

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. & 10:00 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 15th of
each month to:
office@stjohnsnorthfield.org.

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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 7

August 2016

Night to Unite Neighborhood Party August 2 in St. John's Parking Lot 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. All Are Invited!

St. John's will be hosting our 6th annual Night to Unite celebration. This is part of a national program in its 32nd year that encourages neighbors to come together on the first Tuesday in August to strengthen community and increase the safety of neighborhoods.

Menu: Sloppy Joes, Hot Dogs, Baked Beans, Chips, Watermelon, Freezies, Lemonade

Attractions: Bouncy Tent, Emergency Vehicle Tours, Vintage Cars, Live Music, Games

Chief of Police, Monte Nelson, will be stopping by with a greeting.



Refugee Resettlement

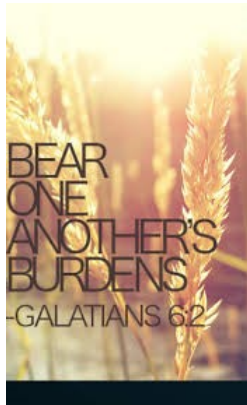
Good news! Lutheran Social Service refugee resettlement program has found a family for Christ Church Lutheran and St. John's Lutheran to co-sponsor.

They are an Ethiopian family of 9 coming from a camp in Kenya. There is a mother and father who are in their late and early 30s respectively. The seven kids are ages 5, 9, 9, 16, 17, 19, 19. Our data shows that both parents and the eldest 4 children speak "some" English. This is very rare! They also won't have a very large ethnic community here as there are fewer Anuak people in the Twin Cities area than there are Somali and Karen refugees.

We are happy to report that they arrived safely on Wednesday, July 20th, and were greeted at the airport by representatives of Christ Church Lutheran and St. John's, Pastors Erik Haaland and Pam Fickenscher, and Ron Johnson and Alyssa Ness, as well as case workers from Lutheran Social Services. Family members who live in St. Cloud were also there for a warm and emotional reunion.

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Who Was Stephen?



The name Stephen Ministers comes from an incident in the early Christian church described in Acts 6:1-7. The number of believers, Jewish and Gentile, was growing rapidly. The twelve disciples did not have time enough to oversee the increasing number of tasks that came their way, like distribution of food to the needy.

When the Greek-speaking believers complained that their widows were not getting a fair share of the

community's food, the twelve disciples solved the problem by delegating the work to the laity: "select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and serving the word."

Everyone was pleased with this solution, and the congregation chose and commissioned seven men. The first mentioned among the

seven is Stephen, "full of faith and the Holy Spirit." We later learn that Stephen did more than distributing food. "Full of grace and power," he "did great wonders and signs among the people." His preaching and miracles brought him into conflict with the Jewish religious authorities and led to his being stoned to death (Acts 6:8 - 7:60). Stephen is best known as the first Christian martyr. The name "Stephen Ministers,"

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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.

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

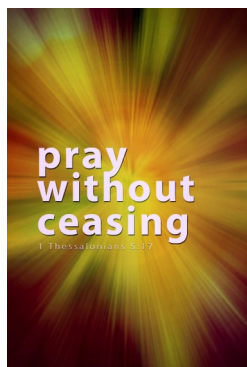
The following St. John's members died in this month last year. We list them so that we can remember these loved ones and their families in prayer "with reverence and affection."

*August 15, 2015
Sandra Molkenbur*

*August 20, 2015
Kenneth Jennings*

*August 23, 2015
Steve Swanson*

*August 30, 2015
Edgar Severson*



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 507-663-1097.

Manna and Mercy Retreat with Rev. Alan Storey: Sept. 30-Oct.1



Pastor Pam and I would like to invite you to an exceptional event happening at St. John's this fall.

South African pastor Alan Storey will be leading a *Manna and Mercy Retreat* on Friday evening, September 30th through Saturday, October 1st. Rev. Alan Storey, retreat leader, is an ordained elder of the United Methodist Church of South Africa and is appointed to the Central Methodist Mission (CMM) in Cape Town. His commitment to the peacemaking Jesus was tested early in life when he faced conscription into the apartheid regime's military. After spending a year of discernment working in Australia, he returned to South Africa, declaring he would never fight in the apartheid army – or any

army. He was arrested and faced trial with a six-year prison sentence as the likely outcome. Alan's trial was abandoned, and he became the last conscientious objector to be tried in apartheid South Africa.

Using Daniel Erlander's book *Manna and Mercy* (a book we use for Confirmation here at St. John's), Alan Storey developed a retreat as a journey from Genesis to Revelation over the course of two days, with sensitivity to the contexts in which the scriptures were written and of our present day.

The Bible is meant to be an instrument of God to enable abundant life for God's creation. Sadly, through the ages it has been read and interpreted in such a way that it has been used as an instrument of human domination and death - to cheer on the crusades, support slavery, advocate Apartheid, glorify genocide, sanction sexism, bless war and worship prosperity in the face of the poor, just to name just a few horrors of our human history. During the *Manna and Mercy Retreat*, we will take a fresh look at scripture through the interpretive lens of Jesus' life, death and resurrection and God's overall call for each one of us to partner with God in mending this fractured world. The hope is that after we have done so, our interpretations and use of the scriptures will be truly liberating and life-enabling.

Following the retreat, Alan will be preaching and leading the adult forum at St. John's on Sunday, October 2nd.

Personally, Alan is one of the best preachers and bible study leaders that I have ever experienced. He is passionate for taking Scripture and the Christian faith seriously and his presentation style is accessible to all people. We are honored to have Alan lead this retreat during a visit to the United States.

The cost for this event is \$40 but if this cost is a hindrance to you, scholarships are available. You can register for this event on the St. John's website or by contacting the church office.

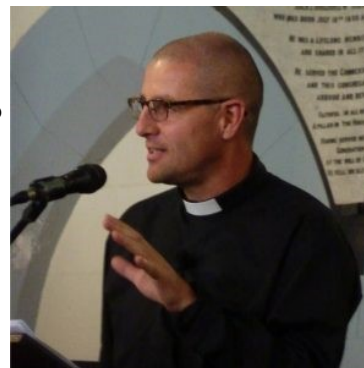
Please consider joining us for this event!

Jan

Pastor Jonathan

Carlton C. Fildes

Pastor Pam



Important Dates to Remember!

Pool Party!

Wednesday, August 10

Online Sunday School Registration

Appreciated by August 7

Open House for Preschool I

Wednesday, September 14, 6:00 p.m.

Catechism Orientation

Wednesday, September 14, 5:30 p.m.

First Day of Sunday School

Sunday, September 18, 9:45 a.m.

ROCK, Wednesday Afterschool Programming
Begins Wednesday, September 21

Fall Programming is Coming!

- Sunday School begins on Sunday, September 18th, for children age 3 (by September 1, 2016) – grade 5 from 9:45 – 10:30 a.m.
- Toddler Time: Children who are 2 by 9/1/16, along with their parents, are invited to "Toddler Time". Once a month during the Sunday school hour, our little ones sing songs, talk about a favorite Bible story, play games, make crafts and meet new friends.
- ROCK, our Wednesday afterschool program for children in kindergarten – grade 5, begins on Wednesday, September 21st. Bus transportation will be offered from the Northfield Elementary schools to St. John's so kids can jump right into Wednesday's fun!
- Catechism, (CAT) for 4th and 5th graders begins in October! Orientation for Catechism will be held on Wednesday, September 14th, at 5:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

Is your 3 year old starting Sunday School?



Children who are three years of age by 9/1/16 are welcome to begin Sunday School this fall!

Parents are invited to bring their preschooler to an Open House on Wednesday, September 14th, at 6:00 p.m. to meet the teachers and get acquainted with their classroom before Sunday School begins on Sunday, September 18th.

If you have question, please call St. John's at 645-4429 and speak with Julie Brehmer.



Dive in on August 10!

Northfield area churches invite families with children in 5th grade and younger to our Annual Pool Party at the Northfield Outdoor Pool on Wednesday, August 10th, from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

The cost for admission is \$3.00 per person or you may use your pool pass. Churches will be providing free food at the event so come eat, swim and enjoy! (We will cancel the event if the pool closes because of the weather.)

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.

NEW Online Registration for Children and Youth

Check out St. John's website at www.stjohnsnorthfield.org where you will find all the forms needed for registering children and youth for the 2016-2017 school year plus information on how to volunteer for upcoming events and programs. We appreciate registrations turned in by August 7th for returning members. Visitors and new members are invited to register at any time during the year. If you have questions regarding programming, please contact Julie Brehmer at children@stjohnsnorthfield.org or 645-4429 or Mike Skunes at youth@stjohnsnorthfield.org or 645-4429.



Magical Mystery Tour III

Who: Grades 5th-8th Completed

When: August 17

Where: It's a Mystery! (But meet at Bethel Lutheran Church)

What: Magical Mystery Tours are events organized by the youth directors of the churches in the Northfield area every 3rd Wednesday during the summer for youth who've completed grades 5-8. The "mystery" part is that we try to keep our destination secret from the participants. Watch your mailbox for a letter detailing where we're going. Sign up outside the Youth Room or email Mike Skunes at youth@stjohnsnorthfield.org

MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR



Volunteers do make a difference!

An ambitious array of activities means more volunteer opportunities for St. John's members - parents, grandparents, anyone! Many volunteer opportunities can be on a rotating schedule. Even teaching Sunday school can be as little as a 2-3 Sunday commitment!

Check out the volunteer page in the registration packet or contact Julie Brehmer at 645-4429 or children@stjohnsnorthfield.org if you are interested!

P.S.: High School students – talk with Julie how you can connect with our younger kids on Sundays and Wednesdays too!



Congrats to St. John's 2016 College Graduates

*This year ten of our members graduated from college.
Please keep them in your thoughts as they accept new challenges.
They will always have a church home with us at St. John's.*

Katie Bull, B.A. in Psychology, St. Olaf, concentrations in Education and Family Studies. This summer Katie is a Classroom Teaching Assistant for TRiO Upward Bound at St. Olaf College, as well as an Assistant Teacher at Northfield Daycare Center. This fall, she will be doing her student teaching at LEAP High School in St. Paul and Loring Elementary in Minneapolis, for a K-12 license in teaching English as a Second Language.

Henry Burt, B.A. in both Psychology and Exercise Science, *magna cum laude* and honors, St. Olaf. Henry will start an M.Div. at Princeton next year and intends to do his Lutheran year at the ELCA's Philadelphia Theological Seminary.

Peter Duba, B.S. in Urban and Regional Studies, Cornell University, concentrations in Business and Real Estate. Peter is taking a position in NYC as an analyst with Tishman Spyer - a real estate development and management company in Manhattan.

Aaron Kohrs, B.M. in Music Education, St. Olaf. (Aaron sang with our choir for two years.)

Adam Neuger, B.A. in Economics, St. Olaf, with a Business Management Concentration.

Kirsten Overdahl, B.M. in Music Performance. Next year's plans are to attend Duke University to pursue a Ph.D. in Environmental Toxicology. (Kirsten was one of our choir interns this year. Last year she earned a B.A. in chemistry.)

Molly Polzin, B.S.N. in Nursing, Mankato State University. In July, she started her job as an Emergency Room nurse with Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital in St. Louis Park.

Alex Rod, B.S. in Kinesiology/Human Performance, *magna cum laude*, UW Eau Claire. He will attend Des Moines University medical school for three years to obtain a Dr. of Physical Therapy degree beginning in August.

Connor Rowley, BA in Physics, Mathematics, & Computer Science. Accepted a position with Protolabs in the Twin Cities.

Will Swanson, B.A. in Mathematics, St. Olaf. This summer Will is working with his dad, Scott.

Thanks to David Sudermann for collecting our graduate info!



**Watch for fall start dates
for choirs
in the September issue of the Voice.**

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 services are also broadcast.

If you would like to sponsor 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

June 5, 2016, given in celebration of the 60th wedding anniversary of Otto and LaVerne Reitz.

June 12, 2016, given by Beverly Lundeen in loving memory of husband Donovan, daughter Sonia, and great-granddaughter Callie.

June 19, 2016, given in honor of George Posfay by Eva Posfay, Pepe Kryzda, and Cecilia Kryzda.

June 26, 2016, given in celebration of Eloise and Milo Quinnell's 66th wedding anniversary on June 24th.

July 3, 2016, given in memory of Edgar Larson by Helen Larson.

July 10, 2016, given in loving memory of Marie, Andrew, and Leland Rowberg by Brynhild Rowberg.

July 17, 2016, given in honor of the late Orwin Marks commemorating what would have been his 99th birthday on July 6th, from his family.

July 24, 2016, given by Dale and Karen Schuette in celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary on July 23rd.

July 31, 2016, given by Elvin and Corrine Heiberg in celebration of their 59th wedding anniversary.

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

Acts of Ministry

Births

July 28, 2016: Claire Elizabeth, daughter of Ashley and Marty Gallagher

Weddings

July 2, 2016: Megan Errington and Andrew Fellows

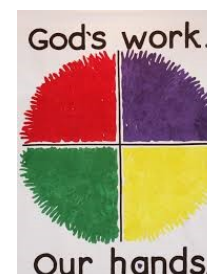
Deaths

Edmund Youngquist, May 30, 2016

Andrew Westerback, June 2, 2016

Edwin “Jack” Huus, June 8, 2016

John Lawrence Carlson, June 20, 2016



Fruit Sundays



Apple Sunday is August 28!

Search for your favorite apple recipe, whip it up and bring it to St. John's for our Annual Apple Sunday on August 28th.

Whether you bring an apple dessert or not, everyone is welcome to enjoy all the delicious creations at 9:30 a.m. in St. John's Hall.

If you can bring an apple dessert and/or help with serving, setup/cleanup, please sign up in the Commons.

Questions? Contact Christy Hall-Holt at sharedministry@stjohnsnorthfield.org or 645-4429.

Northfield Noontime Organ Recitals 2016



Northfield Noontime Organ Recitals will conclude their tenth season this summer on August 10th. Recitals are held during the **Wednesday noon hour from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m.** with the following schedule:

Wednesday, August 3

Stephen May (Director of Music, Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour in Faribault)
Carleton College, Skinner Chapel, 405 1st St. E.
Fifth Sonata by Rheinberger
1916 J. W. Steere & Son, Moller rebuild 1952, 4 manuals, 48 ranks

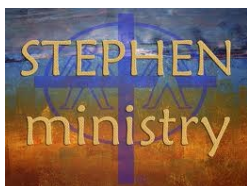
Wednesday, August 10

David Lim (Student, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN)
St. John's Lutheran Church, 500 3rd St. W.
Music of Bruhns, Bach, and Liszt
1974 Dobson tracker, 2 manual, 26 ranks

Some recitals will include a free-will offering to defray publicity expenses. For more information, contact Richard Collman at 507-645-1357 or email rkcollman@msn.com.

Who Was Stephen?

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however, refers to an earlier stage of Stephen's life, his being chosen by the congregation to help the twelve disciples extend the work of ministry in an ex-

panding young church.

If you or someone you know is going through a time of difficulty, contact one of the pastors (645-

4429) or Joan Halvorson (645-8445) to discuss the possibility of receiving the care of a Stephen Minister.

What does the Bible Say about Sexuality?

Discussions Monday at Noon in August

Pastors Pam and Jonathan will be leading a 4-part discussion on scripture and sexuality on Mondays in August over the lunch hour (12:00-1:00 p.m.) at St. John's. Feel free to bring your lunch!

There will be assigned reading before each session. If you are interested in this study and receiving the assigned readings, please contact Pastor Jonathan.

This year, St. John's has committed to intentionally study the topic of human sexuality, as we consider

adopting a welcome statement that includes people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. At the center of faith-based conversations on the topic of homosexuality is the Bible. There are typically seven scripture passages that are referenced in conversations about homosexuality and the Bible.

Through these scripture texts, many people think the Bible explicitly condemns homosexual behavior. Others, however, think the Bible is not speaking about homosexuality as we know it today.

Because the Bible plays an important role in our community of faith, and because sexuality plays an important role in everyone's life, it can be significant for us to explore these scriptures both closely and within the broader context of the Bible. It is also important to hear how people can read them faithfully and come to different conclusions.

Wherever you find yourself in this discussion, know that you and your voice are welcome in the conversation.

"At the center of faith-based conversations on the topic of homosexuality is the Bible."

Refugee Resettlement

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Members of St. John's have gathered toiletry and cleaning supplies and initial stock of pantry items. Others have assisted in assembling furniture and setting up the family's apartment. Members of Christ Church Lutheran have welcomed the family and will be the primary mentors, and St. John's will continue to support the family as needed.

Thank you to all who have assisted in this effort so far! If anyone else wants to join the refugee resettlement group, please let Sharon Flaten (cassakr@gmail.com) or Solveig Zempel (zempel@stolaf.edu) know and we will add you to our email list.

Here are some helpful resources for learning about the Anuak people and why they had to leave their homes.

- A retrospective article: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alemayehu-g-mariam/ethiopia-the-anuaks-forgo_b_795330.html
- Genocide Watch report (some graphic language): http://www.genocidewatch.org/images/Ethiopia_23_Jan_04_The_Anuk_of_Ethiopia.pdf
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees Reference Work: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/49749d2719.html>

It is hard to find information on this conflict and to know what is biased and how. There was seemingly very little reported, so approach each article with an awareness that there may be bias.



Connect with Rice County Habitat for Humanity: Volunteer, Donate, Advocate from Brent Nystrom



As a member of St. Johns and also a board member of the Rice County Chapter of Habitat for Humanity, I have experienced the many ways members of the St. Johns congregation have already supported Habitat. I know many of you have given your time and expertise on build sites around the county, have provided food for volunteers on the build sites and also given generously with direct gifts to the cause. Our benevolence board has also given some of their budgeted dollars to Habitat. Thank you to all who have already connected in these ways.

With the building season now upon us, I am simply sharing Habitat's message of Volunteer, Donate and Advocate. You can Help Build It! through the following methods:

- 1) Volunteer: There are many, many ways to help Habitat with your volunteer time. For example, bring a meal to the build site, work on the build site, raise money for Habitat, join our Board of Directors, mow the lots that we own but have not yet built on, help pick families, and help with mailings and other office work.
- 2) Donate: The easiest way to contribute dollars is by visiting the Habitat website – www.habitatricecounty.org and finding the 'Donate' tab. Donating your Thrivent Choice Dollars is also a possibility if you are a Thrivent Member. Every dollar counts! Consider participating in our "Buy a Foot Campaign. For \$89, you can "buy" a square foot of one of our houses. Your donation is tax deductible and will directly impact our 2016 build season.
- 3) Advocate: Share the Story of Habitat. The more broad the understanding of our organization and its goals, the better! The grassroots message of Habitat is how we spread the word and gain more supporters.

Look for the brochures in the commons area this month or feel free to contact me (Brent Nystrom – brent.nystrom@gmail.com or 507-581-6715) if you would like more information on Habitat or the ways to Volunteer, Donate and Advocate.

Thank You from Citizens' Climate Control

To Dawn Tommerdahl and the congregation of St. John's Church,

Thank you so much for writing cards asking our members of congress to take action on Climate. The 500 cards from Northfield got their attention! Congress needs to know that this issue is important to us. It was a great experience; there were CCL volunteers everywhere in the hall of Congress. I am so grateful to live in a democracy, and to have your support.



Thank you,
Janet (One of 5 CCL volunteers from Northfield)

Sunday Morning Hospitality in August: Have some fun serving and getting to know someone new!

Thank you to all who have signed up to help for this summer's Sunday hospitality! We have many roles yet to be claimed in the month of August. If you know you'll be in town on a particular Sunday, please sign up to serve communion or coffee, prepare or clean up for communion,

be a greeter, or help at the Welcome Desk.

Thank you for your warm welcome here at St. John's!

Reminder: Monthly Hospitality Groups are not in service during the summer. Everyone is welcome to participate.



Usher Training Sessions

Training sessions for ushers will be held after the 10:00 a.m. service on Sundays, August 7th and 14th.

On August 7th the topic will be handling emergencies and using the AED (Defibrillator).

On August 14th, there will be an overview of Usher duties and responsibilities.

We will be conscious of the time so that we can cover material, answer all questions, and then move on to the rest of our day.

Please feel free to contact Doug Child at 507-581-1387 with any questions.

New ushers are welcome!

“Nothing teaches hope, kindness, courage, and compassion like helping others.”

Meals on Wheels

St. John's is responsible for distributing Meals on Wheels from Sunday, September 18th, through Saturday, October 15th. Many volunteers are needed. You can sign up for this important ministry of care for elderly and disabled members of our community on Sundays in the Commons beginning August 21st.

For further information contact Christy Hall-Holt at 645-4429 or sharedministry@stjohnsnorthfield.org or Nancy Kluver at 507-581-0896 or mkluver@gmail.com.



Baby Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief

Summer is in full swing! And so are summer garage sales!!

So...for those of you who may find themselves stopping at a garage sale or two, or three: This is an excellent time to find cheaply priced, gently used baby clothing and other items (listed below) that can be sent to help new mothers in need around the world!



Or...for those of you who are taking time this summer to finally tackle those over-stuffed closets and basements: This is a great opportunity to get rid of or pass on those gently used baby clothes that your children have outgrown by donating them for LWR baby care kits!

Here are the items needed for each Baby Care Kit:

- 2 lightweight cotton T-shirts** (*no onesies, although longer ones may be trimmed off to make a shirt*) Sizes 6 to 24 months
- 2 long or short-sleeved gowns or sleepers without feet** (*although the feet could also be trimmed off*) Sizes 6 to 24 months
- 2 receiving blankets** (*medium-weight cotton or flannel, or crocheted, or knitted with light-weight yarn, up to 52"*)
- 1 jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt with a hood** (*or include a cap*) Sizes 6 to 24 months
- 2 pairs of socks** (*infant and toddler sizes*)
- 4 cloth diapers** (27"x22", flat-folded) **OR 1.5 yds of 45" fabric** (*any color*)
- 2 diaper pins** (*or extra large safety pins*)
- 1 hand towel** (*dark color preferred*)
- 2 bars of gentle soap** (*4 to 5oz bath size bars*)

Donation of just one or as many items as you like will be greatly appreciated! Brand new items and money donations are also accepted. Items can be placed in the collection basket located in the Commons.



Open Door Nursery School Open House: August 4 and 6

Calling all three -five year olds! Open Door will be hosting an open house on Thursday, August 4th from 4:30-6:00 p.m. AND on Saturday, August 6th from 10:00-11:30 a.m. This is a chance for you to visit our space and see what makes us a 4 star parent aware program. We look forward to meeting you soon!

Open Door offers Pathway I and Pathway II Parent Aware scholarships as well as scholarships through Open Door Preschool.

For further information and to see what makes our program unique, be sure to visit our website: www.opendoorpreschoolnorthfield.org or call our Director, Barb Howe at 507-645-8532 x1.

School Kit Donations

Last year, St. John's assembled 220 School Kits to send to kids around the world - twice as many as the previous year! To the children who receive School Kits, these supplies often mean the difference between getting an education or not.

School Kits happen because of the generous donations supplied by YOU! Below is the list of school supplies needed for each kit. Buy one or more supplies and place them in the "school bus" in the Commons area. Monetary gifts are awesome - we'll buy the supplies for you! Make checks payable to St. John's WELCA and write school kits in the memo line. We'll be assembling kits on Sunday, October 23rd, between services.

Suggestion to parents: bring the list along when you take your kids shopping for school supplies, and let them be part of the project.

School Supply list for one school kit:

Four 70-sheet notebooks of wide or college ruled paper approximately 8" X 10 1/2";
no loose-leaf paper

One 30-centimeter ruler or a ruler with cm on one side and inches on the other

One pencil sharpener

One blunt Fiskars scissors (must be the Fiskars brand as the other ones break easily)

Five unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers

Five black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink)

One box of 16 or 24 crayons

One 2 1/2" eraser (no erasers needed this year; we have 100 left from last year!)



From Bread for the World...

The Global Food Security Act of 2016 passed Congress on July 6th. It was supported by Representative John Kline and the entire Minnesota congressional delegation and is on its way to President Obama for his signature.

Broad bipartisan support for this legislation is a testimony to Bread for the World staff and members who were persistent and strategic in their advocacy.

Zach Schmidt, BFW's regional staff person in the Midwest, led the effort to secure 62 members of Congress as co-sponsors of the bill. Over the weeks and months BFW organized phone calls and emails (including some from St. John's members) to congressional staffers with the message "I want to make sure you are aware of the Global Food Security Act, and I ask you to co-sponsor the bill."

With the adoption of this act the **Feed the Future initiative** is made a permanent policy of U.S. development programs. The initiative supports families and farmers in Africa and elsewhere as they grow more food and food that is more nutritious. It will strengthen the global economy and help reduce civil conflict.



Letters from Bishop Steve Delzer



June 13, 2016

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I spent yesterday morning and early afternoon participating in the celebration of the 125th Anniversary of Mabel First Lutheran Church in Mabel. The worship service and the dinner and program that followed were filled with thankful celebration for the blessings of the past 125 years of ministry in the Mabel community, and a joyful expectation for the future into which Jesus is leading this congregation. As I drove away my heart was filled with joy and peace.

Bishop Delzer

Then I turned on the radio and heard the awful news about the shooting in Orlando, Florida. My first thought was, "O God, not again!" Feeling like my heart was breaking over this senseless act of violence, and on the verge of tears for the victims and their families and friends, the words that came to mind were those words of lament from Psalm 13:

How long, O Lord? Will you forget (us) forever?
How long will you hide your face from (us)?
How long must (we) bear pain in (our) soul,
and have sorrow in our heart all day long?
Consider and answer (us), O Lord (our) God!

Since yesterday afternoon I have struggled with what to say that might be helpful in the midst of yet another tragic and painful event. I invite you to join me in the following for the next 30 days.

Each morning pray the prayer attributed to St. Francis of Assisi (ELW, p. 87):

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Each day ask the Holy Spirit to guide you to intentionally seek some way every day to be an instrument of God's peace in what you say, or in the way you think, or in what you write, or in what you post on Facebook, or in what you do, or in the way you treat another person.

Each evening pray these petitions from the second set of Prayers of Intercession from the Service of Healing in the ELW Occasional Services for the Assembly (pages 273-274):

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and especially for all who are suffering or are in any affliction.

Merciful God, you sent your Son to be our peace. Help all those who suffer any pain or grief, hopelessness or anxiety. In your great mercy, hear us, O God.

God of peace and reconciliation, bring an end to the sickness of the world, especially violence, terrorism, war, and their causes. In your great mercy, hear us, O God.

Loving God, mend broken relationships and bring peace to our families, our congregation(s), (our) communities, and the world. In your great mercy, hear us, O God.

Letters from Bishop Steve Delzer (continued)

O God, we bring these intercessions before you, knowing that you will hear us as you have promised, and will answer according to the mercy shown in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

May our prayers, our words, and our actions help to bring to our communities and our world healing, hope, joy, and the peace of God that passes all human understanding.

Peace & Joy in Christ,
Bishop Steve Delzer

June 21, 2016

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This is a follow up to my [June 13 letter](#) about the shooting in Orlando. In the midst of my own pain and anger about that shooting, I needed to dig deep within myself and reflect on how to be an instrument of God's peace and not just another angry voice. I sincerely hope that you have been steeped in prayer and reflection over this past week. I also hope that you have been discovering ways in which you can be an instrument of God's peace in your everyday life and relationships.

Now, to be more specific about the shooter's direct attack on LGBTQ people – I consider this shooting to be a reprehensible act of malicious violence against a group of people simply because of who they are. There is absolutely no justification for such an act. I find in my own heart a mixture of profound sadness and angry disgust that such a thing could even happen.

So, where does one turn for a sense of direction, a sense of what to do? Here is what I have found to be helpful. The Scripture focus in my Spiritual Direction Group last Friday was a reading of the Beatitudes from The Message version of Matthew 5:1-10. What shimmered for me in that reading was verse 8: "You're blessed when you get your inside world-your mind and heart-put right. Then you can see God in the outside world." Those words captured for me what I was trying to suggest in my previous letter. My hope was that turning to prayer and reflection would allow God to get my inside world, my mind and heart, put right, so that then I could see God in the outside world. What I mean by that is that I want God to so permeate my heart and mind with God's love that I see the face of God in the face of every person I meet, regardless of their gender, race, sexual preference, religion, or status in society. Because only then will I be able to truly follow Jesus' command: "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12).

Empowered to love others as God has loved me moves me to take seriously the phrase in our Affirmation of Faith "to strive for justice and peace in all the earth." (ELW, page 236). For me that means finding ways to stand with and to stand up on behalf of all people who are not experiencing God's justice and peace, and at this time, especially our LGBTQ sisters and brothers. That means working for laws and systems that break down walls that divide us, that separate us into "us" and "them." And it means constantly seeking ways in which each of us can be instruments of God's peace in what we say, in what we think, in what we write, in what we post on Facebook, in what we do, and in how we treat one another.

So I will continue to plead with God and with you that our prayers, our words, and our actions will help to bring to our communities and our world healing, hope, joy, justice, and the peace of God that passes all human understanding.

Peace & Joy in Christ,
Bishop Steve Delzer

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**Save
the
Date**

**Friday, September 30 and Saturday, October 1**

Internationally known pastor and teacher Alan Storey will be here to teach a workshop on "Manna and Mercy".

For additional information see page 3.