

THE VOICE

OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Extending God's Love

December 2012

Volume 52, Number 11

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Worship Services:
8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

The *Voice* is a monthly publication of St. John's Lutheran Church, Northfield, MN. Articles for the *Voice* must be submitted by the 15th of each month:

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Church Office hours:

Monday - Friday

9:00 a.m. to noon and

1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

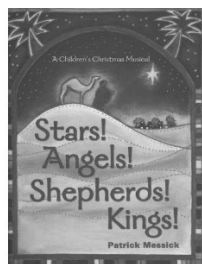
The Giving Tree, November 18 - December 7

The annual "Giving Tree" program sponsored by the Northfield Community Action Center will be set up in the Commons until December 7. The Giving Tree is decorated with paper stars. Each star has a gift idea, along with the name, age and gender of a child whose family is unable to purchase Christmas gifts this year.

Purchased gifts should be placed, unwrapped, with the paper star attached, and put under the tree by Friday, December 7. In addition, we will also offer gifts to our Companion Synods in Columbia and Tanzania. The tree will be decorated with 50 envelopes for making donations to the Tanzania Scholarship Fund and to our partner congregation's preschool in Colombia. Thank you in advance for your donations!

St. John's Children's Christmas Program December 16

Mark your calendars! St. John's Children's Christmas Program will be held on Sunday, Dec. 16 in St. John's Hall. The program, "Stars! Angels! Shepherds! Kings!" a musical written by Patrick Messick, begins at 11:00 a.m. and is performed by children in pre-school - grade 5. Pre-service music by children in K - grade 5 begins at 10:45 a.m. If your child is unable to participate please notify his/her teacher or call Julie Brehmer at 645-4429.



Christmas
Worship &
Events
at
St. John's

Monday, Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve

3:00 and 5:00 p.m. Christmas Vespers

11:00 p.m. Christmas Candlelight and Communion

Tuesday, Dec. 25 - Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Festive Christmas Eucharist

11:30 a.m. Christmas Dinner for All
(see page 11 for more information)

Sunday, Dec. 30 - Sunday Worship

10:00 a.m. Please note that there will be only one worship service on December 30

11:15 a.m. Christmas Hymn-Sing with John Ferguson

Our Mission: *As followers of Jesus Christ, the members of St. John's Lutheran Church welcome all people to join us in celebrating God's grace, nurturing their faith, and reaching out to the world in love and service.*

From our pastors . . .

*"...the one
who began
a good
work
among you
will bring
it to
completion
by the day
of Jesus
Christ."*

Philippians 1:6



Change and transitions are constants in life - in our homes, in our communities, and in congregations. The past two years have been an extended time of transition for the ministry of St. John's. On good days, change can be invigorating and exciting - like when you begin a long-awaited renovation or remodeling project at home and the inconvenience is tolerated because of the promise of a completed project. On other days, change, like a long and complicated building project, can be a burden or at least enough of a frustration that you start wondering if it's worth the trouble.

As we live with the reality of change and the incompleteness of life, the witness of faith points us to what God is doing in Christ as the source of our hope, to encourage us on good days and bad. The witness of faith teaches us to learn to live with the scaffolding of change and transition- inviting us to see in it signs of a project that is being completed..

There is a building project going on in this world, as God's household is built. In baptism we are made members of this household and called to share in the work of this project. In the cross, God has put to death, as Ephesians puts it, the hostility that keeps us from God and from one another so you "...are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone." (Ephesians 2:19-20) So, our work as part of God's mission project continues during this time of transition.

In September, the question was asked at an executive committee meeting what St. John's was able to accomplish during the past two years. One of the committee members answered this way, "With God's help we have shown tremendous resiliency as a congregation, in ways that are hard to measure, such as the general good spirit that people have when they come to church, but also in ways that are easy to measure, such as the debt reduction campaign, Sunday attendance, and participation in the Wednesday night meal and programming. We have a lot of hard-earned momentum, due to the efforts of our staff and members in many areas of ministry. These efforts have touched everything from the strategic plan to behind-the-scenes work on business practices, from the development of the website to renewed energy in children, youth, and family ministry - and a continued commitment to worship, learning, and mission."

During this time of transition, in this season of Advent hope and expectation, we give thanks for the work that's already been done to build this house of faith here at St. John's and around the world. We give thanks for the Spirit's call to continue our work in support of God's building project and we put our trust in the promise, as Paul puts it, that "...the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:6

The hope of Advent, the joy of Christmas, and the promise of what God is doing in Jesus Christ, bless and keep us and all the world in the year ahead.

Mark

... from our Council

After considerable reflection and prayer, the St. John's Council would like to announce the timeline for forming a Call Committee to call a new Senior Pastor. Since the departure of Pastor Randy Johnson, the Council has worked to weigh the balance of moving quickly to find a new Senior Pastor (keeping the momentum that St. John's has been building over the past year), with taking a more measured pace (to provide enough time for healing and trying to prepare a foundation for success for the next Senior Pastor). With input from congregational members, the guidance of Interim Senior Pastor Orlin Mandsager, and the Council's discernment, it has been decided that the timing is right to move ahead with the call process.

Timeline for Call Committee formation:

- **December 16, 2012** - Deadline for submitting nominations for the Call Committee. It is the hope of the Council that the make-up of the Call Committee would reflect the diversity of views, ages, and genders in our congregation. We believe the recently completed Strategic Plan should be a key resource as the committee reviews candidates. Members of the committee will need to be willing to commit the necessary time and energy to the process.

Nominations should be submitted either by email to office@stjohnsnorthfield.org, or in writing to Leah Garlie, Office Manager, at the church office. Please include the nominee's contact information such as name, address, phone and email. A person's name can be submitted by another St. John's member (please obtain agreement by the nominee prior to submission) or a person can self-nominate. All confirmed members are eligible.

- **January 13, 2013** - Deadline for submitting candidate biographies and pictures. Each candidate should submit a biography (50-100 words) with a picture. This information will be posted in St. John's Commons for members to review.
- **January 27, 2013** - Vote to elect Call Committee members at the St. John's Annual Meeting. From the list of candidates, nine (9) people will be elected to form the Call Committee. The ballot names will be placed in random order. All voting will be done in person - the St. John's Constitution does not allow for absentee or proxy voting.

Please consider participating in the Call Committee process either through being a member of the committee, by offering candidate names, sharing ideas for committee consideration, or by voting at the annual meeting. This is an exciting next step in the life of our congregation. Thank you for your involvement in St. John's!

Richard J. Falck
Council President

Early Deadline for the Voice!

With the holiday season upon us and a need to keep communication flowing - the deadline for the January Voice is EARLY! The deadline for January's Voice is Monday, December 10. Please get submissions in by the deadline. If articles are not in, they will not appear in the January edition of the Voice.

Thanks for your help and cooperation.

Annual Meeting Reports

For all those who are submitting information for the Annual Report - the due date for reports is Thursday, December 27. Please get the reports in on time!

Prayer and Care Ministry

*Pray without ceasing.
1 Thessalonians 5:17*

Prayer Ministry

Gathered in the Word: a time of prayer guided by scripture meets Thursday, December 13 at 4:00 p.m. in the Fireside Room. All are welcome.

Prayers for healing, joys, and all concerns are offered every Sunday morning between services in the prayer chapel near the choir room on the second floor.

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.

Forgiveness: Requesting, Receiving, Granting It

At the November 11, 2012, forum between services, three people presented a rich, many-layered discussion of forgiveness. First they each spoke briefly on their assigned topics, and then they responded to questions from the audience. Our own Pastor Orlin Mandsager spoke on our need to ask forgiveness of those we have hurt or harmed; Dan Dimick, a marriage and family therapist, spoke on our need to forgive those who have hurt or harmed us; and Gregory Walter, a teacher in the St. Olaf religion department, spoke on God's forgiveness, which he characterized as fundamentally different from human struggles with forgiveness, which are hard, painful, slow. God's forgiveness is immediate and abundant, all encompassing, "without strings whatsoever," and it makes possible our attempts to seek

forgiveness from one another, and to grant it.

The Stephen Ministry at St. John's planned this forum. We were aware that since Pastor Randy Johnson's resignation at the end of August, many members of our congregation were wrestling with questions about forgiveness—questions directly related to that resignation and questions from their past that had been newly agitated. What came out of the simple format we planned for the panel was—like so many of our prayer requests that we cannot put into words—something far better and more profound than we would have known to ask for.

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*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*

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

Matthew 5:4

Grief Support Ministry

The Grief Group at St. John's meets for the final time on Monday, December 3 at 6:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. The next Grief Support Group in Northfield meets on Mondays beginning January 14 from 3:00-4:00 p.m. at the Northfield Retirement Community. For more information contact Pr. Kristine Braaten-Lee, 664-3478 or Barb Knaak, 646-0444.

Card Notes: are one of the grief support resources at St. John's. Stop by the Commons to pick one up for yourself or for a loved one.



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."

December 17, 2011
Maebel Otteson

December 17, 2011
Archie Anderson

December 28, 2011
Gerald Seitz

Music and Worship Life at St. John's

St. John's Singers – December 2

The **St. John's Singers** (an occasional choir for any adult, college, or high school singer) will meet on Sunday, December 2. Rehearsal is during the Sunday School hour (9:45 to 10:45), and you'll sing at the 11:00 service. For more information, contact Dan Fenn.



Magnificat!

The adult choirs of St. John's, soloists, and orchestra will sing the Gospel Reading at both services on the Fourth Sunday of Advent (December 23) using the *Magnificat* by Johann Sebastian Bach. There's still time if you would like to participate in the choir for this day. You will need to attend a portion (7:00 to 7:50 p.m.) of the weekly Wednesday evening choir rehearsals starting as soon as possible. **Sectional rehearsals** are also being offered (women on Sunday, December 9 between services and men on Sunday, December 16 between services). There will be a final rehearsal on Saturday morning, December 22, at 10:00 a.m. For more information, please contact Dan Fenn at music@stjohnsnorthfield.org or at 507-645-4429, ext. 58.

Community Christmas Dinner – Music Volunteers

If you would like to play an instrument or sing a song during the Community Christmas Dinner on Sunday, December 25, please contact Dan Fenn

Christmas Hymn-sing December 30

John Ferguson will lead us in a time of singing and sharing following the (one) service on Sunday, December 30. Worship at 10:00 followed by coffee, fellowship, and singing!



Stephen Ministry *...continued from page 4*

The panelists offered many true stories, sometimes their own, sometimes stories of those who had come to them for help. They also offered practical advice for us as we do the everyday, hard work of forgiveness, which lies at the center of every Christian life.

We have had several CDs made of the forum panel. Whether you were present at the forum or whether you missed it, we urge you to check out one of these CDs from the church office, stick it in your computer, and spend 45 minutes listening to it. Better yet, ask a family member to join you, and talk about it afterward. The panel's presentation is like a good sermon: up building when you hear it in church on Sunday; and then on Monday night when you watch it on the local TV station, far deeper and more consoling than you had remembered.

If you or someone you know is troubled by a question about forgiveness, consider talking this over with one of our Stephen Ministers, who are trained to listen without judging and to observe confidentiality. Call Mark Johnson (645-4429) or Joan Halvorson (645-8445).

Christmas Dinner

Once again this year St. John's will host the Community Christmas Dinner. This holiday meal is free . . . open to the entire community . . . and is served from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Christmas Day.

As in the past, we ask members of the congregation for their help in making this dinner a success. Help is needed in the following areas:

- Food: potato casseroles; fruit and green salads; desserts
- Kitchen: food preparation; brewing coffee; washing dishes; etc.
- Dining Area: set-up; clean-up; pour coffee and milk; serve deserts; etc.
- Miscellaneous: greet; pour punch; assist diners; etc.

Sign-ups begin Sunday, November 25, in the Commons. Look over the many possibilities to volunteer and help make this dinner a success once again.

Wednesday Night Meals

We are in need of more volunteers to help with the Wednesday Night Meals in December. Please take the time to sign up to volunteer on the board outside of the Church Office or email sharedministry@stjohnsnorthfield.com. Any help is greatly appreciated.

SERVING TO LOVE  *LOVING TO SERVE*

Wednesday Night Meals

I will help set up (3:30-5:00) I will help serve (5-6:30) I will help clean up (6:00-7:30)

I can serve on these nights; please add me into a schedule. By checking below you are NOT agreeing to all of the dates, just showing availability!

_____ I'm typically at the meal; assign me to a date.

_____ December 5

_____ December 12

_____ December 19

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Important Dates to Remember!

Sunday School Schedule

December 2 Sunday School

December 9 Sunday School

December 16 Sunday School

Christmas Program 11:00 a.m. Worship

December 23 No Sunday School (*Christmas Break*)

December 30 No Sunday School (*Christmas Break*)

Sunday School Christmas Program Rehearsal for 5th Graders

Wednesday, December 12, 6:00-6:45 p.m. in St. John's Hall

Sunday School Christmas Program

Sunday, December 16, 11:00 a.m.

Christmas Break

No Wednesday programming on December 26.

No Sunday School on December 23 and December 30.

4th and 5th Grade CATEchism returns on Wed., January 2

No Wednesday programming on December 26.

No Sunday School on December 23 and December 30.

Kids!

Would you like to be part of the Sunday School Christmas Program Prelude Music?

Sunday school children are welcome to participate in the prelude music for the Sunday School Christmas program on December 16. We welcome solos or ensembles, short instrumental or vocal pieces. The prelude begins at 10:45 a.m. before the 11:00 a.m. Sunday school program on December 16. Please sign-up in the Commons or give Julie Brehmer a call at 645-4429, ext. 25 if you are interested in participating.

Christmas Books Available

St. John's Library has many wonderful Christmas and Advent books! Since Sunday School classes will not be visiting the library during December because of Christmas program rehearsals, books will be available for parents and children to check out - some will be on display in the library and others will be downstairs by the Nursery. Check out this great collection and sign out a book or two for your child to enjoy with you.

Nursery Thank You!

Thank you to all the wonderful parents who volunteer their time on Sunday morning to care for children in the Nursery during worship services! Special thank to Amy McBroom for preparing the schedule of volunteers and to our St Olaf student, Maren Bauer. It is truly appreciated!

Catechism for 4th and 5th graders will resume on Wed., Jan. 2!

CAT classes meet downstairs, 4th grade in Room 9 and 5th grade in the Youth Room from 4:00 - 4:45 p.m. Let me know if your child would like to ride the Wednesday afterschool bus to CAT!

Parent Gatherings during the Education Hour!

All parents/grandparents are invited to our next "Parent Gathering" on Sunday, December 2. We will meet in Fellowship Hall from 10:00 - 10:45 a.m.

Celebrating the Sacrament of 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, December 1, at 10:30 a.m. Please call the Church Office if you plan to attend.

YOUTH MINISTRY @ ST. JOHN'S

Renovation of Youth Sunday School Format

Starting in January, we are renovating the format of youth "Sunday School". The plan is to shift from the large group 'classroom' style to small groups more focused on building personal relationships while still engaging in a devotion or bible study. The goal is to foster relationships, engage in more intimate discussions, and provide a welcoming space for high school students who come during that time. Youth in small groups broken down by age and gender will provide a better platform to reach these goals that are currently difficult to meet with large groups that contain multiple grades in each class.

By current attendance averages, we will need six to nine adult leaders each week to dedicate forty-five minutes of their time to facilitate groups and another pool of ten adults willing to fill in during weeks in which regular leaders are unable to make it.

This will be an excellent opportunity to do great ministry with our youth. If you are interested, please reply to Mike Skunes at youth@stjohnnorthfield.org or 645-4429. Interested but unsure if you're equipped to do this ministry? Mike will be providing a forty-minute training session for volunteers at two dates in December that are yet to be determined.

Reflections from New Orleans

In July, members of St. John's travelled to New Orleans to attend the ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans. Their reflections of where they saw God during their trip are printed as a way to share their faith and to thank the members of St. John's who supported them through prayers and financial contributions.

Where did you see God?

I saw God in New Orleans in many different ways and places. Those I remember most are seeing God in the people handing out free pizza, at the evening gatherings in the Super Dome, and in our own St. John's group. I saw God in the people handing out free pizza because it just so happened that we didn't have time to eat any supper that night so it was like manna from heaven... a great act of God and kindness... I saw God in the energy at the gatherings in the Super Dome. The huge cross and the speakers all made it feel like God was in our presence. The last example and the most meaningful place I saw God was in our own group. I saw it in how we didn't complain about our feet hurting or being too hungry. I saw it in how we bonded together, laughed at and with each other, and how we always seemed to have fun no matter what happened. The National Youth Gathering in New Orleans was probably the best church trip I have ever been on. It was a great experience for me and for our group.

Bjorn Bade

The time I spent in NOLA was a time I will never forget. I got to help rebuild a community with Habitat for Humanity. I got to worship with over 30,000 other youth and adults. I made some new friends, all of whom I'm in contact with, and I got to experience a part of New Orleans that I never knew existed! I am so thankful that I was blessed with this opportunity to go and be a part of Citizens with the Saints, ELCA Youth Gathering, 2012! This was an experience I will never forget, and I thank all of you for your donations that help make this trip possible. Without your help we would not have been able to go. Thank you, again, St. John's!

Michael Gasior

...continued on page 11

Serving on Sundays in December

Acolytes

December 2	(8:30) Kuchceang Mangok, Rikka Zillmer; (11:00) Berit Hendel, Kenyon Nystrom
December 9	(8:30) Emily Canedy, Ashley Canedy; (11:00) Sydney Poquette, Willa Kmoch
December 16	(8:30) Alex Redetzke, Samuel Mikula; (11:00) Natalie Nevin, Sophia Nevin
December 23	(8:30) Courtney Nelson, Alison Nelson; (11:00) Creegan Croone, Cole Johannsen
December 30	(8:30) Anne France, Elizabeth Evenson; (11:00) Peter Neeb, Grant Huston

Communion Preparers / Servers

December 2	Elden and Solveig Zempel; (8:30) Kathy Shea; (11:00) Carrie Duba
December 9	Marie Benson, Sherry Benson; (8:30) Shirley Falck; (11:00) Beckie Judge
December 16	Wes and Rae Pearson; (8:30) Zach Bahler; (11:00) Marybeth Bremer
December 23	Jim and Mary Bierman; (8:30) Nordis Christenson; (11:00) Christy Hall-Holt

Offering Counters

December 2	Bob Gelle, Jim Enestvedt, Sue Brockman(data entry), Beckie Judge
December 9	Bob Gelle, Jim Enestvedt, Sue Brockman(data entry), Dan Franklin
December 16	Bob Gelle, Jim Enestvedt, Sue Brockman(data entry), Chris Weber
December 23	Bob Gelle, Jim Enestvedt, Sue Brockman(data entry), Dave Aman
December 30	Bob Gelle, Jim Enestvedt, Sue Brockman(data entry), Terry Gilbertson

Nursery

December 2	(8:30) Maren Bauer; (11:00) Maren Bauer
December 9	(8:30) Saul McBroom; (11:00) Amy McBroom
December 16	(8:30) Maren Bauer; (11:00) Maren Bauer
December 23	(11:00) Maren Bahler
December 25	(10:00) Julie Brehmer
December 30	(10:00) Jodie Doeden

Ushers

December 2	(8:30) Doug Child, Alan Alberg, Duane Benson, Len Hoffmann, Rick Hillard, Loren Lee, Dan Lueck, Gordon Mickelsen; (11:00) Wes Pearson, Brian Boyum, John Hanson, Peggy Hanson, Brandon Kimber, Dale Kimber
December 9	(8:30) Dan Franklin, Jim Enestvedt, Bob Johnson, Rob McCarthy, Brent Mueller, Ruthie Neuger, Tom Porter, Don Sahling, Myron Solid; (11:00) Jonathan Norrie, Zachary Bahler, Andrew Dell, Terry Dell, David Halsor, Dick Kleber, Kristin Nichol, Michael Sylvester, Suzanne Sylvester, Steve Williams
December 16	(8:30) Mark Anderson, Jim Bierman, Jerry Bothun, Dave Hagen, Sue Hagen, Nicholas Gonnerman, Patsy Ophaug, John Ophaug; (11:00) Margaret Hayford O'Leary, Bonnie Jean Flom, Todd Iverson, Lowell Johnson, Andy Langehough, Greg Norman, Doug O'Leary
December 23	(8:30) Dallas Berg, Niles Austvold, Myron Dack, Erik Hong, Eric Lund, Mark Polzin, Bruce Rickert, Ken Wilkens; (11:00) Michael Gasior, Corrine Heiberg, Elvin Heiberg, David Rudser, Susan Rudser, Andy Westerback, Emily Westerback
December 30	8:30) Mark Anderson, Jim Bierman, Jerry Bothun, Dave Hagen, Sue Hagen, Nicholas Gonnerman, Patsy Ophaug, John Ophaug; (11:00) Margaret Hayford O'Leary, Bonnie Jean Flom, Todd Iverson, Lowell Johnson, Andy Langehough, Greg Norman, Doug O'Leary

Adult Ministry and Education

Sunday Morning Learning and Fellowship

Fellowship Time for children, youth, and adults begins at 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School begins at 9:50 a.m. and Education Hour for adults begins at 9:50 a.m.

Small Groups are part of St. John's small group ministry and meet in various rooms as noted.

Dec. 02: *Coffee served in St. John's Hall.*

St. John's Forum: Understanding the Church Calendar - As we begin Advent, the start of the new church year, we will consider how the various special celebrations of the church year came into existence and why they were placed in certain seasons. We will consider the major festivals and commemorations of the church and why some of them are celebrated at different times in the Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant traditions. Presented by Eric Lund. **Sanctuary.**

Dec. 09: *Coffee served in St. John's Hall.*

St. John's Forum: Advent Through Orthodox Art - A look at the traditional Eastern Orthodox icons that show the events of the Advent season including the Annunciation and the Meeting of Mary and Elizabeth, and icons depicting the events in Mary's life that lead up to her becoming the Mother of our Lord. Presented by Jon Rondesvedt and Keith Homstad. **Theater.**
Co-Terminus Update and Conversation. **Fireside.**

Dec. 16: *Coffee served in St. John's Hall and Commons.*

St. John's Forum: Old Testament Topic. Presented by Gary Stansell. **Sanctuary.**

Dec. 23: *Coffee served in St. John's Hall.*

St. John's Forum: New Testament Topic. Presented by Bill Poehlman. **Sanctuary.**

Dec. 30: *Coffee served in St. John's Hall.*

Christmas Hymn Sing led by John Ferguson. **Sanctuary.**

No St. John's Forum



Orthodox Icons for Advent

The Season of Advent has long inspired artists from both the East and the West. On December 9, Pastor Keith Homstad, an accomplished painter of Orthodox icons, and Jon Rondesvedt, retired teacher of English and the humanities, will together explore icons of the Eastern Church associated with Advent. Icons depicting The Annunciation, The Meeting (of Elizabeth and Mary, The Magnificat, and The Nativity will frame this presentation of religious art-art at once both spiritually moving and aesthetically powerful.

Mission Outreach



Two Ways To Serve This Month

“Pay It Forward” Service Project

December 1, from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., 4-9th graders are invited to join us in bagging groceries for the community. This is not meant to be a fundraiser but to be a witness in paying-it-forward with a *memorable twist*. What’s the twist? You’ll just have to come and see! We are looking for students to do the bagging and a few parents to supervise and hopefully we will have enough people to keep it to one hour shifts. If you’re interested, there is a *sign-up board in the Commons outside St. John’s Hall or talk to Julie or Mike*. This is a great opportunity, Confirmands, to do your “Hands and Feet” projects!

Community Christmas Dinner

St. John’s will again host the annual Community Christmas Dinner. This dinner, served from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Christmas Day, attracts members from all parts of St. John’s and the Northfield community. The dinner is free and open to all. This event offers the community of St. John’s an opportunity to extend God’s love in a meaningful and tangible way. As we offer a meal to those who come through our doors we follow in the teachings of Jesus and the traditions of the Christian church.

We need volunteer support in various forms. We need food contributions of cooked potatoes, salads, pies or cakes. We also need various workers to volunteer help for serving and cleaning up after the meal. There will be a sign up for all volunteer opportunities in the Commons or contact the Church Office at office@stjohnsnorthfield.org or 645-4429.

Reflections from New Orleans ...continued from page 8

The group was asked to write a short paragraph to sum up our trip to the National Youth Gathering. To be honest, I really do not know how to do this. I started and stopped writing this more times than I would like to admit. I didn’t know what I should include and what to omit. I know that I have to explain how amazing it was to experience the gathering as a whole...to be able to attend a worship service each night with 33,000 young adults; to listen to the many different speakers share their faith journeys and sharing both their successes and their failures, but stressing to never give up; to have Bishop Mark Hanson challenge all of us to not build “walls” between one another, but to be welcoming and to “be the change”; to see multitudes of buses leaving the SuperDome with thousands of volunteers on board, heading out in every direction to give their time and talents to people in need. There was more, so much more. For me, the most amazing part of the Gathering was the young adults from St. John’s. To be able to watch them grow in their faith, to hear their questions and to watch them serve others was truly amazing and humbling. Throughout the entire trip, this group of young adults never lost their joy, their laughter, compassion or concern for each other. I felt very blessed to be one of the chaperones for this group and I really wonder if they understand how much they taught the adult leaders? One closing thought – we were asked to bring different things we had learned back to our homes and congregations. One of the things I learned was to ask a question that was posed to our every night, “Where have you seen God today?” Tonight, take a moment to ask yourself this question. You might be surprised by the answer...

Brian Evenson

November Actions

Memorials and Gifts (January 2012 - October 2012)

In memory of **Phyllis Lapham**: by Various Givers.

In memory of **Chuck Lunder**: by Virginia Beecroft, Sharon Bishop, Will & Gert Brosz, Kathleen Costa, Harold Cristendon, Myron & Arlene Dack, Lorene Elg, Shirley Falck, Bonnie Flom & Greg Norman, Louise Gass, Nancy Gelle, Robert & Jane Gelle, Obert Grinde, David Griffith, David & Joan Halvorson, Allen & Lorraine Hanson, Marilyn Haugen, Kenneth & Carolyn Jennings, Carol V. Johnson, Paul & Joann Jorgensen, Gerhard & Gloria Knutson, Paul & Lois Larson, Van & Ruth Anna Miller, Gordon & Delores Mickelsen, Bruce & Audrey Moe, Dagfin & Lydia Moe, Charles Muckey, Char Nelson, Scott Nelson, Dean & Dorothy Ostlie, Paul & Deaun Peterson, George & Judy Pinc, Paul & Marilyn Raadt, Myron & Carol Solid, Solveig Steendahl, Howard & Julie Thorsheim, Mary White, Kenton Wolfe, Ed & Rose Youngquist.

In memory of **John Maakestad**: by Bruce & Carol Benson, Marcia Berg, Sharon Bishop, Lois & Mikkell Beckme, John & Marybeth Bremer, Will & Gert Brosz, Bill & Charlotte Carlson, Richard & Joanne Dahlin, John Deno, Steve & Jennifer Edwins, Jill Enestvedt, Shirley Falck, Herb & Pat Fick, Brenda Foat, Frederick & Ruth Gonnerman, David & Deborah Grimsrud, David & Joan Halvorson, Roger & Darlene Hand, Ruth Hansen, Marilyn Haugen, Kathryn Haugen, Marjorie Jepak, Carol V Johnson, Ruth Jones, Dan & Susan Jorgenson, Paul & Joann Jorgensen, Ronald Kindem, Richard & JoAnn Kleber, Barbara Knaack, Duane & Elaine Kringen, Chrusune Lamft, Walter & Thelma Lee, AM & ME Lean, Edward Lindell, Eric Lund, Beverly Lundeen, Robert & Marilyn Matta, Gordon & Delores Mickelsen, Bruce & Audrey Moe, Basil & Kathy Mroz, Lois Pearson, Paul & Deaun Peterson, Dennis & Jane Rinehart, Orlando Shefveland, Llewellyn Smith, Myron & Carol Solid, Solveig Steendahl, Judith Stoutland, Les & Carolyn Svendsen, Elaine Thurston, Mary White.

In memory of **Lee Mahachek**: by Bev Mahachek.

In memory of **Kim Motzko**: by David & Cheryl Buck, Tracy Mullenbach, Brett & Karen Norgaard, Dennis & Jane Rinehart, Harley & Naomi Uber.

In memory of **Jane Nelson**: by Steve & Jennifer Edwins, Richard Nelson.

In memory of **Carol Palrud**: by Roger & Darlene Hand, Will & Gert Brosz, Cindy Clausen, Elaine Feroe, Charles & Marilyn Jacobson, G. Wescott, Gerald Williams.

In memory of **Kris Paulson**: by Herb & Pat Fick, Paul & Joann Jorgensen.

In memory of **Gertrude Quade**: by Dale & Diane VanGuilder.

In memory of **Addie Roadfeldt**: by Cynthia Baumgartner, L Bailey, Sharon Bishop, James & Phyllis Bull, Allen Burns, Clark & Lois Cary, Ron Cirksena, Anthony & Margery Dadamio, Lester & Doris Dallman, Robert & Jane Gelle, Jerry & Liz Hankins, Thomas & Sonja Hirsch, Ronald & Carol James, Marvin Johnson, Bob & Elaine Kadow, Richard & JoAnn Kleber, Barbara Knaak, Doug & Patrica Kriesel, Dale & Mary Larson, Wilbur & Carolyn Liebenow, Jim & Jean Lovrien, Clair & Ursula McRostie, Bruce & Audrey Moe, Basil & Kathy Mroz, Dr & Mrs Leroy Mueller, Lyle Norris, Dean & Dorothy Ostlie, Burt & Donna Paulsen, Owen & Judith Peterson, John & Louise Quam, Bert & Bernie Reese, Bernie & Sue Renander, Bill Roadfeldt, Gail Roadfeldt, Janice Roadfeldt, Jon & Ginny Roadfeldt, Nancy Roadfeldt, Norman & John Roadfeldt, Anna Mae Sjogren, Myron & Carol Solid, Bernard & Joann Welinski, Bruce & Arlene Wetter, Marilyn Will, Thomas & Christine Wilmot.

In memory of **Ronald Sell**: by Margaret Sell.

November Actions (cont.)

Memorials (cont.)

In memory of **Edlo Solum**: by Kathleen Costa, Robert & Jane Gelle, Marilyn Haugen, Kathryn Haugen, Thomas & Marvel Heath, Ron & Carol James, Richard & JoAnn Kleber, Carol & Clayton McCall, Bruce & Audrey Moe, Gunther & Allene Moesler, George & Judy Pinc, Thomas & Gloria Porter, John & Louise Quam, Brynhild Rowberg, Aarlynd & Myrna Otte, Solveig Steendahl, Maren Swanson & Rob Smith Stephen & Judy Swanson, M O & C W Teigen, Margaret Vanderkolk, WELCA.

In memory of **Marie Severson**: by Hazel Honke.

In memory of **Andrew Thompson**: by John & Louise Quam.

In memory of **Vi VanGuilder**: by Dale & Diane VanGuilder.

Baptisms

Andrew Dean King, son of Dena and Adam King, sponsors are Amber King and Scott King, November 11, 2012.

Preston James Reed, son of Jill and Saul Reed, sponsors are Tyson and Maria Reed, November 25, 2012.

Funerals

June Severson, November 2, 2012

Radio Broadcasts

November 4, 2012, in memory of Helen Ingram by her family.

November 11, 2012, in memory of Eileen Muckey, Debra Nugent and Carla Muckey by Charles Muckey.

November 18, 2012, in memory of John Gunderson by his family and friends.

November 25, 2012, in memory of Curtis Reed by his family.

News and Events



Births

A daughter, MaKena Rae Hansen, born on November 9 to Amanda and Shawn Hansen. MaKena joins big brother, Seth, and big sister, Madison.

A son, Lars Samuel Bartley, born on November 16 to Naomi and Chuck Bartley. Lars is the grandson of Pr. Orlin Mandsager.

News and Events

Co-terminus Update

Report from the Taskforce studying the pastoral leadership structure at St. John's

At the 2011 Annual Meeting, the Council was charged with studying *pastoral leadership structure at St. John's and in particular the co-terminus nature of the associate pastor position*. Essentially, the co-terminus provision of the by-laws requires that all called pastors submit their resignation 6 months after a new senior pastor is called to St. John's.

Sue Brockman, Char Carlson, Greg Colby, Barb Eaves, and Sandi Gerdes were appointed by the council to conduct the study and to report back no later than the November council meeting. During the process, the task force consulted with Pastor Mark Johnson and Bishop Harold Usgaard, and reconvened following Pastor Randy Johnson's resignation to review and affirm its recommendation.

The task force made its recommendation to the council at the October council meeting. The council accepted the committee's recommendation at that meeting. Members of the task force and the Council will discuss the recommendation and answer questions on the process on Sunday, December 9th in the Fireside Room, between services.

After extensive conversation, investigation and careful consideration, the task force brought the following recommendation to the Congregation Council:

That St. John's retain Article 4 of the by-laws which provides a co-terminus relationship for called pastoral staff until such time as the growth, mission and ministry of St. John's require a change.

In short, the task force determined that no official ELCA policy exists regarding co-terminus calls and the current called pastors support the continuation of the co-terminus relationship. As a task force, we stepped back from the current situation to determine the best long-term interest of the church. We acknowledge that the co-terminus provision can have both negative and positive impacts on the life of the church. Ultimately, it provides some protections for the church that have a positive long-term impact.

Please join the conversation in the Fireside December 9th!

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Brockman, Char Carlson, Greg Colby, Barb Eaves, and Sandi Gerdes



St. John's Wednesday Night Meals

Wednesday, Dec. 5
Pizza / Pasta and Salad

Wednesday, Dec. 12
Tacos

Wednesday, Dec. 19
Meatloaf w/Mashed Potatoes

Wednesday, Dec. 26
No Meal

Free will offering appreciated!

Come, Share a Meal!

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. Preparation for children and parents is provided on an individual basis.

Small Groups Ministry

For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.
Matthew 18:20

Providing opportunities for fellowship, Bible study, health and wellness, faith in daily living, learning, and service.

Connections

Contact: Carol Schoen 645-6840

Gathered in the Word

Contact: Pr. Johnson 645-4429

Grief Support

Contact: Barbara Knaak 664-0444

Healing Prayer

Contact: Dick Beckman 664-3882

Mens Breakfast Bible Study

Contact: Dean Ostlie 645-2597

Mens Time Out

Contact: Greg Kneser 663-0271

Options Bible Study: Gospel Of Luke

Contact: Dave and Gen Quarberg 645-0089

Peace and Justice

Contact: Judith Stoutland 645-7842

Prayer and Praise

Contact: Mary White 645-4783

Tuesday Noon Bible Study

Contact: Pr. Orlin or Pr. Mark 645-4429

Women of the ELCA Circles

Contact: Marilyn Jacobson 663-9060

Women of the ELCA Knitting

Contact: Kathy Vang 645-4397

Womens Bible Study at Parkview West

Contact: Dick Dahlin 645-5978

Women of the ELCA Quilting

Contact: Kathy Vang 645-4849

Womens Breakfast Group

Contact: Kathy Mellstrom 663-1451

Home Away from Home

By Barbara Eaves

I recall the first Christmas Phil and I spent as a married couple. We were in Texas, far away from family and friends. Living in a garage-apartment with a small kitten, we may as well have been in another country since neither the landscape nor the culture was familiar. Most days the adventure of marriage brought contentment and hope for a bright future, but at Christmas time there came a deep longing for family and the familiar.

Then, on Christmas Eve, we went to the small church where we had been attending worship on Sunday mornings. There we sat among others who had gathered to worship, sing carols and hear the Bethlehem story of a baby, shepherds, wisemen, and angels. It was then we realized it felt just like home, amidst the comfort of the familiar and the family of God.

Whether or not we are with family or friends at Christmas, we are invited to come home to Bethlehem and bask in the wonder of God's goodness, grace and love. What a precious gift!

On behalf of the faithful volunteers of
St. John's Small Group Ministry,
we wish you a blessed Christmas!

If you are interested in leading a small group
or have a suggestion for a new small group
please contact a member of the Small

Group Leadership Team:

Sandi Gerdes 645-2290,
sandi@laurabaker.org

Cheryl Buck, 663-9056,
cabuck@charter.net

Barb Eaves, 645-4172,
pbeaves@hotmail.com

Mark Johnson, 645-4429
mjohnson@stjohnsnorthfield.org

Richard Nelson, 650-0203,
richardnelson_03@q.com

Richard Beckman, 664-3882
dickbeck32@q.com

St. John's Thoughtful Film Club December 7, 7:30 p.m., St. John's Film Theater

For its December offering, St. John's Thoughtful Film Club, will show *Certified Copy* (2010) starring Juliette Binoche and William Shimell. Beautifully shot in Tuscany, the film offers a moving meditation on human relationships in the guise of a romantic comedy. In a *New Yorker* review, David Denby called *Certified Copy* "a brilliant, endlessly fascinating work."



WOMEN OF THE ELCA

Mission Statement:

TO MOBILIZE WOMEN TO ACT BOLDLY

Women of the ELCA (WELCA) includes ALL women of St. John's!

The study theme for 2012-2013 is **Gathered by God**, by Dr. Audrey West. This theme is found in the monthly "Gather for Faith and Action" magazine and will be studied at the monthly Circle meetings. To order or renew a subscription: subscriptions@augzburgfortress.org or [800-328-4648](tel:800-328-4648). If you would like to join a circle, call Marilyn Jacobson at [507 663-9060](tel:507-663-9060).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec. 8, Saturday, 9:30 a.m. Women's Advent Gathering: "There's a Star in the South". Come join us for pastries and fruit, and hear the latest news about Mwangaza from Shoonie Hartwig, an ELCA missionary and former member of St. John's. Mwangaza is a partnership of education, health, family and faith for the Lutheran Church of Tanzania. An offering will be taken up for this ministry. Checks can be written to "Friends of Mwangaza".

*To learn more about this mission:

<http://www.mwangazapartnership.org>

**Lutheran World Relief Fair Trade gifts will also be on sale at this gathering.

Dec. 10: Bible Study Leaders meet at noon in Fireside Room

Dec. 4 & 18: Knitters meet at 9:30 at home of Kathy Vang. 645-4849

Dec. 12,13,14,20: Circles meet. Check with leaders for locations.

Dec. 17 & 20: Quilters meet in Fellowship Hall from 9-11 a.m.

Nov. 29: WELCA Executive Board meets at 9:30 in Fireside Room.

Dec. Executive Board will be held on Jan. 3, 9:30 a.m.

CIRCLES: PLEASE JOIN US! (call Marilyn Jacobson: [663-9060](tel:663-9060))

Small groups of St. John's women meet for fellowship and Bible Study during the second week of each month (the week following the first Thursday), with a few exceptions as noted:

Anna — 3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Fireside **Please note time change.*

Abigail / Rebecca — Thursday, 2:00 p.m., NRC Parkview East

Elizabeth — Thursday, 1:30 p.m.,

Lydia — Wednesday, 9:30 a.m.,

Martha / Claudia — Thursday, 9:30 a.m.,

Mary — 2nd Friday, 1:00 p.m.,

Sarah — Wednesday, 9:30 a.m.,

Women's Breakfast Group — 2nd Saturday, 8:30 a.m., Fireside Room

LOOKING AHEAD

Jan. 3, Thursday, 11:30 a.m. All St. John's women are invited to a luncheon at St. Olaf, Valhalla Hall. Carol Benson will be leading us in a Christmas Carol songfest. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the Commons, and bring \$13.00 to St. Olaf on the 3rd to cover food, tax and tip.

Please submit items for this WELCA information page to: Jo Franklin, jo_franklin50@yahoo.com or [720-281-5107](tel:720-281-5107)

Please submit items for the Sunday bulletin to: Shirley Keltto, kelttos@msn.com or [785-317-9509](tel:785-317-9509).

OTHER NEWS:

•••••
• ***FAIR TRADE COFFEE** is sold
• in the Commons every third
• Sunday. Your purchase of Equal
• Exchange coffee helps Lutheran
• World Relief projects that
• support coffee farmers and their
• families.

•••••
• ***HELP NEEDED!!!**

• If you can sew a straight line,
• have a sewing machine at home,
• and have a limited amount of
• time to volunteer from your
• home, here is an opportunity for
• you:

• St. John's WELCA supports
• three important ongoing
• ministries that require sewing:
• SCHOOL KITS (sewing bags),
• QUILTS (piecing squares) and
• LAYETTES (hemming blankets).
• If you are willing to give an hour
• or two of your time, at your own
• convenience, please stop by the
• small table in the middle of the
• Commons to pick up all the pre-
• cut materials and directions.
• Completed projects can then be
• returned to the same table.

For your consideration from the Peace and Justice Group . . .

ELCA Statement on Criminal Justice

The ELCA has produced a first draft of a social statement on criminal justice. It is being studied across the church, and feedback given to the task force for its final editing. It will be considered at the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. A 2/3 majority vote of approval will adopt it as our church's position on issues of criminal justice.

In October, we discussed the initial draft of the statement at the adult forum. Greg Colby presented a position paper that many persons at the forum signed. This in turn was sent to the ELCA Criminal Justice Task Force for consideration in the writing of the final draft.

Our response form focused on a number of issues: lack of adequate funding for the criminal justice system, the problem of collateral sanctions that make it difficult for ex-prisoners to re-enter society, failure of our current drug policies that treat drug addiction as a crime rather than a health issue, and the failure to give adequate treatment to mentally ill incarcerated persons. Our response statement concluded that social order and human flourishing will be enhanced by greater emphasis on rehabilitative opportunities for prisoners rather than the current focus on long term prison sentences as punishment for crimes committed.

In response to our letter to the task force, we have received the following communique from the ELCA task force. It reads as follows:

"Thank you for taking the time to share your response to the draft social statement on criminal justice with the ELCA Task Force on Criminal Justice. Developing this social statement is an inclusive process and we are pleased to be receiving a broad spectrum of comments and suggestions. Each response will be read by members of the task force as it considers how to revise the draft.

The task force will be meeting over the next few months to revise the draft. The edited draft, called the proposal social statement, will become available online in February 2013 at www.elca.org/criminaljustice.

Thank you again for your response to the draft. Please keep the members of the task force in your prayers.

Sincerely,

Maggie Olson

Staff to the Crminial Justice Task Force"

JUSTICE CALENDAR

Monday, December 3:	The Peace and Justice Group Meets, 7:00 p.m., Fireside Room
Monday, January 21:	Martin Luther King Day / Community Celebration (Details TBA)
Sunday, February 24:	Northfield Community Celebration for Peace, Bethel Lutheran Church

Pastors
Orlin Mandsager
Mark Johnson
John Quam
Security & Building Maintenance
Assistants
Marvin and Irene Perez
Children's Ministry
Julie Brehmer
Music Ministry
Daniel Fenn
Music Staff
Daniel Fenn - Alleluia
Cathy Rodland - Jubilate
Ruth Legvold - Laudate
Zack Pelletier - Rejoice
Ringers
Office Manager
Leah Garlie
Parish Nurse
Lynette Marks
Youth Ministry
Mike Skunes
Congregation President
Richard Falck



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December Highlights



Wednesday Night Meals

Wednesdays, from 5:15 - 6:15 p.m.
(No Meal 26th - Christmas Break)

"Pay It Forward" - Service Project

Saturday, December 1st, from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 16, at 11:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve Worship

Monday, December 24, at 3:00 & 5:00 p.m., 11:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship

Tuesday, December 25, at 10 a.m.

Community Christmas Dinner for All

Tuesday, December 25, at 11:30 a.m.

Christmas Hymn-Sing with John Ferguson

Sunday, December 30 at 11:15 a.m.