

THE VOICE

OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Extending God's Love

April 2015

Volume 55, Number 4

*on the
inside...*

Reception for
John Schwehn
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Visit from Bishop
Steve Delzer
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Easter Breakfast
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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 to:

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www.stjohnsnorthfield.org

Church Office hours:

Monday - Thursday

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.

An Associate Pastor has been Called at St. John's

At the special congregational meeting on Wednesday, March 18, the congregation voted to call Pastor Jonathan Davis as Associate Pastor.

Pastor Davis accepted the call in a letter on March 19:

"I am honored and grateful to receive the call to serve as Associate Pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church. It is with great joy that I accept this call. I look forward to joining you in the good and hard work of partnering with God to serve the needs of our neighbors in Northfield and beyond. My wife, Lauren, and I, along with our sons Elliot and baby-to-be, are very excited about moving to Northfield and getting to know all of you. I am also very eager to begin working with St. John's vibrant staff and lay leadership."

Pastor Davis looks forward to joining St. John's in worship on May 10, 2015.



Please see page 11 for additional information from the Call Committee.



Worship for Holy Week and Easter

Sunday of the Passion, March 29
Procession with Palms and
Holy Communion
8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 2
Holy Communion
12 noon and 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 3
Liturgy of Good Friday
12 noon and 6:30 p.m.

Holy Saturday, April 4
The Great Vigil of Easter 7:00 p.m.
Beginning in the St. John's Courtyard
Service with candlelight
and Holy Communion
All are Welcome!

Celebration of the Resurrection
Sunday, April 5
8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m.
Holy Communion at all services
Easter Breakfast from
8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
9:30 service broadcast
on KYMN 1080 AM

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.*

Prayer and Care Ministry

*Pray without ceasing.
1 Thessalonians 5:17*

Prayer Ministry

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*

Listening for God's Voice

We ask God for guidance. Then we receive counsel, through a friend or as an inspiration from within. How do we know that this counsel comes from God? Might it also come from some other source: family messages, cultural expectations, childhood patterns, personal willfulness, wrongful desire? Does this counsel represent God's way, or some other way? How do we discern the voice of God?

Although there is no easy answer to these questions, one thing is certain: we are more likely to discern the voice of God if we read Scripture regularly and if we are in the habit of listening for the voice of God as it speaks to us personally in the Word. Listening to other people is a skill that can be cultivated, and so is listening to God. Stephen Ministers, early in their training, study a lesson called "The Art of Listening." Its point is to learn how to quiet our unruly selves so that we can be entirely present for our care receiver, to listen to that person with the whole heart and soul and mind, to listen without judgment and with love and understanding. Of utmost importance for listening to another person is this quieting of the self, quieting the chatter of the tongue and the clamor of the mind.

Christ is our standard. In Philippians 2 Paul says: "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness." This habit, of emptying the self and quieting the voice and mind, helps all of us minister to others by listening to them, but it also helps us listen to God, to discern God's voice and accept God's counsel.

If you or someone you know would benefit from working with a Stephen Minister, contact Joan Halvorson at 645-8445 or one of our pastors at 645-4429.

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

Matthew 5:4

Grief Support Ministry

Northfield Grief Support Coalition:

A grief support group for parents grieving the loss of a child will be meeting on Tuesday evenings, April 21 through May 26, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Northfield United Methodist Church. For more information contact Sherri Bunch Quaas at 507-645-4300.

Grief Care Resource: Care 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."

April 5, 2014
Christopher Nevin

From our pastor ...

Dear Friends,

Who am I in this story? It's a question I often find myself asking as I read Scripture. A study on how people listen to sermons once revealed that clergy are more likely to identify with Jesus when they hear a biblical story, asking questions about how he healed and taught and led. In contrast, many lay people said they saw themselves as part of the crowd, or maybe one of the disciples – if they could identify with anyone.

It's a question that haunts me especially around this time of year, because one of the uglier sides of Christian history has been the way Gentile Christians have read the passion story as the story of how “they” crucified our Lord. “They,” in this case, were the Jews (even though only Romans had authority to execute). Thus we turn the eternal story of the world's redemption into suspect history about a particular group of people. One of the great shames of the Lutheran tradition were Luther's hateful rants about the Jews written near the end of his life.

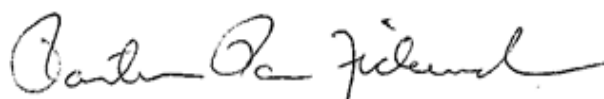
Interestingly, though, the best of our tradition has always said *we* were in that crowd calling “Crucify him!” In J. S Bach's St. John Passion, the composer follows the chief priests' mocking and beating of Jesus with this chorale:

*Who has struck you so,
my Salvation, and with torments
so badly beaten you?
After all, you are no sinner
like us and our offspring.
Of misdeeds you know nothing.
I, I and my sins,
as countless as the grains
of sand on the seashore,
have brought down on you
the misery that strikes you,
and this grievous host of agonies.*

In Johann Heermann's great hymn Ah Holy Jesus (ELW 349), the question “who brought this upon thee?” – the answer comes “Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee. I crucified thee.”

These texts remind us that “all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” We are still complicit in sin and suffering today. But equally so, Jesus' death and resurrection are *for us* today as well.

This is no history lesson. We experience Holy Week and Easter anew each year, bringing our sins and our own wounds with us. At the empty tomb, we are invited to be the disciples – astonished, overjoyed, and invited to touch the risen Christ's wounded hands. Then we are invited to **be** the *living body of Christ*, trusting that his death and new life are *for us*.



P.S. This season is also a time of remembrance of the Holocaust. See page 9 for details about events at Carleton College on April 19.

*For if
we
have
been
united
with him
in a
death
like his,
we will
certainly
be united
with him
in a
resurrection
like his.*

Romans 6:5

Important Dates to Remember!

Annual Easter Egg Hunt

April 4

Prayer Buddy Get-Together

April 8

Sunday School Schedule

April 5 No Sunday School – Easter
April 12, 19, 26 Sunday School

Wednesday Afterschool Programming

April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Catechism for Grades 4 and 5

April 8, 15, 22

3rd Grade CAT Retreat

3rd Graders are invited to attend the last of our 3rd Grade Catechism retreats on Wednesday, April 29 from 4:45 – 6:00 p.m. in the Undercroft. Parents are invited to join the retreat at 5:30 p.m. The topic is The Sacrament of Communion.

Please RSVP to Julie Brehmer if you are unable to attend.

Prayer Buddies Get-Together

During the Lenten season, 4th and 5th grade Catechism kids were paired with an adult Buddy member from our congregation to be their “Prayer Buddy”. Prayer Buddies are asked to pray for their child from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

On Wednesday, April 8, we will have an informal get-together during our regular Wednesday night meal at 5:30 p.m. for Prayer Buddies and their child/family to eat together and share their experience. Thank you for being a part of Prayer Buddies.



4th and 5th Grade Catechism Resumes, April 8, 15, 22

4th and 5th graders resume Catechism classes starting on Wednesday, April 8. CAT classes meet in the lower level of St. John's from 4:00 - 4:45 p.m.; 5th grade meets in their Sunday school classroom studying the Apostles' Creed and 4th graders in the Undercroft, studying the Ten Commandments. Don't forget your CAT books!

Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 4!

The Annual St. John's Easter Egg Hunt is on Saturday, April 4! This event invites children up to 5th grade, along with parents, to meet in the Commons at 9:30 a.m. for the egg hunt. Make sure to bring a basket or bag for collecting eggs and feel free to bring a friend!



Everyone: We need individually wrapped candy and small items to fill the eggs. Donations can be dropped off in the office or put in the basket in the Commons. Thanks so much!

Celebrating the Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Parents who wish to have their baby or child baptized at St. John's are asked to speak with Pastor Pam Fickenscher to discuss the meaning of baptism and to talk about the details of the day. Please contact Pastor Pam by phone at 645-4429 or by email at pfickenscher@stjohnsnorthfield.org.

YOUTH MINISTRY @ ST. JOHN'S

NAYW High School Romans and Christians

When: Friday, April 17th, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

Where: St. John's

Who: All High School Youth!

Cost: \$5 for Pizza and Pop

What: Northfield Area Youth Workers are hosting a night of Romans and Christians, pizza, and worship for all Northfield Youth. All friends (from any church) are welcome and encouraged to join us. Please email Mike Skunes or sign-up outside the sacristy so that we know how much food to order!



Join us this summer!

Sign up for summer camp! It's a BLAST!



Shores of St. Andrews, New London, MN (grades 3-5) June 21-26

At this week long Bible camp, kids have lots of fun with friends laughing, learning and growing in their faith. Enjoy swimming, kayaking, games, campfires, fellowship, singing and more! This camp is offered through Green Lake Lutheran Ministries.

"On the Road" Summer Camp (K-4), August 2-6, St. Peter's Lutheran Church

Good Earth Village, "On the Road!" will bring the fun of summer camp to Northfield. This 5-day program is filled with games, worship, crafts, Bible study and singing. Registration is through Good Earth Village. Campers can register on-line at www.goodearthvillage.org. **It's very popular so register early!** GEV takes approximately 125 campers.

Vacation Bible School, (Pre 1 - K), August 2-6, Bethel Lutheran Church

VBS is sponsored by St. John's, Bethel, St. Peter's and Emmaus Churches of Northfield. Volunteers come together to provide this fun-filled week where children enjoy music, crafts, games, Bible stories and make new friends!

Kindergarteners have the option of going to either VBS or "On the Road". The VBS program is half days whereas "On the Road" is a full day experience. You decide which program works best for your child! Registration forms available in late April/May.



Shared Ministry

I have heard newcomers to St. John's say they are warmly welcomed — one family recounted with joy that they couldn't leave their pew after worship the first Sunday here due to the people around them giving introductions! Hospitality at St. John's is one of the prime reasons my own family is here. It's irresistible!

After Easter this April, our community will begin a transformation in some of the ways we provide this welcome on Sundays: "**Hospitality Monthly Sharing**" which could affectionately be called "**H.M.S. St. John's**" or simply "**Monthly Groups.**" Here is a snapshot of what this will entail:

- Every person who is a part of St. John's congregation will be given a place in one of **NINE** Monthly Groups. It turns out that there are almost 800 adult leader(s) of household who are a part of St. John's. This makes for almost 90 adults for each Monthly Group. In addition to the adults, the children and youth of St. John's are heartily invited to share their talents along with their group.
- Each Monthly Group will have **Co-Leaders** from two different households. These courageous captains will coordinate with the people in their monthly group to provide three primary hospitality gifts on each Sunday in their month.
- These are the hospitality functions that will be taken care of by Monthly Groups:
 - * **Welcome Desk and Greeting**
 - * **Communion Preparing and Serving**
 - * **Coffee Serving**

I'm sure there will be many questions as we put this ship into the water — and we can only make smooth sailing if we hear about any rough patches along the way — so please, PLEASE, do not hesitate to talk with your Co-Leaders and/or me. One important way is to let your Co-Leaders know THE BEST WAY TO CONTACT YOU (calling, emailing, texting, other?). We can't do this without YOU!

ALLHANDS HOAY!

Christy Hall-Holt
Shared Ministry Coordinator

SERVING TO LOVE  *LOVING TO SERVE*

COMING UP AFTER EASTER...

On April 12th during worship, we will publicly celebrate the gifts of dedication and service from the leaders who have been coordinating **Sunday hospitality** most recently:

Carol Benson - Coffee Serving

Melissa Berthelsen - Coffee Serving

Peggy Dell - Coffee Serving

Kristy Harms - Coffee Serving

Marilyn Raadt - Greeting

Judy Smith - Communion Preparing

Joanne Sommers - Welcome Desk and Communion Serving

*Thank
You*

Music and Worship Life at St. John's

Our services Sunday morning April 12 will be a bit different as Bruce Benson and John Ferguson will lead "A Celebration for Eastertide" in scripture, reflection and song.

Learning and Fellowship

Sunday Learning and Fellowship in April

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

Sunday School (Lower Level) begins at 9:45 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.

April 5- Easter Sunday:

Easter Breakfast, 8:30-11:00 a.m., St. John's Hall.

April 12:

Coffee and Fellowship, Commons and St. John's Hall.

Sunday School (Pre-K thru Grade 5), Lower Level.

Life Groups (Grades 6-9) and Life Group Guides (Grades 10-12), St. John's Hall.

Fair Trade Sales of Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate Mix/Chocolate Bars, Commons.

Forum: Poetry Sunday at St. John's, Sanctuary.

Accompany, Undercroft.

April 19:

Coffee and Fellowship, Commons and St. John's Hall.

Sunday School (Pre-K thru Grade 5), Lower Level.

Life Groups (Grades 6-9) and Life Group Guides (Grades 10-12), St. John's Hall.

Fair Trade Sales of Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate Mix/Chocolate Bars, Commons.

Forum: Trends, Music, Communion, Etc. Part 2, Sanctuary.

Accompany, Room 205.

Bold Cafe, Fireside Room.

April 26:

Coffee and Fellowship, Commons and St. John's Hall.

Sunday School (Pre-K thru Grade 5), Lower Level.

Life Groups (Grades 6-9) and Life Group Guides (Grades 10-12), St. John's Hall.

Forum: Bishop Steve Delzer - Food Security, Sanctuary.

Reflections

Interim Pastoral Intern John Schwehn will be with us through Wednesday, April 22. We invite you to join us that evening at 5:45 p.m. for a celebration of his ministry and prayers for his future.

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on my short time with you this year, I can't help but feel that it was so *full* of wonderful things: prayer, relationships, meals, visits, blessed times with people young and old, laughter, music, and, of course, beautiful worship. I have been deeply moved by how you care for one another, for visitors and guests, and for your community. Your faith in Jesus Christ is plainly seen in the many ways that you give yourselves away to this place and to the life of the world. Thank you for so generously welcoming *me* into this ministry, yet another pastor you've received in such a short period of time! I know that you will extend the same warmth and welcome to your new associate pastor.

Our focus on Holy Communion this season of Lent has been very powerful for me. Just as Christ's own body is broken and given to us in the meal, so are we called, having received Christ's body and blood, to be broken open in love for the world. My prayer for St. John's is that you would continue to break open the possibilities for ministry and fellowship in this place. Be open to the transformative power of the Gospel, which comes to us often in unexpected (and, sometimes, uncomfortable!) places and relationships. Be bold in your vision of where God is calling you to go and who Christ is calling you to be.

Thank you for being such a bold witness and gift to my own journey of faith. I depart St. John's in great joy, having received such an abundance of God's grace through all of you, and confident that God is setting before all of us an extravagant banquet table.

Yours in Christ,
John Schwehn

Mission Outreach



Easter Breakfast

When: Sunday, April 5th, from 8:30-11:00 a.m.

Where: St. John's Hall

Who: For Everyone at St. John's (but put on by Youth)

What: As a service to the congregation and all our guests Easter Day, St. John's Youth will be hosting a breakfast consisting of egg-bakes, muffins, and fruit. All proceeds from the event will go to individuals who assist to help defray summer ministry opportunities including the ELCA Youth Gathering, Green Lake, and Magical Mystery Tours.

News and Events

St. John's Group Visits the Capitol

High School Youth and Peace and Justice attend the JRLC "Day on the Hill"

Six St. John's members spent Tuesday, March 10th, at the Capitol in St. Paul for the JRLC (Joint Religious Legislative Coalition) "Day on the Hill". Two high school students, Nicholas Gonnerman and Viveka Hall-Holt, joined Paul Peterson, Judith Stoutland, Hayden Kvamme and Mike Skunes for a day of briefings on important issues affecting Minnesota and for meetings with our state representatives.

The Joint Religious Legislative Coalition (JRLC) is an interfaith group including Jewish, Muslim, and Catholic representatives that draw on the shared values of many religions and denominations to be public policy advocates for social justice. On issues where there is broad consensus among religious organizations, JRLC makes recommendations for faith groups to advocate these issues with our state representatives on behalf of our congregations.

In the morning, the group met for breakfast, prayer, briefings, and a keynote address put on by the JRLC. This year's focus was on four primary issues including: increasing funding for child-care subsidies for low-income families, restoring voting rights to those being released from prison, advocating on behalf of victims of sex-trafficking, and increasing funding for families in welfare-to-work programs. After being informed about these issues and being given time to discuss them with other residents from MN District 20, our group headed up to the Hill. We had very productive meetings with Senator Kevin Dahle and Representative David Bly as our group got to engage them in discussions around these issues and hear about what progress our representation was making in St. Paul.

Overall, it was a wonderful opportunity for our group (especially our students) to learn about issues of justice in our state, ways that we can put our faith into action, and to learn about the importance of flexing our democratic rights to be engaged with our government representation.

Yom HaShoah: The Annual Remembrance of the Holocaust

Yom HaShoah, the annual remembrance of the Holocaust, is marked this year by an event at Carleton College's chapel on Sunday, April 19 at 5 p.m. The speaker will be author Peter Grose, who has just published a new book on the amazing story of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, "A Good Place to Hide: How One French Community Saved Thousands of Lives During WWII".

The "Heroes for Hope" Fun Run/Walk

Spend time with your family, be active, and support a good cause! The "Heroes for Hope" fun run/walk on Saturday, April 11, will raise money for the Hope Center, Ruth's House of Hope, and Whispers of Hope. Register at <http://www.finalstretch.com/heroesforhope>.

Church Council Approves Policy for Benevolence Grants

Upon recommendation of the Business Management Board and the Benevolence and Social Concerns Board, the Church Council has approved a policy for benevolence grants from St John's. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that St. John's is in compliance with government law and that projects supported have responsible management. Benevolence grants will be given only to domestic and international projects that have charitable 501-C3 status or are supported by the Southeastern Minnesota Synod or the ELCA churchwide. Exceptions to this policy will be reviewed by the Benevolence and Social Concerns Board and recommended to the Church Council for approval.

News and Events

Bishop Steve Delzer Guest Preacher Visits St. John's on Sunday April 26th

On Sunday, April 26, Bishop Steve Delzer will be our guest preacher and lead the adult forum. This will be an opportunity to meet Steve, learn more about new initiatives, and get updates on continuing ministries in our synod.

Ending food insecurity in our Southeastern Minnesota Synod is the major synod-wide benevolence effort Steve has promoted. Last September he led a run to raise funds for this cause, and churches throughout the synod have been sharing ideas and resources for eliminating hunger. Though St. John's has long contributed to the CAC food shelf and hosted the community Christmas Day Dinner, perhaps we can be inspired to find new ways to promote enough food for all.

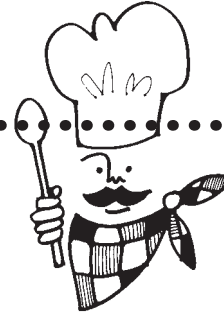
The New Ministries Fund was started in the synod several years ago to support new churches. One of the more recent is a South Sudanese ethnic Dinka group in Rochester that developed a relationship with Rochester's Zumbro Lutheran Church and the synod. The Dinka came to the relationship with a history of a resilient faith that stood up to the horrors of civil war. Zumbro Lutheran brought some expertise on how to be a congregation in America. The Southeastern Minnesota Synod was able to connect the Dinka with five other South Sudanese worshipping communities throughout the synod (in Austin, Faribault, Owatonna, and Rochester) among three different tribes (Dinka, Nuer, and Anyuak).

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod and the ELCA have partnered together to provide financial support for this ministry. The monies for the synod's portion have come from a designated New Ministry Fund that exists outside the normal synodical budget. St. John's has designated \$5000 in our budget for New Ministries, and since our relationship with El Milagro in Minneapolis ended several years ago, this money has supported this synod fund.

In addition to the South Sudanese ministries, the New Ministry Fund underwrites a portion of a new **House Church ministry** that is emerging from Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Rochester. Many people in this day and age don't feel comfortable walking through the front doors of a church building. This ministry will take 'the church' out of the walls of a building and into people's homes.

Annual Poetry Reading Event

On Sunday, April 12, between services, come hear poems written and read by poets from among us. Join us at 9:50 a.m. in the Sanctuary.



St. John's Wednesday Night Meals

Supper is served
from 5:15- 6:15 p.m.
in St. John's Hall.

Wednesday, April 1

No Meal - Holy Week

Wednesday, April 8

Pulled Pork

Wednesday, April 15

Enchilada Hot Dish

Wednesday, April 22

Scalloped Potatoes with Ham

Wednesday, April 29

Sloppy Joes and Chips

Free will offering appreciated!

Come, Share a Meal!

FROM THE CALL COMMITTEE . . .

On March 18, the congregation in meeting voted 191-1-0 to call Jonathan Davis as Associate Pastor.

The Call Committee's statement:

The Call Committee unanimously endorses the recommendation of Pr. Jonathan Davis for many reasons. High on the list are his gifts for preaching, teaching, and leadership in worship. In addition, his personal strengths of connectivity, collaboration and communication will be a great fit with Pastor Pam in moving our congregation forward. One of Jonathan's references who also knows Pam and her high caliber of preaching stated that the two together would make for a "lively pulpit".

Pr. Davis graduated from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN in 2004 with a B.A. in religious studies. From 2003-2007, Pr. Davis served as Middle School Ministry Coordinator for Zumbro Lutheran Church in Rochester, MN. In 2011, he earned a Master of Divinity from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN and was ordained into parish ministry in June of 2011. Currently, Pr. Davis is serving as full time pastor of the two-point rural parish of Aurora and Trinity Lutheran churches in Owatonna, MN.

Strong passions for preaching and relationship building guide Pr. Davis throughout his ministry. He was awarded the Sheldon Tostengard Preaching Award and the Senior Preaching Award through Luther Seminary, and he continues to develop thought-provoking sermons. One of Pr. Davis' references commented that "he is an excellent communicator, preacher, and teacher. His preaching is based both in biblical text and world context. He is a strategic thinker who wants to make a difference in the world".

In his role as pastor, Jonathan believes one of his greatest gifts is in making connections with people and in connecting others. He seeks relationship in ministry opportunities through confirmation classes, small group/Bible study, inter-generational gatherings, and other forms of lay-person and pastoral congregational member care. Pr. Davis demonstrated his strength in relationship building at a broader level with his current two-point Parish where the churches were previously unconnected relationally. Jonathan helped to foster relationships between the members of both congregations and engaged them in a visioning process that resulted in a united parish that is moving forward together in mission through one mission statement shared by both churches. One student member of his current congregation emphasized that "this leader helped save my church and my sister church". She continued, "Pr. Davis goes above and beyond expectations, and is always willing to help".

Pr. Davis' gifts fit with the mission and ministry of St. John's as his strengths include: being welcoming, helping people to develop their spiritual life, building a sense of community (inter-generational), and being creative/innovative about his tasks. He has proficiencies and skills in speaking Spanish as well as in music performance (e.g. studied trumpet, sang in choir, and took voice lessons while at St. Olaf College).

Pr. Davis is married to Lauren, also a graduate of St. Olaf College and a pastor in Owatonna. They have a son, Elliot, and another child on the way. In his free time, Jonathan loves spending time with his family. He is an avid reader and also enjoys soccer, ultimate frisbee, rock climbing and musical theater. Their home is currently in the parsonage in Owatonna, but if called to St. John's, they plan to move to Northfield in the near future.

Thanks to the committee members: Mary Cisar, David Gonnerman, Christy Hall-Holt, Andrea Hoff, Barb Knaak, Amy McBroom, Betsy McLaughlin, Scott Swanson, Gary Wicks (chair), Ex-officio: Pr. Pam Fickenscher, Bailey Dell (youth representative), and Patsy Ophaug (Council President)

Ministry Statement of Pr. Jonathan Davis -

"I am passionate about people and where God intersects with their lives. My ministry is about coming alongside people, as together we seek to struggle with and discern God's action and desire for the world. I have more questions than answers, but it is on that road that we encounter God."

Notes of Thanks!

Youth Fundraiser THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who donated, volunteered, and attended the Youth Fundraiser. What an awesome day! All funds raised will help families with the cost of attending the ELCA Youth Gathering in Detroit, MI and other summer camps and activities this year! God's blessings as kids continue to learn, discover and grow in their faith!

Big Thanks to Linda Anderson for her hard work and delicious soup suppers! Also big thanks to all the people (boards and other groups) who helped serve and clean up for soup suppers.

March Actions

Baptisms

March 22, 2015, Amelia Kay Timmer,
daughter of Amanda and Joe Timmer.

Deaths

Kenneth Hagen, February 19, 2015

Irene Nelson, February 27, 2015

Charlotte Rasmussen, February 28, 2015

Lorraine Hanson, March 1, 2015

Ann Louise Swanson, March 4, 2015

Radio Broadcasts

March 1, 2015, given in memory of Eugene Schrader by family and friends.

March 8, 2015, given in memory of Ken Struss and Elmer & Cora Schultz by Marie Struss and family.

March 15, 2015, given by Sharon Bishop in honor of her daughter, Kris, whose birthday was on March 15.

February 22, 2015, given by Ronnie and Ruth Anglin in memory of Helene Anglin, whose 20th birthday would have been March 10th.

March 29, 2015, given in memory of Della Gunderson by Lester Gunderson, family, and friends.

From Bread For the World

This year Bread for the World focuses on child nutrition. As a result of persistent poverty and stagnant wages, one in five American children lives in a family that struggles to put food on the table. Working to end hunger in our nation and world can seem overwhelming. What can one person do?

Providing assistance to hungry and poor people through churches and charities is vital. But even if churches and charities doubled their efforts, they still would not be able to end hunger on their own. Our federal government must play a role. Only government leaders can make the economic, social, and political decisions necessary to attack the deep structural causes and ultimately eliminate widespread hunger and poverty. Just a sentence or two written into a piece of legislation can benefit millions of people in the U.S. and around the world. As people of faith and conscience, we can advocate for public policies that will end hunger and poverty at home and abroad in the decades ahead. Advocating is something each of us can do. It doesn't take a lot of time. Even though the political process in Washington can seem challenging, we remain hope-filled and confident that our voices will make a difference, as they have through the years.

Letters can be written anytime. There is a sample letter on the FEED OUR CHILDREN flyer on the table in the Commons. Later this year we will have an opportunity to join the collective impact of an offering of letters. Addresses: for Senators - U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510; for Representatives - U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515.

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.

Accompany

Contact: *Pastor Pam* 645-4429

Bold Cafe-Women of the ELCA

Contact: *Christy Hall-Holt* 581-1508
Sara Redetzke 301-3599

Circle Bible Studies-Women of the ELCA

Contact: *Jane Gelle* 645-8507
Genevieve Quarberg 645-0089

Grief Support

Contact: *Naomi Mandsager Bartley* 403-3394

Knitters-Women of the ELCA

Contact: *Kathy Vang* 645-4397
Delores Mickelsen 645-8101

Life Issues in Scripture

Contact: *Dick Beckmen* 645-3882

Men's Breakfast Bible Study

Contact: *Gary Knutson* 663-1522

Men's Time Out

Contact: *Greg Kneser* 663-0271

Peace and Justice

Contact: *Judith Stoutland* 645-7842

Prayer and Praise

Contact: *Mary White* 645-4783

Quilters-Women of the ELCA Quilters

Contact: *Kathy Vang* 645-4849

Women's Breakfast Group-Women of the ELCA

Contact: *Kathy Mellstrom* 663-1451

All Things New

By Barbara Eaves

Spring...the time of year when I want to clean everything, inside the house and out. And so I wash and polish, dust and shine. The windows and doors are opened to let in the fresh spring air. The flower beds are raked, the porches and garage floor are swept. Not only are surfaces cleaned, but, oh those closets and cupboards that hide way too many things that need to be sorted, cleaned and given away or recycled.

Spring...the time of year of new life, when the grass turns green and buds on the trees swell until they burst open. Plants that have lay buried in the ground, pop up and blossom...tulips, crocuses, hyacinths, lilies and the like. Birds make nests and warble to attract a mate and their colors often change to a brighter hue.

What is not to like about all of that! But it gets even better.

Spring...the time of year when we celebrate Easter...for seven weeks.

Easter...sometimes called the queen of Festivals...cleanses and brings new life to us as well.

With Easter the old is washed away...all the errors, the unkept promises, the loss of direction, the "forgottenness" of whose I am...all that and more are washed away with Easter. Then adorned with a cloak of new life...claimed, forgiven and blessed...we walk away new.

Best of all, the story rolls on, and because Jesus not be kept down, the Easter promise of new life is also ours to claim each and every day. Certainly this wondrous mystery is worth a soft, but firm, "Alleluia."

*Now the green blade rises, from the buried grain,
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;
love lives again that with the dead has been;
love is come again like wheat arising green.*

*When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,
your touch can call us back to life again,
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;
love is come again like wheat arising green*

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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,
classysandi@yahoo.com

Deb Seitz, 301-3526,
deborah.seitz@nfl.k12.mn.us

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

Richard Beckmen, 664-3882
dickbeck32@q.com



WOMEN OF THE ELCA

Mission Statement:

To mobilize women to act boldly
Women of the ELCA (WELCA) includes ALL women of St. Johns!

The study theme from "Gather" is
"Transforming Life and Faith" by Carol Schersten LaHurd.
April's Topic: Inspired by the Risen Lord

April Meetings

April 6: Bible Study Leaders meet at 12:00 noon in the Fireside Room.

April 7 and 21: Knitters meet at 9:00 a.m. at the home of Kathy Vang, 507-645-4849.

April 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19: Circles/groups meet. See time and location below.

April 13 and 16: Quilters meet in the Fellowship Hall from 9:00 a.m.-12:00p.m.

April 6: WELCA Board meeting 9:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room

Event Dates

Thursday, April 9, 1:00 p.m.: Documentary film, *Postville*, will be shown in the theatre with discussion to follow.

Saturday, April 11: The WELCA Cannon River Conference Spring Gathering will be held at Lands Lutheran Church, 16640 MN Highway 60, Zumbrota. Registration-8:00 a.m., Program-9:00 a.m., Lunch-11:30 a.m. St. Olaf Professor Joseph Mbele will speak on cultural differences. Program/lunch is \$12.00-pay at the door or preregister with checks written to SEMN Synod WELCA and mail to Cora Lee Monroe, 304 Skogen Lane, Kenyon, MN 55946. Items for area food shelf is appreciated.

Monday, April 13, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at St. Dominic's Church: Northfield Reads: Enrique's Journey to provide insight and understanding regarding the immigrant situation. Immigration has been the theme for programming in WELCA this year. This is one more opportunity for conversation and understanding regarding the diversity among us. For more info contact f.corinne.smith@gmail.com or leah@growinguphealthyly.org.

April Circle/Group Meetings:

Gather Groups

Wednesday, April 8: **Lydia** 9:30 a.m. at Jo Dahlin's, 1114 Heywood Rd., 645-5978

April 15: **Sarah** 9:30 a.m., at Solveig Bailey's, 1906 Lincoln St. S, 645-2496

Thursday, April 16: **Elizabeth** 1:30 p.m. at Rachel Peterson's, 14 Fareway Dr., 645-7636

Martha/Claudia 9:30 a.m. at Parkview W., Contact: Marilyn Jacobson, 663-9060

Abigail/Rebecca 2:00 p.m. at NRC Parkview E., Contact: Lois Wrede, 663-9002

Friday, April 10: **Mary** 1:00 p.m. at Winnifred Alberg's, 11125 Kane Trl., 645-8630

Saturday, April 11: **Women's Breakfast Group** 8:30 a.m. Fireside Room, Contact: Kathy Melstrom, 663-1451

Bold Café Group

Sunday, April 19, 9:45 a.m. Fireside Room

Contact: Christy Hall-Holt, sharedministry@stjohnsnorthfield.org, 645-4429

Sara Redetzke, srednorth@charter.net, 301-3599

For topics and articles, go to Boldcafe e-zine at www.boldcafe.org.

Submit items for the **Voice** to Anita Hellie (ahellie@charter.net)
Submit information for the **Sunday Bulletin** to Mary Hoff (jpmhof@msn.com)

From the Peace and Justice group...

JUSTICE CALENDAR

April 6—Peace & Justice Group Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Fireside Room

Updates on Projects:

Library, Nonviolent Radio, Gender Violence, Day on the Hill Reports, Legislation to Support

All are Welcome! Please join us!

Climate Change for Making Peace

How can we work for peace? How can we choose which programs to take on? What can we do that makes a difference?

During the month of March, the justice calendar of Minnesota was full and challenging:

Thousands participated in the Noble Peace Prize Forum on March 6 to 8 in Minneapolis, hearing speakers and leaders from around the world who are—and have been for years—involved in understanding the critical issues and causes of conflict, and working to resolve them. Rallied by the JRLC, about a thousand gathered in St. Paul March 10 to focus concern on topics needing attention in this year's legislative session to alleviate hunger, housing, joblessness, and other debilitating conditions that prevent the goal of 'dignity for all' and to lobby their elected legislators for action. Here in Northfield there were meetings concerning alarming changes in the global climate, energy sources, causes of gender violence, actions of groups large and small in perpetrating injustice on others, persons lacking basic food and shelter.

In all of these situations, participants learned the details, were drawn to one great need or another, considered what they might as individuals or groups of individuals of varying sizes, do about it. The significance and numbers of issues could make one feel it was all beyond what any of us could do.

From the research for her book, *A Strategy for Peace*, the ethicist Sissela Bok suggests that a sustainable peace in communities from very small to global requires the absence of violence, the presence of honesty and truthfulness, dependability of one's word and action, the absence of excessive secrecy.

This four-part formula establishes a climate that can restore health to our globe and to our immediate environment. It is a climate change within us as individuals for our own deepest motivations and efforts. Everyone can participate in this important work without leaving home or hometown and it is a guide for those who go near and far to heal the wounds in our societies on all levels.

"I see all those who strive to reduce distrust as working for peace," Bok asserts. "Whether in government offices or at the negotiating table, with children or with adults, in religious or in political groups, in private or public life, the men and women who work to diminish the sway of violence, of deception, of breaches of faith, and of excessive secrecy are all doing the work of peace."

Furthermore, "They show that the opportunities for such work, should one so choose, are everywhere—and that change can begin, should one so choose, right away."

The choices and possibilities offered in the many meetings in March are important. But also important are the seemingly small choices we make in the routines of each day which can make a big difference in the climate of our towns and world.

Books for the Rice County Jail Library

We are looking for helpers to collect books on Saturday afternoon, May 2, for the Rice County Jail Library. Contact Greg Colby (645-684) if you are interested or have questions.

Senior Pastor
Pam Fickenscher
Visitation Pastor
John Quam
Pastoral Intern
John Schwehn
Children's Ministry
Julie Brehmer
Facility Manager
Tim Byers
Financial Manager
Bernie Renander
Music Ministry
Nathan Proctor
Music Staff
Carol Benson - Alleluia
Cathy Rodland - Jubilate
& Jubilate Schola
Zack Pelletier - Rejoice
Ringers
Office Manager
Leah Garlie
Shared Ministry
Christy Hall-Holt
Parish Nurse
Lynette Marks
Youth Ministry
Mike Skunes
Congregation
President
Patsy Ophaug



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Northfield, MN 55057
507-645-4429

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Easter Breakfast



The Easter Breakfast is one way we celebrate Easter together as a congregation and with those who visit St. John's. All are welcome to St. John's Hall on Easter Sunday for a delicious breakfast of egg bake (ham, sausage, and veggie), muffins, fruit, juice, and coffee. The breakfast starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 11:00 a.m. Suggested donations at the door are \$5 per individual and \$20 per family. The breakfast is being hosted by St. John's youth and parents and the Youth Ministry and Education Board. All funds raised above the cost of the breakfast will be used to support summer programming.

Looking for ways to help? We are still in need of individuals to donate an egg bake or other essentials for breakfast. Please stop by the table in the Commons or contact Mike Skunes for your chance to support Youth Ministry at St. Johns.

Thank you for supporting our youth!