

Our Mission:  
As followers of Jesus  
Christ, the members of  
St. John's Lutheran  
Church welcome all peo-  
ple to join us in celebrat-  
ing God's grace, nurtur-  
ing their faith, and reach-  
ing out to the world in  
love and service.

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Worship Services:  
8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

The *Voice* is a monthly pub-  
lication of St. John's Luther-  
an Church, Northfield, MN.  
Articles for the *Voice* must  
be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of  
each month to:  
[office@stjohnsnorthfield.org](mailto:office@stjohnsnorthfield.org).

For information, contact the  
Church Office:  
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[office@stjohnsnorthfield.org](mailto:office@stjohnsnorthfield.org)  
website:  
[www.stjohnsnorthfield.org](http://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.

# THE *Voice* ★

OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Volume 56, Issue 1

January 2016

## St. Olaf Choir Sings Here on January 3

We welcome the St. Olaf  
Choir and its director, Dr.  
Anton Armstrong, to wor-  
ship services on Sunday,  
January 3<sup>rd</sup>. This is a long-  
standing and deeply be-  
loved tradition at St. John's  
as we welcome the choir  
back to the place of its  
birth and as we are blessed  
by their wonderful leader-  
ship and music.

A reception in honor of the  
choir will be held between  
services in St. John's Hall.  
Please take the opportunity  
to welcome the St. Olaf  
Choir back to St. John's!



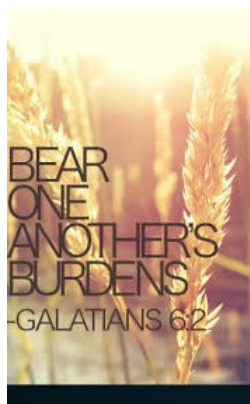
## Brush Off Those Winter Blues and Join Us for Game Night at St. John's! Bring your family, friends, and a game to share!

When:  
Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup>  
Time:  
4:00 – 6:00 p.m.  
Where:  
St. John's Hall/Commons  
Serving:  
Pizza around 5:00 p.m.  
(Free Will Offering to cover the cost)



PING PONG TOURNAMENT! GA GA PIT! GAMES, GAMES, GAMES for all ages!

Game Night is sponsored by the Children's and Youth Boards.



## Stephen Ministry Needs You

As part of the visioning process at St. John's, our congregation has adopted a Shared Ministry program that matches our gifts and talents with needs of our congregation. As you are reflecting on ways you might serve at St. John's, we invite you to consider Stephen Ministry.

Through Stephen Ministry, members of St. John's provide Christian caregiving to members of our congregation and community. With

new Stephen Ministers, we will be able to provide Christ's healing love to additional people in our congregation who are grieving, in crisis, or experiencing other stresses of life.

On January 19<sup>th</sup>, we will begin classes for people interested in becoming Stephen Ministers. Characteristics of a Stephen Minister include the ability to listen and to offer care and Christian friendship to

others. Through 50 hours of class time, Stephen Ministers learn and develop skills for assisting others.

Are these qualities you have or would like to develop? If so, we invite you to consider this ministry. For more information, contact Pastor Jonathan Davis.

**Stephen Ministers provide one-to-one care and encouragement.**

**"Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted."  
Matthew 5:4**

## Grief Support Ministry

### Northfield Grief Support Coalition:

A grief support group meets on Mondays beginning on January 4<sup>th</sup>, from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m., at the Northfield Retirement Community. For more information contact Tana Kelly, LSW, at 507-664-8821 or Pastor Kristine Braaten-Lee, at 507-664-3478.

### Grief Care Resource:

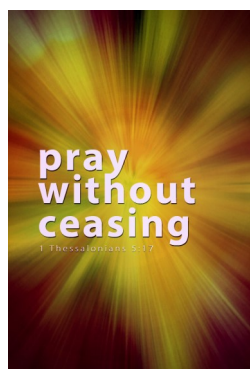
Care Notes are one of the grief support resources at St. John's. Stop by the Commons to pick one up for yourself or for a loved one.

*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."*

*January 5, 2015  
Della Gunderson*

*January 12, 2015  
Dorothy Bolton*

*January 25, 2015  
Kathryn Hinsverk*



## 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.

## From our Pastors...

By now, many of us have heard about the Syrian refugee crisis. In fact, the crisis goes beyond Syria – *the world* is in the midst of the worst refugee crisis that has ever been recorded. Across the globe, close to 60 million people have been forcibly displaced due to war, conflict, and persecution. Much of the recent attention in the news has focused on Syrian Refugees. People are fleeing Syria due to an ongoing civil war that has killed many civilians, as well as the ongoing violence created by ISIS and religious persecution.

In November, the Women of St. John's hosted a gathering in which Robert Flaten spoke on the Refugee Crisis. During his presentation, Robert put forth an idea: perhaps St. John's should sponsor a Syrian Refugee family. This resonated with many of you who were at the Women of St. John's gathering and who heard about Robert's idea later. The question of how we can support a refugee family has been floating around the halls of St. John's ever since.

Ministry with refugees is not new to St. John's. Did you know that after World War II, St. John's became a place that welcomed and cared for refugees? Due to the war, over 10 million people were forced to leave their homes and members of St. John's decided to do something about that in 1948, by voting to bring the Hungarian family of Josef Varga here to St. John's and have Mr. Varga serve as custodian of the church. St. John's continued to sponsor refugee families, even at one point welcoming 20 new refugee families as new members on one Sunday. (For a personal story see page 15)

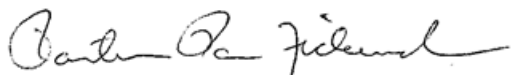
With this history in mind and the great need that is in front of us, the leadership of the Women of St. John's have officially asked the church council for support in St. John's considering to sponsor refugee families. At the December council meeting, the church council approved a resolution of support on this matter.

With that approval, a small committee is being formed to explore how St. John's can be involved in the ministry of Refugee Resettlement, which will likely include working with Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota (LSS) and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS). At this time, refugees in need of resettlement in Minnesota are from Iraq, Burma, and Somalia.

In the meantime, during this winter and spring, St. John's Adult Forum will be continuing this dialogue on refugees, beginning with a presentation on January 10<sup>th</sup> by L. DeAne Lagerquist titled "Immigrants, Refugees, and Lutherans."

Thank you for your passion in taking up Jesus' call to welcome the stranger. This is long, hard, and faithful work, and we are so glad that we can begin to do this together.

Grateful for each one of you,



Pastor Pam



Pastor Jon

P.S. Check out [www.lss.org](http://www.lss.org) or [www.lirs.org](http://www.lirs.org) to learn more about the refugee crisis and what can be done to help.

***"I was hungry  
and you gave  
me food,  
I was thirsty  
and you gave  
me something  
to drink,  
I was a stranger  
and you  
welcomed me"  
- Matthew 25:35***

## Important Dates to Remember!

### Sunday School Schedule

Jan. 10	Sunday School
Jan. 17	Sunday School
	Toddler Time
Jan. 24	Sunday School
Jan. 31	Sunday School ( <i>Camp Sunday</i> )
Feb. 7	Sunday School ( <i>Teacher Appreciation</i> )

### 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade CAT Resumes

Wednesday, January 6, 4:15 – 4:45 p.m.

### Bowling for 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grades

Monday, January 18 (No School Day)  
12:30 – 2:00 p.m.

### Camp Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade

Sunday, January 31, in Fellowship Hall, 9:45 – 10:30 a.m.

### Teacher Appreciation Brunch

Sunday, February 7, at 9:45 a.m. in Fireside Room

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade CAT Retreat

Wednesday, February 3, 5:30 – 6:45 p.m.  
The Sacrament of Baptism

## Time to think about Summer Camp!

On Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders are invited to Fellowship Hall to hear about St. John's summer camp options for 2016. Parents – come and learn more about camp with your child! We will be meeting during the Sunday school hour, 9:45 – 10:30 a.m.



## Let's Go Bowling!

Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, is a NO SCHOOL DAY so we're heading to the bowling alley!



**Who:** Grades 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>,  
(Friends are always welcome!)

**Where:** Jesse James Lanes, Hwy 3, Northfield

**When:** Monday, January 18 – **NO SCHOOL !**

**Time:** 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.

**Cost:** \$10.00/child for 2 games and shoe rental

Please sign up on the bulletin board in the Commons or downstairs by the Nursery.

Parents: Please drop off and pick up your child at the bowling alley. If they need a ride or a financial assistance to participate, give Julie a call at 645-4429. Parent or high school chaperones are needed.

## 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade CAT Resumes in January

4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders resume Catechism classes starting on Wednesday, January 6. CAT classes will meet in the lower level of St. John's; 4<sup>th</sup> grade in Room 19 and 5<sup>th</sup> grade in the Undercroft from 4:15 – 4:45 p.m. on the following Wednesdays in January: 6, 13, 20, 27.

## Third Grade Catechism Retreat

Third graders, along with their parent(s), will meet Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5:30 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. for a Catechism retreat on the Sacrament of Baptism (room to be determined). If you are unable to attend, please call Pastor Pam Fickenscher or Julie Brehmer at 645-4429.

## Youth Service Opportunity

**When:** January 9<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Where:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Harvest - Golden Valley (Leave from St. John's Parking Lot)

**What:** Second Harvest is a non-profit organization that supports MN food shelves by handling, sorting, and distributing bulk food donations. We have promised to bring 25 people from St. John's to assist in their warehouse for a two-hour shift from 12:30 till 2:30. Email Mike if anyone in your family would like to join us!



## Prayer Buddies During Lent

Starting on Ash Wednesday and continuing through the Lenten season, our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade Catechism kids will be paired with an adult member from our congregation to be their "Prayer Buddy". Children and adults exchange simple information with each other. We ask the adult to pray for their buddy and to acknowledge them when they see their child in church. With this program, we are hoping to create spiritual and caring connections with children and adults in our church community.

If you are interested in being a Prayer Buddy for a child, please contact Julie Brehmer, [children@stjohnsnorthfield.org](mailto:children@stjohnsnorthfield.org) or 645-4429. We're looking for about 30 adult members from St. John's congregation. Thank you!

*"With this program, we are hoping to create spiritual and caring connections with children and adults in our church community."*

## NAYW Ski - Trip

**When:** January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2:30 - 11:00 p.m.

**Where:** Welch Village (Leave from Bethel Parking Lot)

**Cost:** \$45 (covers rentals, lift ticket, transportation, food)

\$30 (lift ticket, transportation, food)

\$10 (transportation, food)

**What:** Join us for our annual Northfield area churches ski-trip to Welch Village for youth in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades for a fun night on the slope with friends. Never been on skis or a snowboard before? No problem Welch offers free beginner lessons. Feel free to invite a friend!





## Sunday Learning and Fellowship in January

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

*Sunday School (Lower Level) and Education Hour for adults begins at 9:45 a.m.*

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### **January 3:**

*Reception for St. Olaf Choir - Coffee and Fellowship, **Commons and St. John's Hall.***

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

### **January 10:**

*New Member Reception - Coffee and Fellowship, **Commons and St. John's Hall.***

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

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

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

*Adult Forum: Immigrants, Refugees, and Lutherans (Presented by DeAne Lagerquist), **Sanctuary.***

### **January 17:**

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

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

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

*Adult Forum: Annual Meeting Preview, **Sanctuary.***

*Bold Cafe, **Fireside Room.***

*Toddler Time, **Room 20.***

### **January 24:**

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

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

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

*Adult Forum: Luther's Critique of Catholicism in the Reformation (Presented by Eric Lund), **Sanctuary.***

### **January 31:**

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

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

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

*Adult Forum: Modern Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue (Presented by Eric Lund), **Sanctuary.***



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## Children's Ministry Appreciation Brunch!

Children's ministry volunteers are invited to brunch on Sunday, February 7 at 9:45 a.m. in the Fireside Room. More information will be coming your way!

**Please contact Julie if you can help with the brunch by serving, bringing an egg bake or bake treats (muffins, rolls, breads...). Thanks in advance!**

## St. John's Wednesday Night Meals

Let's get together for Dinner -  
Come, share a meal!

All are welcome,  
it's a fantastic time for  
fellowship for ALL ages!

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

Free will offering appreciated!

**Wednesday, January 6**  
Lasagna

**Wednesday, January 13**  
Tator Tot Nachos

**Wednesday, January 20**  
Chicken and Noodles

**Wednesday, January 27**  
Enchiladas



## Radio and Video Broadcasts

Worship services are  
broadcast on KYMN 1080  
AM from 8:30-9:30 a.m.  
central time every Sunday.  
Christmas Eve, Christmas  
Day, and Good Friday ser-  
vices are also broadcast.

If you would like to spon-  
sor a broadcast (\$160),  
please contact the church  
office by phone.

Video broadcasts of St.  
John's worship services  
can be seen on Northfield  
Community Television  
(NTV) - cable channel 187,  
Mondays at 7:30 p.m and  
Fridays at 7:00 p.m.

### Radio Broadcasts

December 6, 2015, given by Judy Christensen in memory of Dagny Christensen and Leslie Gustafson who shared a December 1<sup>st</sup> birthday.

December 13, 2015, given in memory of Curtis Reed by Avis Reed and family.

December 20, 2015, given by Duane and Marie Benson.

December 24, 2015 (5:00 p.m.), given in memory of Dorothy C. Johnson by family and friends.

December 25, 2015, given in memory of Dorothy C. Johnson by family and friends.

December 27, 2015, given in memory of Loretta Siler by her children and their families, Connie Babcock Finner and Chuck Babcock.

***" Help us keep  
this ministry  
alive and  
sponsor a  
broadcast!"***

## Acts of Ministry

### Baptisms

November 28, 2015: Catherine Ramsey Jackson, daughter of Jason and Ann Jackson

November 28, 2015: Lilja Phuong Jackson,  
daughter of Josh Jackson and Phuongdiep Le Nguyen

December 25, 2015: Duke Andrew Humphry, son of Anne and Michael Humphrey

### Deaths

Robert Bastian, December 21, 2015





## Annual Meeting is Sunday, January 24

The Congregation Council has set Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, as the date for the Annual Meeting of St. John's Lutheran Church, immediately following a potluck dinner in St. John's Hall starting at noon. Items of business will include receiving of reports,

election of officers, board, and council members, and action on the proposed 2016 budget.

The preview of the Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, between services in St. John's Hall.

**"The RIC Committee has recommended a potential timeline for this process of discernment..."**

## Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Study in 2016?

The Reconciling in Christ Committee, supported by the Church Council, will be seeking affirmation from the Congregation at our upcoming Annual Meeting regarding further study during 2016.

The RIC Committee has recommended a potential timeline for this process of discernment that was endorsed by Church Council at its December meeting. Among items on this outline is a

vote at the Annual Meeting to intentionally explore the topic of God's welcome in a variety of ways and continuing conversation around the possibility of becoming an RIC congregation. An affirming vote at the Annual Meeting encourages us to proceed with this study during the coming year.

*Patsy Ophaug*

Patsy Ophaug  
President of the Congregation

**LISTENING POST**

## Reconciling in Christ Listening Post Thursday, January 14, 6:30 p.m.

Do you have questions or concerns about the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) conversation that we have been St. John's? Recently, St. John's has having conversations about the possibility of becoming a Reconciling in Christ congregation, which means creating a welcome statement that intentionally welcomes those of all sexual orienta-

tions and genders. The RIC committee, along with your pastors, want this to be an open dialogue, where all voices are valued, respected, and heard. If you would like to ask a question, express a concern, or simply have more conversation about this topic, you are invited to this RIC Listening Post on Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup>,

from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Pastor Jonathan and a member of the RIC committee will be present to both listen and lead the discussion.

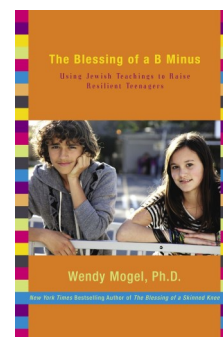


## Parent Discussion: The Blessings of a B Minus

Parents of middle and high school kids are invited to join in a parent discussion January 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> from 6:15 to 7:15 p.m. (during confirmation).

Our topic will be taken from Wendy Mogel's book *The Blessings of a B Minus*, about raising resilient teens.

Google "Overparenting Anonymous" for a brief summary.



## ELCA's "Confront Racism: A Holy Yearning" Webcast

In December, Pastors Pam and Jonathan led a two-part adult forum on racism that centered around the ELCA's Confronting Racism webcast from August. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, and her conversation partner, William Horne III, will be continuing the conversation

through a follow-up webcast on Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 p.m. In this upcoming webcast, Eaton and Horne will be joined by three ELCA members, one who is an associate judge in Baltimore, one who is a seminary student that has lived through incarceration and

homelessness, and another seminary who is a former police sergeant.

Please join us at St. John's on Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 p.m. for a live-viewing of this webcast and conversation to follow.

**"Racism - a violation of God's intention for humanity."**

## What's Happening at Holden Village?

Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. there will be a "Creation Awakes" event in Northfield, featuring Holden's Executive Directors and an

update on the village since the Wolverine Creek fire. Pastor Pam Fickenscher is helping host this event at a private home. If you would like to attend, please email

her at [pfickenscher@stjohnsnorthfield.org](mailto:pfickenscher@stjohnsnorthfield.org). Other events in Minnesota on different days can be found at [www.holdenvillage.org](http://www.holdenvillage.org).



## A Study of Philippians

Sponsored by Women of St. John's, for both women and men, meeting four times, once a month on the second Wednes-

day: Jan. 13, Feb. 10, Mar. 9 and Apr. 13. Come for coffee in St. John's Hall at 9:00 a.m., gather in the library at 10:00 a.m. for

study of Paul's most personal letter to the church in Philippians. David and Genevieve Quarberg will lead the discussion.



## St. John's Chancel Guild: A Perspective from Joan Halvorson

With the coming of Advent, and the striking blue cloth with which our sanctuary has been decorated, we give thanks for the work of the Chancel Guild. An architectural term, the "chancel" refers to the space around the altar in a church. Joan Halvorson has chaired the Chancel Guild for approximately the last 12 years. In recognition of those years of service on the occasion of her handing the leadership of the Guild's Chair over to Deb Christensen, we are providing some of Joan's reflections on her tenure as Chair.



Joan Halvorson

### ***First of all, Joan, how did you come to be at St. John's?***

We moved to Northfield in 1960 when my husband, David, began practicing here. We lived in this part of town and thought it natural to attend our neighborhood church. We have four children, and I was the Primary Choir director at St. John's for several years. Then when the High School choir director, Jeanne Neram, moved away, I directed that choir too.

### ***How and when did you become Chair of the Chancel Guild?***

Well, I believe it was about 12 years ago when, I think it was Jane Rinehart, and maybe Deb Christensen too, asked me if I would chair. This was when the previous chair, Jane Macintyre, stepped down. Kristine Carlson Wee, whose husband was Associate Pastor at the time, was the chair before Jane.

### ***What are some of the rewarding aspects of chairing the Chancel Guild?***

The way the sanctuary looks after we change the paraments (these are the altar cloths and hangings as well as the adornments visible around the sanctuary.) I always meet with the Pastor ahead of time to plan the paraments to use, and then the members of the Guild sign up for all the Sundays of the year. We make sure the altar is free of crumbs, wax spills, and wine stains.

Working with this wonderful group of women -- I had never worked with a group of women before except for my bridge club, so I didn't know what they would be like. They're just so willing to help. When we gathered together for our last meeting, all I had to do was to tell them we were going to have scones, and that was it -- it was all taken care of! **Thank you, Guild Members!**

One thing I have to say is that we couldn't do this without Leah Garlie, St. John's Office Manager. She is "Johnny on the Spot" with getting schedules sent out to Guild members and using the new online directory for communicating. **Thank you, Leah!**

Scott Swanson is our honorary Chancel Guild member. All of the hangings above eye level are Scott's work. This year when we were getting ready for Advent, Lynette Swanson asked if we were going to use the angels that hang above the pulpit and the lectern -- she remembered and helped to get those up. **Thank you, Scott and Lynette!**

### ***Are there any not-so-pleasant aspects?***

Cleaning the "purificators" (altar cloths) was a pain in the neck. This was so even before we had communion every Sunday. We used to pour the wine into the communion cups on the altar and it would stain the purificators. How did we get the stains out? We just did -- we were miracle workers.

### ***Are there any new members in the Chancel Guild?***

Last Spring, when I announced my upcoming retirement, we started talking about getting some "new blood" for the Guild. A few women's names were brought up, then we went out and asked if they would join. New members, Shelley DeBernardi and Lynette Schroeter, have joined us.

**Thank you, Joan, for your gifts of service to all of us at St. John's!**

## Annual Meeting Potluck Kitchen Coordinator and Volunteers Needed

Prior to St. John's Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, the congregation will share in a potluck meal. Please bring a dish to share!

If you are available on this day to serve as a kitchen coordinator please contact Christy Hall-Holt at 645-4429 or [sharedministry@stjohnsnorthfield.org](mailto:sharedministry@stjohnsnorthfield.org).

A kitchen coordinator is primarily responsible for delegating tasks and serving as "point person" for the rest of the volunteer crew. Volunteers are needed to help with set up (11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.), serving (11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) and clean up (12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.). If you can help in any of these ways please contact let us know!



## Notes of Thanks

**Thank you to all the volunteers who made the Advent Fair a special night!** Special thanks to our cooks, Peggy Dell and Kristy Harms, to Katherine Norrie, Jill Enestvedt, and Kelly Lynn Stanton-Nutt for organizing the crafts, and to Jane Rinehart and Kristy Wermager for organizing the Fair Trade Fair.

**Thank you to everyone who donated gifts to the Giving Tree this year!** Special thanks to our 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade Wednesday kids for helping with the stars!

**Thank you to all our Sunday School children who participated in the Sunday school Christmas Program!**

Thank you to the Sunday school teachers, the choir directors and all of our musicians; to Brian Evenson for helping with the set, and, thank you parents, for supporting our Children's programming at St. John's! A special thank you to Sue Brockman, Kristy Harms, Marcia Yernberg and Frances Boehning, for helping with the program.

**Thank you to our Funeral Team** who did wonders of hospitality in a very busy season this fall.

**Thank you, thank you, thank you!** From all of us on the Christmas Dinner Committee, Thank You for your contributions of food and time to make the 2015 Community Christmas Dinner such a great success. Without your help this event would never happen. It is always such a joy and blessing to look out over St. John's Hall on Christmas Day and see so many enjoying such a wonderful home cooked meal. This is a great gift to the community.

**Thank you for your generous offerings to ELCA World Hunger,** which exceeded \$11,000!

***"Nothing teaches hope, kindness, courage, and compassion like helping others."***

## Global Missions: Where Do Our Donations Go? from the Benevolence and Social Concerns Board

The January envelope packet includes an envelope for Missions. Have you ever wondered how this money is used and how much these gifts are needed?

In 2016 St. John's will be sending your donations to support three different missions:

- Missionary sponsorship for Randy and Carol Stubbs, who direct and teach in the music department at Tumaini Lutheran University Makumira in Tanzania. This program trains church musicians as well as music teachers for the country.
- Missionary sponsorship for Curtis and Katie Kline who serve with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia. Curtis is involved with human rights projects and education with the Lutheran congregations, and accompaniment of the Kogi indigenous people. Katie is involved in leadership training for women and youth.
- Support for the partnerships of the Southeast Minnesota Synod Global Mission in the Central Diocese of Tanzania, the Lutheran Church of Colombia, and the Lutheran Church in South Sudan.

Kathy Bolin, our synod coordinator of Global Mission, was in the Central Diocese of Tanzania in September, 2015, and reported to our Benevolence and Social Concerns Board in December. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT) continues to have rapid growth. There are more Lutherans in Tanzania than in the United States. In the Central Diocese, where our synod is partnered, there are now 88 congregations (Iambi Lutheran, our partner congregation, is one of them), 22 mission areas and 10 new congregations applying for approval. The synod supports projects in health care and education. Of special interest to St. John's are the programs that we have supported with past donations:

- Iambi Secondary School, 202 students. St. John's donated funds from Val Halborg's estate to support teacher salaries, \$7000 per year for 6 years. These funds are helping to retain good teachers. The fund will run out in 2018. The well and pump that we funded with Grace Upon Grace donations is working and valued by the community as well as the school.
- Lutheran Institute Kiomboi (LIK) trains pastors, evangelists and parish workers. St. John's has sent money to support evangelist training. This is an effective program, as about 20 congregations have been added in the diocese in just the past 8 years.
- LIK is in the process of joining the Tumaini Lutheran University system. There is support from ELCT to do this. The goal is to become a teacher training college, in addition to being a seminary and Bible School. Requirements include building 3 classrooms, and the synod sent \$35,000 to assist with this. Another \$70,000 is needed to complete the classroom project.
- St. John's sends money for scholarships each year which are donated on the Christmas Sharing Tree. These funds support students in these schools. There are two other schools in the diocese, a high school and a technical school. The latter was on the verge of closing, but was rescued by community demand and assistance. There is a great need for scholarships to support the schools and the students. Tanzanians see education as the road to a better life.
- Iambi Hospital and Palliative Care program. St. John's has supported Palliative Care, which has an outreach to 25,000 patients per year. The hospital needs a new x-ray machine, as well as a building that is radiation proof. The current room and machine are leaking radiation.
- A nursing school with a two-year program was started at the hospital and will graduate its first class next year. Textbooks and laptop computers are needed for the school to complete certification by the Tanzanian government.

The synod has also been asked by the ELCA to assist with the support of the new Lutheran Church in South Sudan. The synod is sponsoring Pastor Wal Reat, a Sudanese man who lived in Faribault, completed a program at Luther Seminary, and was ordained this past September. Pastor Reat is now serving in South Sudan.

These are some highlights of the mission work being done by our synod and the missionaries we sponsor. Your donations are a vital part of our global outreach.

# ***WOMEN OF ST. JOHN'S***

**Mission Statement:**  
**TO MOBILIZE WOMEN TO ACT BOLDLY**  
 Women of the ELCA includes ALL women of St. Johns!

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## **January Meetings**

- January 11:** Women of St. John's Board Meeting at 9:30 a.m. in Fireside Room  
 Bible Study Leaders meet at 12 noon in the Fireside Room
- January 12 & 26:** Knitters meet at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Kathy Vang (507-645-4849)
- January 14:** **Lydia** - 9:00 a.m. in St. John's Hall for coffee, with Bible study to follow at 10:00 a.m.  
 (bible study lead by Genevieve & David Quarberg, see pg. 9 for additional information)  
**Sarah** - 9:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room, contact Char Nelson, 663-05
- January 15:** **Martha/Claudia** - 9:30 a.m. at Parkview West, contact Marilyn Jacobson, 663-9060  
**Elizabeth** - No meeting in January  
**Abigail/Rebecca** - 2:00 p.m. at Parkview East
- January 16:** **Mary** - 1:00 p.m. at Genevieve Quarberg's, 1604 Cannon Valley Drive, 645-0089
- January 17:** **Breakfast Group** - 8:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room, contact Kathy Mellstrom, 663-1451
- January 18 & 21:** Quilters meet in the Fellowship Hall from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon.

## **Something New for Women of St. John's**

We have our own Facebook page!

- "Like" us to receive updates of upcoming women's events.
- View pictures of our activities or post your own.
- Share events or activities you have planned with other women at St. John's.

Find us at *Women of St. John's* and "like" our page, or email us at [women.stjohns500@gmail.com](mailto:women.stjohns500@gmail.com) to receive a friend request.

## **Carols Old and New**

Women of St. John's will meet on Thursday, January 7th at 11:30 a.m. for lunch in the King's Room at St. Olaf. "Christmas Carols, Old and New," led by Carol Benson, Nancy Ordahl Knoch, Kristin Partlo and Donna Paulsen. Please have your money/check payable to WELCA ready to give to treasurer Barb Walters who will pay the bill (cost is \$15). Sign up on the WELCA bulletin board by January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please park at the church and we will pool rides. This will make it easier for parking at St. Olaf and will make the walk shorter for those not driving.

Submit items for the **Voice** to Marilyn Calcutt ([merilyn.calcutt@gmail.com](mailto:merilyn.calcutt@gmail.com))  
 Submit information for the **Sunday Bulletin** to Mary Hoff ([jpmhof@msn.com](mailto:jpmhof@msn.com))

*"As a community of  
 women created in  
 the image of God,  
 called to  
 discipleship in Jesus  
 Christ, and  
 empowered by the  
 Holy Spirit, we  
 commit ourselves to  
 grow in faith, affirm  
 our gifts, support  
 one another in our  
 callings, engage in  
 ministry and action,  
 and promote  
 healing and  
 wholeness in the  
 church, the society,  
 and the world."*





## From Bread for the World...

Bread and partner organizations want to ensure that ending hunger and poverty becomes a high priority for our next president and Congress. With that goal in mind the Alliance to End Hunger, Bread for the World, Feeding America, Meals on Wheels America, RESULTS, and Share Our Strength have organized the Vote to End Hunger (VTEH) coalition. VTEH was launched during the Iowa Hunger Summit in November. Dozens of organizations and individuals have signed on to the coalition. The Iowa Catholic Conference, Bread, and Methodist, Lutheran and Episcopal churches sponsored a Vote to End Hunger rally at Grand View

University in Des Moines on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

"Throughout the world countries such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Great Britain have made tremendous strides in ending hunger. However in the U.S. we have seen little progress because our nation has not made solving the problem a priority," said Bread president, Rev. David Beckmann (ELCA). One out of every seven American households struggle to put food on the table.

A recent elections survey commissioned by Bread found that 6 out of 10 voters surveyed said that ending hunger should be a

priority for our government. Among those surveyed hunger is of most concern when described in the context of children going hungry, veterans needing food stamps and working families unable to buy enough food.

"The 2016 elections are critical in ensuring ending hunger is a national priority with the new president and Congress starting in 2017," said LaVita Davis, Bread's director of grassroots organizing.

As a nonpartisan organization Bread will not be endorsing any particular candidate or party. (more at [www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org))

*"We must learn to  
live together as  
brothers or perish  
together as fools."  
Martin Luther King Jr.*

## Martin Luther King Jr. Day Community Celebration

The annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day community celebration will take place on Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016. It will be held at Emmaus Church, 712 N. Linden Street, from 7:00-8:15 pm. The focus this year will be on The Color of Unity. Dr. King said "We must live together as brothers or perish together as fools." This event is free and open to all. Everyone in the community is invited and encouraged to attend. For more information, contact Corinne Smith: [f.corinne.smith@gmail.com](mailto:f.corinne.smith@gmail.com)



## ELCA Advocacy News

ELCA Advocacy news from the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris: "We stand at a critical moment, when the world has come together to decide the framework for our shared future," said Interim Advocacy Director Mary Minette, who traveled to Paris last week as part of a delegation representing ACT Alliance, of which the ELCA is a member. To learn more about the Paris summit and how the ELCA continues to be involved in caring for God's Creation, visit <http://www.elca.org/advocacy> and read Mary's updates from Paris on our [ELCA Advocacy blog](#).

## Refugee Response: An American Family Story

by Allene Moesler

In early September 1944, Erna was the 25 yr. old wife of Fred and mother of 4 year old Guenther, living in the Transylvanian town of Reghin, in what is now Romania. Fred was with Hungarian troops somewhere near the Russian front. Russian troops were advancing rapidly and, when it became apparent that the country would likely fall to the Russians, people of German ethnicity were evicted. Erna and Fred's Germanic ancestors settled regions of Transylvania about 800 years prior, but because of ethnicity and the conscription of the men by the Nazis army, they were forced to leave.



Guenther & Allene Moesler

Erna fled with her child, mother (Oma) and sister, Rike, hoping to reach Budapest, where they had relatives. That wasn't to be and they spent 4-5 weeks with other refugees traveling in a railroad car that had been used to transport horses. They slept on straw and ran out into fields when Allied bombers flew over. They ate what could be gleaned from those fields. The suitcase of money was worthless. Fear, hunger and uncertainty were constant companions.

By mid-November the little group was in war-torn Austria, housed in a schoolroom crowded by refugees, some from Reghin. Meanwhile, Fred's Hungarian unit was retreating from the battlefield on foot and in disarray. He learned, strictly by happenstance, about the eviction of German ethnics from Transylvania and that his wife and child had fled....probably to Austria. After weeks of searching, he learned of their whereabouts; they reunited on December 4, 1944. Fred found temporary work and lodging in an upper room of a small farmhouse for his family and Erna's mother and sister. The farm family shared their meager harvest and Fred was able to bring some bread from the bakery where he worked. Guenther recalls many days, however, where they had only potatoes to eat. However, they were better off than other refugees; many were starving. Many families were never reunited.

By another stroke of luck, the region of Austria where they lived became occupied by the United States. During the next 6 years, life was harsh, but manageable. A hotel was converted to housing for refugee families; the family now had a kitchen and two bedrooms. Fred began construction work, Aunt Rike worked as a cook and Oma took in sewing. Two more sons were born. After the Marshall plan took hold in 1948, Fred found better construction work.

By 1952, the US had opened immigration to German ethnics. Seeking a better future for their sons and with the support of Lutheran World Services, Fred, Erna and their three sons came to Northfield, Minnesota. St. John's Lutheran Church sponsored the family, as it did so many others.

Each son served in the US military; Air Force, Marines or Army. Erna died in 1999 and Fred in 2000, leaving their sons and six grandchildren. One granddaughter died in 2004 from illness contracted when she was an air traffic controller for the Air Force in Saudi Arabia during the first Gulf War. One granddaughter was adopted from an orphanage in Korea. All of the grandchildren are contributors to the economy and society of the United States. There are seven promising great grandchildren.

This All-American family results from the policies and guarded openness of the United States of America that I love and respect. I am deeply saddened by the strident "not in my state" and "not in my country" screeds of some leaders and policy makers today as women like Erna and men like Fred flee much harsher conditions, seeking stability and opportunity. I see Erna's eyes in the eyes of current refugees. How can we turn our backs on women, children and families fleeing unsurvivable conditions? Had those voices prevailed after World War II, my family would not exist. Guenther is my husband.

***"Fear,  
hunger, and  
uncertainty  
were  
constant  
companions."***

**Senior Pastor***Pam Fickenschner***Associate Pastor***Jonathan Davis***Visitation Pastor***John Quam***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 H. Garlie***Shared Ministry***Christy Hall-Holt***Parish Nurse***Lynette Marks***Youth Ministry***Mike Skunes***Congregation President***Patsy Ophaug***St. John's Lutheran Church**

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St. John's Annual Meeting

will be held on

**Sunday, January 24**

*(following a potluck lunch)*