loved ones and their families in prayer "with reverence and affection."

September 2, 2008

Richard Nasby

September 2, 2008

Kenneth Peterson

September 29, 2008

Peter Rappe

September 29, 2008

Jack Tripp

From our pastors . . .

God's
work.
Our
hands.

Peter said, "Yes,
Lord, you know
that I love you."
Jesus said, "Feed
my lambs."
John 21:15



For a year now we've been focusing our work and mission on the theme *Extending God's Love*, and it's been exciting to see boards and ministry teams engage this vision and mission. As you can read on the front page, this theme will continue into 2010, with the addition of the words of the ELCA churchwide organization's theme for the year, "God's work. Our hands." Those four words sum up very well how the real action of extending God's love happens in the world – through us.

The Congregation Council met in a mini-retreat on Aug. 25 after its regular council work and brainstormed some focus points for this year as we look to be the hands and feet and voices doing God's work of love in this place. They came up with three main areas: Fellowship and Learning, Outreach, and Service.

Fellowship and Learning is a key way for us to grow as disciples together, part of the greater vision of the congregation. We are together that we might deepen in faith and love toward God and toward the world and each other, and we do that in our worship together, in our conversations and work together, and in many ways. But times of fellowship and learning are also very important. This year a main focus will continue to be the growth of our small group ministry here at St. John's. Formerly called ChristCare, our small groups are just that – small groups of people gathered around prayer, Bible study, fellowship, and sometimes service. There will be an expo between services on Sunday, Oct. 4, to give information on the many small group opportunities available to experience. I hope many will come, and then find a group they can be a part of and so deepen their discipleship.

Outreach is also essential to our work as the hands of God here. Finding ways to bring the Good News of God's love for the world in Jesus to

others through our words and actions is a central part of Jesus' call to us. There are many ways to work on outreach, and many are going on here already, including the ministry each member does when they invite someone to St. John's or bring them so they can know God's grace, too. For this year, the council has decided to focus on expanding and improving our hospitality ministries. This includes Second Wednesday meals and other additions to the Wednesday programming, the Sunday Night at St. John's worship services, and supporting the work of the new Welcome Ministry Team, who will help us be hospitable and welcoming on Sunday mornings.

The third area is *Service*, and this is literally the "our hands" part. We are living fully as disciples of Jesus when we are using the gifts God has given us to make a difference in the world, getting our hands dirty as we work for the good of God's kingdom. It's a call and a blessing that God has given us to do this. So we will continue to lift up our Shared Ministries program at St. John's, led by Regina Hassanally, and invite all members to discover their passion and gift for service. We can make an enormous difference in the world by using our hands to extend God's love, and that's what this focus is all about.

Sounds like a lot of things to do, doesn't it? But in all three areas there are many exciting things underway and many faithful people already working. How might you get involved? Where is your place in the mission of St. John's? I have no doubt that there is a place for each of us, and that God has given all of us, including you, gifts to grow as a disciple and become signs of God's love in the world and to each other. May God continue to make this vision a reality among us!

In Jesus' name,

September Actions

Memorials and Gifts

Special Gifts and Memorials

In memory of **Ralph Haugen**: by Marilyn Boschee, Gary and Jean Springer, James Mason, Wendell Arneson and Beth Christensen, Penny Bidne and Verle Rhoades, Patrick and Kathleen Quade, Josephine Hetcher, Ruth Gilmore.

In honor of **the baptism of Lars Vezauskas**: by Terry and Norma Gilbertson.

In memory of **Marion Finholt**: by Gary and Elizabeth Wicks.

In memory of **Ansley Gunderson**: by Lester and Della Gunderson

In memory of **Rebecca Johnson**: by Marilyn Boschee.

In memory of **John Distad**: by Julian and Elizabeth Trangsrud.

St. John's Foundation

In memory of **Ralph Haugen**: by Millie Johnson, Joseph and Mary Shaw, Kenneth and Lois Wilkens.

In memory of **Dan Palm**: by Joseph and Mary Shaw.

In memory of **Ralph Strand**: by Mildred Johnson.

In memory of **Ray Larson**: by Lester and Della Gunderson, Donald Kimber.

In memory of **Al and Marion Finholt**: by Ken and Lois Wilkens

Radio Fund

In memory of **John Distad**: by Millie Johnson

In memory of **Ralph Haugen**: by Paul and Marilyn McRae Raadt.

In memory of **Ray Larson**: by Millie Johnson.

In memory of **Bev Pinc**: by Mildred Johnson

Stewards of Grace Fund

In memory of **John Distad**: by Lorene Elg

Other Actions

Baptisms

Camila Marie Macias, daughter of Juan and Nichole Macias; sponsors are Adam Van Sickle and Miguel Macias; August 2, 2009

Anna Jane Bash, daughter of Brent Bash and Trish Goodrich; sponsors are Jeff and Betsy McLaughlin; September 6, 2009

Charlotte Leigh Doeden, daughter of Jamison and Jodi Doeden; sponsors are Lisa Broitzman, Christopher Doeden, Doreen Doeden; September 13, 2009

Sophia Evelyn Conn, daughter of James and Ingrid Conn; sponsors are Frances and Scott Boehning, Carla and Terry Waletzko; September 20, 2009

Weddings

Amy Rudser and Joshua Gumm, September 26, 2009

Funerals

Raymond Larson, September 1, 2009

Ralph Strand, September 10, 2009

Beverly Pinc, September 12, 2009

Sylvia Johnson, September 14, 2009

Walt Johnson, September 23, 2009



WelcomeFest 2009 - Sept. 20, 2009



Music Life at St. John's

Music Ministry Notes:

- Childcare is available during Senior Choir rehearsal time (7:00-8:30) on Wednesday evenings for parents who would like to sing. If you are interested, please call Dan Fenn to make a reservation (645.4429 ext. 58).
- The Rejoice Ringers handbell choir will begin rehearsals on Thursday, Oct. 15 at 5:15 p.m.
- A note from Alleluia Choir director Jenny Pelletier...
 - Alleluia Choir is off to a GREAT start! If there are any other K-1st graders who would like to join us, we welcome you! This group sings about once per month for our church services, with one or two field trips planned this year. Choir provides a great introduction to music and teaches us the importance of sharing our gifts with others (and it's free!). Please contact Jenny Pelletier (664-9296) with any questions.
- October Choir Singing Schedule
 - 4th – 8:30 – Senior; 10:45 – Hosanna and Jubilate
 - 11th – 8:30 – Alleluia, Hosanna, Senior; 10:45 – Laudate
 - 18th – 8:30 – Senior; 10:45 – Laudate
 - 25th – 8:30 – Senior; 10:45 – Jubilate
- Wednesday, Oct. 14 – no rehearsals for Alleluia, Hosanna, Jubilate, or Laudate choirs due to the MEA holiday

Sunday Morning Concert

The first Sunday Morning Concert of the season is Sunday, October 18 at 9:45 a.m. in the St. John's sanctuary. The program will feature some of St. John's talented instrumentalists and vocalists with organist Dan Fenn.



News and Events

Free Yoga Classes began on Sept. 18

This is open to all adults who are interested in beginning and developing a weekly yoga practice. Class will be on Fridays 4:15-5:15 (with the exception of 10/16, 11/27, 12/25, 1/1, and 4/2). This class is being taught by Patsy Ophaug, Certified Yoga Teacher (by Yoga Alliance) as part of Extending God's Love through St. John's Church: Faith and Health Board. This is intended to be inclusive for St. John's members as well as others in the community. Please contact Patsy at 645-6231 with any questions.



Special Dessert Sunday's a Success!

Fall has arrived, and the end of our Special Dessert Sundays has completed with great success. We even had to set up additional tables for our Peach Sunday desserts. We hope everyone enjoyed the Rhubarb, Strawberry and Peach desserts!

Our hope is that you also enjoyed the fellowship with friends in the St. John's congregation and perhaps met some new friends. It is a great time to sit around the tables in St. John's Hall enjoying desserts and conversations.

The Hospitality Team heartily thanks the many of you ladies and gentlemen who baked the pies and treats. We also appreciated the workers who volunteered to work in the kitchen before and after these events. Many of you saw a need to help and offered your services.

Many, many thanks to all of that helped make these events successful! We are hearing requests to continue them next year. The Hospitality Team thanks all of you for sharing your talents!

- Guy, Sue and Char

Confirmation, cont. from p. 1

breakfast, rehearsal, and group photograph on Saturday, Oct. 10, at 9:00 a.m. in St. John's Hall and the sanctuary. Please pray for these young people and their faith and life as they make this commitment and affirmation.

Thrivent Builds Thank You

St. John's members raised \$1,300 for the 2009 Rice County Habitat for Humanity's Thrivent Builds home in Dundas. This surpasses the goal of \$1,200! In addition to the money raised, St. John's volunteers worked at the Thrivent Builds home on Aug. 19. Thank you to: Mark Anderson, Greg Colby, Terrence and Regina Hassanally, Saul McBroom, Jennie Redfield, Mike and Karleen Sherman, and food preparers Amy McBroom and Debbie Nitz. Thank you St. John's! Together we are extending God's love.

Understanding Memory Loss

"Understanding Memory Loss" will be the theme of the Faith and Health St. John's Forum on Sunday, Oct. 11. Gerise Thompson, Rochester Regional Center Director of the Minnesota/North Dakota Chapter of the National Alzheimer's Association, will be the presenter.

Many of us know or have a family member or friend living with the sadness and challenges of Alzheimer's disease or some other form of dementia.

Alzheimer's disease was named after Dr. Alois Alzheimer, a physician in Munich, Germany, whose observations and findings contributed to the research of the disease as we know it today. Dementia is the umbrella term for many brain diseases and disorders; Alzheimer's disease being the most common.

Gerise will help us understand the difference between various forms of dementia and normal aging. She will also explain the importance and advantages of getting an early thorough diagnosis and explain possible medications and other resources available.

As a follow up to the Oct. 11 presentation by Gerise Thompson, the St. John's Stephen Ministers are leading a discussion of Mary Gordon's short story, "Mrs. Cassidy's Last Year". The story is about an elderly man who is caring for his wife at home as her dementia worsens. Pr. Johnson used the story as part of a sermon a few months ago. The discussion will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 20 at 7 p.m. in the Fireside Room and all are welcome to attend. Copies of the short story are available in the church office.

I have never tasted manna from heaven but I have personally experienced the faithful provision of God time and again. Each time I do, for some reason, I am surprised and humbled. I am surprised that God could be so good, so faithful, meet my needs so perfectly. And I am humbled that God would lovingly do so over and over again.

There have been times in my life when God's provision was all I had. When I was a toddler with my parents finishing college degrees and temporarily joining the ranks of the "working poor," my mother opened our front door to a bag of groceries lovingly given by someone who had more than we did. When I was in seminary I knew the balance of my checking account to the penny because sometimes pennies were all there were and I never went without, never missed a bill, never knew real need. A significant theme in my life story is a testimony to God's faithful provision.

Unlike the Israelites I wasn't wandering in a desert and manna and quail have never appeared before me out of thin air. God has always been faithful to meet my needs but in ways different than the faithfulness shown in the book of Exodus. God's faithfulness in my life has more often than not been demonstrated through people. A person left groceries on my family's doorstep and that person exemplified the tangible faithfulness of God. A living person bequeathed a sum of money to my seminary that translated into a tuition scholarship that enabled earning an M.Div. for me.

In my life God has used the generosity of others to make tangible his faithfulness. There is the nagging question of those whom God seemingly does not provide for. Our brothers and sisters who know genuine need, who are without homes, shoes, clothing, or food. Jesus referred to them as "the least of these." His lessons regarding our treatment of those most in need can seem quite harsh. He casts away those of us who do nothing for our brothers and sisters in need and warmly invites into the kingdom those who served Christ in serving others.

It doesn't seem to make sense. Many of us proclaim and know for ourselves God's faithful provision, but we live in a community with those who know the depths of poverty and need. It is a nagging question indeed: how do we explain God's faithful provision to some and not to others?

I cannot help but wonder whether we are part of the answer in our refusal to respond to the needs of the "least of these." I have, in part, known God's faithfulness because people of God have made it tangibly so in my life. Perhaps others have needs because the people of God refuse to live in obedience to Christ's commands and meet the needs of those around us.

In the summer of 2004 before I left to work as a public health intern in the southern parts of India, my godmother gave me a written copy of this prayer of Mother Teresa. It profoundly affected the way I think about the "least of these" and I trust God will use it to transform your heart, mind, and spirit as well.

"Dearest Lord, may I see you today and every day in the person of your sick, and, whilst nursing them, minister unto you. Though you hide yourself behind the unattractive disguise of the irritable, the exacting, the unreasonable, may I still recognize you, and say: 'Jesus, my patient, how sweet it is to serve you.' Lord, give me this seeing faith, then my work will never be monotonous. I will ever find joy in humouring the fancies and gratifying the wishes of all poor sufferers. O beloved sick, how doubly dear you are to me, when you personify Christ; and what a privilege is mine to be allowed to tend you. Sweetest Lord, make me appreciative of the dignity of my high vocation, and its many responsibilities. Never permit me to disgrace it by giving way to coldness, unkindness, or impatience. And O God, while you are Jesus my patient, deign also to be to me a patient Jesus, bearing with my faults, looking only to my intention, which is to love and serve you in the person of each one of your sick. Lord, increase my faith, bless my efforts and work, now and for evermore, Amen"

-Regina Hassanally



Serving on Sundays

Serving in October

Acolytes

- October 4** (8:30) Greta Hummel, Hannah Cuddy; (10:45) Nicholas Gonnerman, Brandon Kimber
October 11 (8:30) Hunter Redfield, Noah Parker; (10:45) Confirmation Class
October 18 (8:30) Bailey Dell, Katelyn Canedy; (10:45) Peter Crippen, Tanner Ruppe
October 25 (8:30) Jimmy Rowley, Karl Amundson, Mike DeCramer; (10:45) Cameron Judge-Becker, Kirsten Buck, Irene Duba

Coffee

- October 4** Nick Neeb and Rosalyn Eaton-Neeb, Deanne and Christopher Weber, Lenora St. Martin
October 11 Mark and Kathy Mellstrom, Donna and Richard Werdahl, Myron and Carol Solid
October 18 Guynell and Jon Reid, Alice and Bruce Rickert
October 25 Margaret and Leonard Hoffman, Ron and Sue Rodman, Alice Nasby

Communion preparers

- October 4** Elvin and Irene Heiberg
October 11 Gloria and Tom Porter
October 18 Marilyn McCrae Raadt, Barb Knaak
October 25 Erik and Carol Hong

Nursery

- October 4** (9:30) Todd and Connie Menssen
October 11 (9:30) Rosalyn Eaton-Neeb
October 18 (9:30) Amy Willkomm
October 25 (9:30) Kris Vatter

St. John's Welcome Team

- October 4** (8:15) The Swanson family, Dennis and Jane Rinehart; (10:30) Mary and Peter Crippen, Bruce and Alice Rickert
October 11 (8:15) Mike and Suzanne Sylvester, Bob and Lois Wrede; (10:30) David and Sue Rod, Marilyn McCrae Raadt
October 18 (8:15) John and Elizabeth Bade, Jennifer and Jerry Bothun; (10:30) Canon/Bull family, Will and Gert Brosz
October 25 (8:15) Bob and Lois Wrede, Doug Johnson; (10:30) John and Carrie Duba, Dick and Jo Dahlin

Ushers

- October 4** (8:30) Doug Child, Alan Alberg, Alice Bates, Duane Benson, Len Hoffmann, Rick Hillard, Dan Lueck, Gordon Mickelsen, Sandy Whitworth, Bill Whitworth; (10:45) Wes Pearson, Brian Boyum, John Hanson, Peggy Hanson, Brandon Kimber, Dale Kimber, Don Kimber
October 11 (8:30) Bob Gelle, Jim Enestvedt, Bob Johnson, Chuck Lunder, Rob McCarthy, Ruthie Neuger, Tom Porter, Don Sahling, Myron Solid; (10:45) Jonathan Norrie, Terry Dell, David Halsor, Dick Kleber, Todd Nichol, Kristin Nichol, Guy Reid, Jon-Erle Reid, Steve Williams
October 18 (8:30) Mark Anderson, Jim Bierman, Jerry Bothun, Dave Hagen, Sue Hagen, Nicholas Gonnerman, Patsy Ophaug, John Ophaug; (10:45) Margaret Hayford O'Leary, Bonnie Jean Flom, Lowell Johnson, Todd Iverson, Andy Langehough, Greg Norman, Doug O'Leary
October 25 (8:30) Dallas Berg, Niles Austvold, Myron Dack, Erik Hong, Eric Lund, Mark Polzin, Bruce Rickert, Ken Wilkens; (10:45) Corrine Heiberg, Elvin Heiberg, Tim Eklund, Lois Eklund, David Rudser, Susan Rudser, Andy Westerback

News and Events

Next meeting:
Monday, Oct. 12
7:00 p.m.
Fireside Room

“Justice in the
Courts:
Consequences
of Budget Cuts”
Greg Colby,
Managing
Attorney
for the
Owatonna
Office of MN
State Public
Defenders, Third
Judicial District

Bread for the
World Sunday
is
Oct. 25.

From the Peace and Justice group . . .

Reducing Justice?

Cuts in the State budget flash in newspaper headlines. The effects of these cuts are rarely analyzed or reported. How concerned should we be about the reductions? In the case of the courts and legal system we hear of crowded court calendars, diminished support staff for judges and attorneys. We can sense that justice will be much slower and may suffer in other ways.

Greg Colby, whose career has been in criminal defense since 1985, has a passion for his work. Since 1992 he has been a State Public Defender, the last 12 years being full time in this role. Currently he is the Managing Attorney for the Owatonna Office of MN State Public Defenders, Third Judicial District. He appears in five counties for this work.

On Oct. 12 he will speak on the adverse impact of state budget cuts on the justice system with special attention to juvenile

justice and child protection. For example, there has been a withdrawing from representing people charged with misdemeanors (traffic violations, DWI, domestic assault). The significance of this can be seen when, in the course of a trial, a simple misdemeanor may be changed to a gross misdemeanor with increased fines, increased jail time and implications for future employment and further consequences.

More dire results come when a gross misdemeanor is changed to a felony. Within the system, opportunities to work to correct the causes of crimes or criminal behavior are reduced.

He will bring more details about the changes and share his great concern for assuring that juveniles receive justice in the courts, with the hope of restoring them to useful lives in the community.

Bread for the World Sunday, Oct. 25

The St. John's Peace and Justice group invites the congregation to join with other Bread for the World (BFW) covenant congregations across the country on Sunday, Oct. 25, to amplify this collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad.

Ed Payne, a longtime volunteer with the Midwest region of BFW, will speak at St. John's Forum on that Sunday. He will present the compelling rationale for **reform of U.S. foreign assistance**, the focus of the 2009 BFW Offering of Letters. He will remind us again of the urgency of reducing world poverty and hunger and of our opportunity and obligation to advocate with our representatives in government on behalf of the poor and the hungry. There will be time for letter writing during the forum hour.

Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, President of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, pens these words in support of the offering of letters: “The universal Christian symbol is the cross, a transcendent fixture that stands with both a vertical and a horizontal element. Bread for the World's 2009 Offering of Letters reconciles both elements where our commitment to God, the vertical, shines with our care for the poor and the hungry, the horizontal. Via these letters, our national elected officials will understand the moral imperative to alleviate poverty and hunger. They will join with the faith community in fortifying the greatest of all wars in our generation, the war against apathy, injustice, and poverty. Let us pray that the 2009 Offering of Letters will fortify a cross with the complete message of our Lord, bringing Good News to the poor.”

Mission Outreach



Adopt-A-Highway

This month's Hands and Feet project is the fall clean-up of St. John's section of State Highway 246. Meet in the High School parking lot across from the cemetery on Saturday, October 3 at 1:30 p.m. Wear comfortable but durable shoes and dress for the weather. Safety

vests, gloves, and a snack will be provided. Children 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Call the church office to sign up. Thank you for helping to take care of this small part of God's creation!

Update from Japan

This is a portion of the September newsletter from Charity Hall. Charity teaches English and serves at Koishikawa Lutheran Church in the ELCA's J-3 program. St. John's has supported Charity's work since 2007.

Greetings from Tokyo!

In August, I had the opportunity to stay at the Asian Rural Institute (ARI), which is currently hosting 30 participants from 18 different countries with approximately 50 other staff and volunteers from around the world. With English as the common language we did everything together from early morning stretches, to picking vegetables, to worship, to weeding. Learn more about ARI at www.ari-edu.org/english/index.html.

September marks my two year anniversary in Japan and signals the beginning of the end as I move into my last six months with the J3 program. Classes officially began the second week of September with Bible studies, English conversation classes, English worship and a children's dance class. It was admittedly hard to be back to routine after a dynamic summer but great to see students again. Please keep these ministries in your prayers that God's Spirit might move mightily in the hearts of all involved.

Thank you for your continued support, thoughts and prayers. I appreciate it so!

In peace, Charity

Emergency fund still low

These are hard economic times, and that affects the ones on the edge more than most of us. As said in last month's *Voice*, we've seen an increase in requests for help at St. John's the past few years, and the Pastors' Emergency Fund is very low. Thanks for the gifts we've received so far, which will help. Gifts come into this fund without much invitation, but given its current level, Pr. Crippen and Pr. Johnson would like once again to make the congregation aware in the event that some would like to designate a gift to help replenish this fund.

Mission Statement: To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

Our theme for 2008-2009: One World: Our World.

Websites for newsletters and information: semnsynod.org and womenoftheelca.org

Oct. 1 – Thursday, 8:45 a.m. – General Meeting Field Trip to the Institute of Arts. The Rev. Sarah Henrich, professor at Luther Seminary and the author of this year's "Lutheran Woman Today" Bible study on Romans will give a tour. Previous registration \$25

October Schedule:

Oct. 5 – Noon - Bible study leaders meet in the Fireside room.

Oct. 6 and 20 – 9:30 a.m. – Knitters meet in the Library.

Oct. 7 & 8 – Circles meet.

Oct. 12 & 15 – Women of the ELCA Workday for Quilting and other mission projects. Quilt preparation is the Monday before workday at 9:00. Quilts are tied on Thursday.
The work is easy and the fellowship is fun.

Women interested in joining a Circle, please contact Ann Ness at 645-5133 for further information and to make contacts.

Circle Bible Study Regular Meeting Times each month are the second Wednesday or Thursday at the times below:

Lydia – Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. Marilyn

Boschee & Judy Smith, Leaders

Sarah – Wednesday, 9:30 a.m. Carole

Nesheim, Leader

Martha/Claudia – Thurs., 9:30 a.m.

Eulalie Smestad, Leader

Elizabeth – Thursday, 1:30 p.m.

Darlene Hand & Iva Dodson, Leaders

Abigail/Rebecca – Thurs., 2:00 p.m. Gert

Brosz, Leader

Mary – Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Rachel Stark, Leader

Miriam – Time to be decided

Cheryl Buck, Leader

Womens' Breakfast Group, second

Saturday at 8:30 a.m. in Fireside Room,

Kathy Mellstrom, Leader.

Looking Ahead::

Nov. 5 - Thursday – 1:00 p.m. – General Meeting: Daniel Fenn, Director of Music Ministry, guest speaker. The "Thankoffering" will be collected for the Synod Women of the ELCA.

School bags for LWR are cut and ready to assemble. Pick them up in the Commons and you can work at home.

LWR Projects: There is a great need for women to sew quilt tops at home and/or take part in the quilt preparation day and project day, the third Thursday of each month and preparation day the Monday before that, both at 9:00 a.m. If you would like to work in the afternoon, please speak to Marilyn Boschee or Judy Vang. If there is enough interest, they can arrange it.

Year-end Project Report (Sept. 08 – Sept. 09)

In the past year the following projects were completed and delivered to: Lutheran World Relief, 49 layettes, 92 quilts, 50 school kits; Global Health Ministries, 87 hospice/aids kits, 2 boxes of sheets, approx. 1300 bandages; Retreat Center in Alaska, 35 sweaters and 3 quilts.

Adult Ministry and Education

Small Group Ministries

Gospel of Luke

Contact: David and Gen Quarberg 645-0089

Everyone has a Story

Contact: Phil Eaves 645-4172

Connections

Contact: Carol Schoen 645-6840

Dad's Time Out

Contact: Greg Kneser 663-0271

Grief Group

Contact: Barb Knaak 664-0444

Men's Breakfast Bible Study - Food, fellowship, Bible study on Genesis

Contact: Dean Ostlie 645-2597

Meets: Every other Thursday, 7:30-9:00am

Mission Partner Team

Contact: Jane Rinehart 663-1659

Noon Bible Study

Contact: Pr. Crippen or Pr. Johnson 645-4429

Peace and Justice - Informing and engaging people of faith in issues of faith and justice

Contact: Judith Stoutland 645-7842

Meets: 2nd Monday, 7-9pm

Praise and Prayer

Mondays, 10:00 a.m.

Contact: Mary White 645-4783

Women of the ELCA Knitters

Contact: Bobbie Maakestad 645-4397

Women of the ELCA Quilters

Contact: Kathy Vang 645-4849

Women of the ELCA Circles

Contact: Ann Ness 645-5133

Women's Breakfast Group

Contact: Kathy Mellstrom 663-1451

Yoga

Contact: Patsy Ophaug 645-6231

Small Groups Ministry

Providing small group study and fellowship opportunities

For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.

Matthew 18:20

Small Group Ministry at St. John's

Some of the more important lessons of life we did learn in kindergarten. Do you remember singing this little ditty?

*The more we get together, together, together,
the more we get together, the happier we'll be;
'cause your friends are my friends,
and my friends are your friends.
The more we get together, the happier we'll be.*

On the surface, this little song may strike us as something of the past, or just for children; however, it is contemporary and is as well-suited for adults as it is for children. Our faith reminds us of our need for one another, yet sometimes we feel disconnected from others within our own church family. In the opening verses of the Letter to the Romans, St. Paul writes the value of meeting together... "that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith..."

Small groups at St. John's provide fulfilling opportunities for individuals to experience the grace of community relationships where friendships can be fostered and faith can be nurtured. Below is a listing of the small group opportunities offered at St. John's this fall and when they gather. The sidebar lists a contact person for each group.

Group Name

When Group Meets

Men's Breakfast Bible Study - Every other Thursday, 7:30 am as of Sep 24

Women of the ELCA Bible Study Circles - Monthly, various times and location (See WELCA page in the Voice for complete listing)

Gospel of Luke - Weekly, Tuesdays, Oct 6-Nov 10, 10:30am or 5:30 pm

Noon Bible Study - Weekly, Tuesdays, Noon

Praise and Prayer - Weekly, Mondays, 10:00 am

Everyone Has a Story - Weekly, Wednesdays, Oct 14-Nov 18, 7:00 pm

Grief Support - Weekly, various times & locations. (See Voice and Sunday bulletin for details)

Yoga - Weekly, Fridays, 4:15 pm

Peace and Justice - Monthly, 2nd Monday, 7:00 pm

Quilters - 3rd Mondays & 3rd Thursdays, 9:00 am

Knitters - 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 9:30 am

Connections - Monthly, 3rd Friday, 7:30 pm

Dad's Night Out - TBA

Women's Breakfast Group - Monthly, 2nd Saturday, 8:30 am

The Small Group Catalog for 2009-2010, with descriptions of each group, is available at the bulletin board display in the Commons

Adult Ministry and Education

Education Opportunities for Adults on Sunday Mornings

Education Hour is at 9:45 a.m. Coffee is in the Commons between services.

The St. John's Forum meets in St. John's Hall between services.

Oct. 4: No St. John's Forum: Small Group Ministry Expo

Oct. 11: St. John's Forum: "Understanding Memory Loss" presented by Gerise Thompson, Rochester Regional Center of the Minnesota/ North Dakota Chapter of the National Alzheimer's Association. See article on page 7.

Oct. 18: St. John's Forum: Sunday Morning Concert Series, Sanctuary, See article on page XX

Oct. 25: St. John's Forum: Bread for the World, presented by Ed Payne, longtime Bread for the World volunteer in the Midwest Region.

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Youth Blast Retreat

Youth Blast invites kids in grade 3-6 for an overnight adventure at Good Earth Village in Spring Valley, MN on Oct. 9-10. If your child has not signed up and is interested in attending, it may not be too late! Call Julie Brehmer at 645-4429 to see if space is available. Thanks to all who are going as chaperones! It promises to be great fun.

Thank You, Sunday School Volunteers!

We want to thank the dedicated teachers and volunteers who are teaching Sunday School, preschool – grade 5, at St. John's. Teachers are: **Preschool** – Stephanie Aman, Martha Sudermann, Berit Seeberg, Dodie Mickelsen, Kim Norton, Jordan Cook, Katy Wagner, Lauren Ehlers, Kelly Colhune; **Kindergarten** – Deidre Kiefer, Deanna Tollefson; **First Grade** – Katherine Peterson, Sonja Wermager, Hannah France; **Second Grade** – Karleen Sherman, Julie Ims; **Third Grade** – Kirsten Gunn, Julie Becker, Kristy Mikula; **Fourth Grade** – Beret Amundson, Martha Crippen, Liv Thompson; **Fifth Grade** – Sue Brockman, Ellen Iverson.

Also, thank you to Susan Canon for coordinating Library time.

ROCK, Reaching Out to Christ's Kids, Is Off to a Great Start!

ROCK, our Wednesday afterschool program offered to children from kindergarten to grade 5, is off to a great start. Approximately 40 kids ride the bus from the 3 elementary schools to participate! Wednesday afterschool programs for all grade levels consist of an afterschool snack, recreation, Catechism, music opportunities (Alleluia, Hosanna and Jubilate Choir plus bell chime and Orff instrument ensembles) art, service projects and more! For more information, check out the Children's Ministry Information Packet which includes an insert you may use to register your child.

Sign Up for Parent's Night Out!

Parent's Night Out is coming in October! This is a chance for parents to enjoy a night out with the church providing a "Kids Night Out" for your elementary age children. The first night will be Saturday, Oct. 24 from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Here's how it works: sign up and bring your children (up to grade 5) on any/all of these nights. Parents are encouraged to stay back one night each year to assist with childcare/activities at church. Confirmation students can earn cubits by helping!

The next 3 dates are scheduled for Jan. 9, Mar. 6, and Apr. 10. A sign up poster is in the Commons. Please call Julie Brehmer at St. John's if you have any questions.

Important Dates to Remember!

Sunday School Schedule

October 4 - Sunday School
 October 11 - Sunday School
 October 18 - No Sunday School (MEA)
 October 25 - Sunday School (3rd graders receive Bibles)

ROCK – Wednesdays programming

October 7
 October 14 - NO Wednesday programs (MEA)
 October 21
 October 28

Youth Blast – Good Earth Village

October 9-10 (3rd – 6th Grade)

CATechism

Grades 4 & 5 – room 9 Youth Room 3:15 – 4:00 p.m.

October 7
 October 21
 October 28

3rd Grade CAT – St. John's Hall, 9:00-11:00 a.m.

Retreat with Parents

October 24

"Second Wednesdays" meal

For everyone!

October 14, 5:15 – 6:15 p.m., St. John's Hall

Menu: Potato Bar!

Parent's Night Out

October 24, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Where Does Your Sunday School Offering Go?

St. John's Sunday School offering will be distributed to 3 different missions this year:

We continue to sponsor Romairo Vasquez Polo from Columbia through Compassion International. Our sponsorship of \$38.00 / month provides Romairo with Bible teaching, medical care, nutritious meals, recreational activities, academic support, educational classes and literacy training.

In Northfield during the month of March we will participate in the Minnesota FoodShare Drive to help benefit the Northfield Food Shelf.

Pennies for Peace is a program founded by Greg Mortenson. It teaches children the rewards of sharing and working together to bring hope and opportunities to children in Pakistan and Afghanistan. A penny in the United States is virtually worthless, but in Pakistan and Afghanistan a penny buys a pencil and opens the door to literacy. More information will be sent home with your child in October.

4th and 5th Grade CAT Begins in October

4th and 5th grade students at St. John's will begin Catechism starting on Wednesday, Oct. 7. CAT class will meet downstairs, 4th grade in room 9 and 5th grade in the Youth Room from 3:15 – 4:00 p.m. on the following Wednesdays in October: Oct. 7, 21 and 28

4th graders receiving Catechisms this year:

Emily Canedy	Anders Koenig
Cole Dack	Cole Little
Anne France	Theo Mattson
Dylan Gehring	Sam Motzko
Jacob Gonnerman	Courtney Nelson
Berit Hendel	Kenyon Nystrom
Ivan Herrlich	Hannah Pahs
Viveka Hall-Holt	Casey Parker
Caroline Hummel	Griffin Rod
Matthew Knutson	Cheyenne Smith

3rd graders to Study the Word

3rd graders and parents will meet in St. John's Hall **Saturday, Oct. 24, from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.** for a Retreat on the Word – an introduction to the Bible. This class will be a primer on the Bible for students who will receive their Bibles at the 10:45 a.m. service on Sunday, Oct. 25. Call Pastor Mark Johnson or Julie Brehmer if your child is unable to attend either day.

Preparing for Holy Baptism

Parents who wish to have their baby or child baptized at St. John's are asked to attend a preparation session to discuss the meaning of baptism and to talk about the details of the day. Baptism preparation is held on the first Saturday of each month in the Fireside Room. The next session is Saturday, Oct. 3 at 10:30 a.m. Please call the Church Office if you plan to attend.

Children and Communion

Holy Communion is the meal of all the baptized children of God. If your baptized child has expressed an interest in receiving Holy Communion please contact a pastor.

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YOUTH MINISTRY @ ST. JOHN'S

Adopt-a-Highway

Hey all you Confirmation folks looking to get your Hands + Feet Cubit out of the way early! We're doing Adopt-a-Highway, on Saturday, Oct 3, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Come and help make our world a more beautiful place. Parents, you're more than welcome to join in!

No Confirmation

This is a reminder that there is no Wednesday night programming for youth on Oct. 14, due to MEA. We will still be having our Second Wednesday meal, and you are more than welcome to come and eat with us, even if you don't have confirmation that night.

Confirmation Rehearsal and Breakfast

Confirmation rehearsal starts at 9:00 a.m. However, you need to be there at 8:45 if you're planning to get individual pictures taken. After the photos are taken and rehearsals are done, we'll gather in St. John's Hall for brunch and read our faith statements.

High School Event

On Oct. 24, the highschoolers are going to head up to St. Olaf to play a round of Frisbee Golf. Afterwards, we'll go grab some food at Hogan Brothers or some place similar. Frisbee Golf is very easy to learn and lots of fun to play. Sherm has lots of extra discs if you need to borrow one. All highschoolers are invited!

Confirmation Sunday

Confirmation Sunday is Oct. 11. This is a special service where our 10th Grade Confirmation students publicly affirm their Baptism. They will also be participating in the services that day, doing things like ushering, greeting, reading and singing.

Morning Devotions at the Tavern (grades 9-12)

"Sunday School" for High Schoolers is on Wednesday mornings this year. All 9th-12th graders are invited to the Tavern at 7:45 a.m. on Wednesday mornings for breakfast and devotions led by Sherm.

Sunday School Schedule

Howdy Folks, here's this month's Sunday School line-up for Middle School.

- October 4 - Sherm - Peer Ministry
- October 11 - Paul Peterson - Bread for the World
- October 18 - No Sunday School MEA
- October 25 - Jenny Pelletier - Drumming



Welcoming New Members

St. John's formally welcomes new members in the fall and spring. This fall, new members will be received on *Sunday, November 22, at the 10:45 a.m. service*. To assist new members in getting better acquainted with St. John's, with staff, and others in the congregation, there are the following sessions:

Lunch at St. John's Sunday, October 4
Noon, St. John's Hall

Prospective members join St. John's staff and members of the Welcome Team for a light meal and conversation about life and ministry at St. John's.

New Member Beginnings Sunday, October 25
9:45 a.m., Fireside Room

Getting acquainted and building connections at St. John's

New Member Connection Sunday, November 1
9:45 a.m., Fireside Room

Fellowship time with hosts – St. John's members who help to welcome and to connect new members with the congregation

Shared Ministry – Part One Sunday, November 8
9:45 a.m., Fireside Room

Exploring spiritual gifts and how Shared Ministry shapes life at St. John's

Shared Ministry – Part Two Sunday, November 15
9:45 a.m., Fireside Room

Exploring the call of belonging to a congregation and sharing gifts

New Member Reception Sunday, November 22
9:45 a.m., St. John's Hall

Fellowship time with congregation between worship services

1

New Member Litany Sunday, November 22
10:45 a.m., Sanctuary

New members are formally received during the 10:45 worship service

For those who come from a Christian tradition other than Lutheran (and for Lutherans who would like a refresher course!), a study of Lutheran theology and tradition will be held in December during the Education Hour on Sunday morning. Watch the newsletter and bulletin for details. Contact the church office for more information.

St. John's Forum 2009-2010

Date	Topic/Event	Presenter	St. John's Contact Person
Sep 20	Passing On Faith With Children and Youth-Roland Martinson		Pastor Johnson
27	Church Wide Assembly Report-Pastor Crippen		Pastor Crippen
Oct 4	Small Group Ministry Fair		Small Group Ministry Team, Sandy Gerdes
11	Alzheimer and Dementia-Gerise Thompson. Director of SE Minnesota Alzheimer's Association		Faith & Health Board, Lynette Marks & Barb Knaak
18	Sunday Morning Concert Series # 1		Dan Fenn
25	Bread For The World		Benevolence & Social Concerns Board, Paul Peterson
Nov 1	Global Issues: Part One: Climate Change-Kathy Shea and Kristi Wermager		Pastor Johnson
8	Part Two: Religion/Morality/Lincoln-Ed Santurri		Eric Lund
15	Part Three:Poverty-Becky Judge and Tony Becker		Guy Reid
22	New Members Reception		St. John's Staff
29	Sunday Morning Concert Series #2		Dan Fenn
Dec 6	New Testament: Papyrus to Print to CD Part One-Steve Reese		Joe Shaw
13	Part Two-Steve Reese		Joe Shaw
20	Part Three-Steve Reese		Joe Shaw
27	Christmas Hymn Sing-John Ferguson		Dan Fenn
Jan 3	St. Olaf Choir Reception		Sue Boxrud
10	Popular Culture & Faith-To Be Announced		Eric Lund
17	Visiting Luther Seminary International Student		Pastor Johnson
24	Annual Meeting Preview		Congregational Council
31	Report from the Bishop-Bishop Usgaard		Pastor Crippen
Feb 7	HealthFinders of Rice County-Angela Koch		Guy Reid
14	Health Topic-To Be Announced		Faith & Health Board
21	Northfield Alliance Grief Coalition-Barb Knaak		Faith & Health Board
28	**		
Mar 7	Lenten Season in Theology and Art: Part One:To Be Announced		Joe Shaw
14	Part Two: Focus on Art-John Rondestvedt		Joe Shaw
21	Part Three:To Be Announced		Joe Shaw
28	Sunday Morning Concert Series #3		Dan Fenn
Apr 4	Easter		No Forum
11	Poetry in Old Testament: Part One:16 th and 17 th Century-Lowell Johnson and Pamela Schwandt		Guy Reid
18	New Members Reception		Pastor Crippen
25	Part Two:Poetry in 19 th and 20 th Century-Lowell Johnson and Pamela Schwandt		Guy Reid
May 2	**		
9	Sunday Morning Concert Series #4		Dan Fenn
16	Musical Event		Dan Fenn
23	**		

** Saved for ideas/topics from the congregation; contact any member listed below.

St. John's Forum Ministry Team-

Guy Reid, Coordinator	Pastor Johnson	Eric Lund	Doug Schuurman
Kristi Wermager	Karl Hella	Mark Gleason	Katie Helgen
			Keith Holmstad Joe Shaw

Pastors*Joseph G. Crippen**Mark E. Johnson**John E. Quam***Building Manager***Rich Kleeberger***Children's Ministry***Julie Brehmer***Music Ministry***Daniel Fenn***Music Staff***Jenny Pelletier - Alleluia**Cathy Rodland - Jubilate**Ruth Legvold - Laudate**Jo Dahlin - Rejoice Ringers***Office Manager***Laurie Prior***Shared Ministry***Regina Hassanally***Parish Administrator***Shelley Keske***Parish Nurse***Lynette Marks***Youth Ministry***Mike Sherman***Congregation President***Betsy McLaughlin*

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Considering joining St. John's?

Any who are considering joining St. John's are invited to an informational lunch on Sunday Oct. 4, at noon in St. John's Hall. There will be opportunity to meet St. John's members and staff, learn about ministries at St. John's, and hear about the new member process. Contact the church office for more information, 645-4429 or office@stjohns-elca.org. See article on page 18.

Second Wednesday Meal is October 14!

Wednesday, Oct. 14 is the date for this month's Second Wednesday Meal. Serving time is from 5:15 – 6:15 in St. John's Hall. A potato bar will be served by St. John's staff. Everyone is invited to come and share in this time of food and fellowship. A reminder that there is no children's programming or confirmation classes on Wednesday, Oct. 14 due to the MEA school break.

Stewards continued from front

particularly faith-building account of giving is found in 1 Kings 17:8-16. Here we learn of a widow who, with her last handful of flour and jar of oil, fed Elijah the prophet and later found that there was always enough flour and oil to feed her and her son. Read the passage and think on it; then prayerfully consider your commitment. Do it cheerfully, and watch God work.

- *Terrance Hassanally, Stewardship Board*

