



The

# Voice

OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

VOLUME 56, ISSUE 11

DECEMBER 2016



## Advent and Christmas Worship & Events

**Sunday, November 27 - First Sunday of Advent**  
Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

**Advent Fair**  
Wednesday, November 30, from 5:15-7:15 p.m.  
(see page 9 for additional information)

**Advent Vespers**  
Wednesdays, December 7, 14, and 21, at 6:30 p.m.  
Contemplative Worship in the Sanctuary

**Sunday, December 4 - Second Sunday of Advent**  
Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

**Sunday, December 11 - Third Sunday of Advent**  
Worship at 8:30 a.m.  
Sunday School Christmas Program during Worship at 10:45 a.m.  
(see page 10 for additional information)

**Sunday, December 18 - Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
Service of Lessons and Carols at 8:30 and 10:45 a.m. Worship Services  
Intergenerational Event: Christmas Dinner Workshop - Between Services  
(see page 10 for additional information)

**Christmas Eve - Saturday, December 24**  
Christmas Vespers at 3:00 p.m. (especially for families and children)  
Christmas Vespers with Candlelight at 5:00 p.m.  
Christmas Candlelight and Holy Communion at 11:00 p.m.

**Christmas Day - Sunday, December 25**  
Christmas Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.  
Christmas Dinner for All from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

**Sunday, January 1**  
One Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

### Inside this issue:

- 6 Important Dates for Children and Youth
- 9 Christmas Day Dinner Needs Your Help
- 11 Important Reconciling in Christ and Spectrum Survey Forum
- 13 Message from the Stewardship Board
- 16 Early Deadline for the Voice and Deadline for Annual Meeting Reports

**WORSHIP SERVICES**  
8:30 & 10:45 a.m. Sundays  
**LEARNING AND FELLOWSHIP**  
9:45 a.m. Sundays

**LIVE BROADCASTS**  
8:30-9:30 a.m. Sundays  
KYMN Radio 1080AM

**TV BROADCASTS**  
NTV Channel 187  
7:30 p.m. Mondays  
7:00 p.m. Fridays

## Worship Services

8:30 & 10:45 a.m. Sundays

## Nursery Hours

8:15 a.m. - Noon Sundays

## Learning and Fellowship

9:45 a.m. Sundays

All Ages from September-May

## Live Broadcasts

8:30-9:30 a.m. Sundays

KYMN Radio 1080 AM

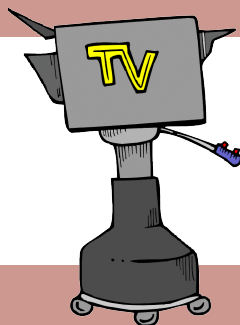


## TV Broadcasts

7:30 p.m. Mondays

7:00 p.m. Fridays

NTV Channel 187



## Learning and Fellowship

### **December 4:**

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

*Fair Trade Sales of Coffee and More, Commons*

*Poinsettia Sales, Commons*

*Community Christmas Day Dinner Sign Ups, Commons*

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

*Life Groups (Grades 6-9), Youth Room*

*Life Group Guides (Grades 10-12), Youth Room*

*Adult Forum: Reconciling in Christ and Spectrum Survey,*

**St. John's Hall**

*Youth Percussion Ensemble, Room 205*

### **December 11:**

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

*Fair Trade Sales of Coffee and More, Commons*

*Poinsettia Sales, Commons*

*Community Christmas Day Dinner Sign Ups, Commons*

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

*Life Groups (Grades 6-9), Youth Room*

*Life Group Guides (Grades 10-12), Youth Room*

*Adult Forum: The Life and Death of the Small Family Farm -*

*Presented by Fred Gonnerman, St. John's Hall*

*Toddler Time, Room 20*

### **December 18:**

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

*Sunday School (Pre-K thru Grade 5), St. John's Hall*

*Life Groups (Grades 6-9), St. John's Hall*

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

*Intergenerational Event: Christmas Day Dinner Workshop,*

**St. John's Hall**

*Bold Café, Fireside Room*

### **December 25:**

*Christmas Day Dinner (served from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.,*

**St. John's Hall**

## A Christmas Letter from Our Pastor...

Last year in the midst of the holidays, a TV ad featured a father “winning at Christmas”! The tongue-in-cheek spot featured a man making every effort to delight his family with just the right (that is, expensive) gifts. Every “victory” was marked with a cheer soundtrack and play-by-play.

While the intent of the ad was – like every advertisement – to induce shoppers to choose *this* venue for gift-buying, the idea of “winning” Christmas struck me as a perfect illustration of how far we’ve come from the Christmas story. As Americans we want to be on the “winning” side of any effort. But when you think about it, Christmas was a story of losers.

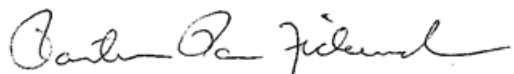
Jesus was born to the “losers” of his time – a people who lived under the military boot and economic oppression of the Roman empire. Mary, as a girl still unmarried, was a “loser” as an unwed mother. Mary and Joseph were losers in being pushed aside to the stable when they arrived in Bethlehem; they were losers as they fled to Egypt in fear of their lives. The shepherds, losers in their own society of honor and shame, were the first to hear the good news.

As if to prove that we have “won” God’s approval, we often turn our religious celebrations into displays of perfection. Everyone tries to be happy, prosperous and peaceful, even when our workaday reality is anything but. And our commercial society is more than ready to equip us with every possible tool to put the best face on things – for a price.

But God chose to come among losers. From the manger on, the story of Jesus is the story of God descending – descending to be among the least, the lost and the losers. God comes down – all the way down to the people at the bottom the ladder, and that’s where God chooses to stay.

Don’t ask how you can win Christmas. Don’t ask how you can “rise above” the fray. Don’t ask how Christmas can help you escape the troubles of the world. No, look for Jesus this year among the least and the lost. Seek out someone lonely at a church dinner; reach out to a neighbor who is an immigrant; give a gift through the CAC’s Christmas sharing; visit someone who is grieving; pray for those who are displaced by war; give to St. John’s so that we can continue to welcome all. That is where Jesus will be, descending to us in the flesh.

Blessings,



Pastor Pam Fickenscher

## From Our Pastors



Pastor Pam Fickenscher



Pastor Jonathan Davis

## Prayer and Care 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](mailto:macisar@gmail.com) or 663-1097.

### 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.

### Grief Booklets:

"Journeying through Grief" is a resource for those grieving the loss of loved ones. Contact one of the pastors if you would like a copy or if you would like to give a copy to a friend or family member.



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

December 21, 2015  
**Robert Bastian**

December 31, 2015  
**Sandra Ims Rowan**

## When Holidays Are Not Joyful

Do you sometimes find your stress level increasing, or feel an overwhelming sadness with the approaching holidays?

We like to think of holidays as bringing enjoyable time with family and friends.

But often our current life situations - a recent move, job loss or change, hurts, struggles, health crises, or loss of loved ones - will leave us with feelings that are not so joyful. Many times our difficulties seem even worse during the holidays because everyone else seems to be enjoying life while we are feeling down. If you are experiencing a difficult time - emotionally, spiritually, or relationally - you do not have to suffer alone.

St. John's participates in Stephen Ministry, a distinctively Christian caring ministry in which pastors and lay people work together to provide quality one-to-one care to meet the needs of people experiencing a wide range of life circumstances or crises.

Our Stephen Ministers pray with you and for you, and help you through whatever it is that you are facing. It's confidential. It's free. And it could make a difference in your life! To find out more about Stephen Ministry for you or someone you know, please talk with one of our pastors or Stephen Leaders: Pastor Jonathan, Barbara Wilson, Eulalie Smestad, Jennifer Edwins, Pam Schwandt, Joan Halvorson or Jo Franklin.

Our Stephen Ministers are here to care!





## Pub Theology in December



We are all theologians. Believe it or not, all of us are constantly doing theology as we think and wonder and ask big questions about God, Jesus, the Bible, and a life of faith.

Continuing on Monday, December 5th, join us at the Contented Cow from 6:00-7:30 p.m. for Pub Theology.

Pastors Pam and Jonathan and Mike Skunes will lead a monthly conversation around questions of faith, God, Jesus, the Bible, and current events. No fancy theological or biblical knowledge needed in order to participate. Just bring your questions, thoughts, and experiences to the table. Each month, the topic will be different and will be published ahead of time on Facebook, the News Blast, and an email list.

Contact Pastor Jonathan ([jdavis@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:jdavis@StJohnsNorthfield.org)) to add your name to the email list.

## New Perspectives

A revival of St. John's Connections Group, **New Perspectives**, will continue their monthly gatherings on Friday, December 2nd, at 7:00 p.m. in the Fireside Room.

We're looking forward to intellectually stimulating theological conversation among friends, old and new. For meetings during the year, we'll select timely topics, readings, or films. You do not need a Ph.D. to feel at home in this group!

Feel free to contact David Sudermann at church, by e-mail ([dsudermann@charter.net](mailto:dsudermann@charter.net)), or by phone (507-663-1097) for more information. Otherwise, just come!

## American Sign Language Interpretation Now Available on Sunday Mornings



St. John's is happy to announce that we have an American sign language interpreter available for most Sunday worship services. If you or someone you know would benefit from this service, please let one of the pastors know, so that we can make sure to have an interpreter available that Sunday.

## Life and Growth

### Births

September 23, 2016  
Mabel Lee Mae Keneipp  
Daughter of Ingrid and Tim Keneipp

### Baptisms

November 20, 2016  
Clayton Robert Moore  
Son of Tammara and Robert Moore

November 27, 2016  
Evelyn Marie Langan  
Daughter of Emily and Aaron Langan  
Granddaughter of Lynette and Alan Marks

### Deaths

November 13, 2016  
Allen Hanson



## Radio Broadcasts

**November 6, 2016**  
Given in memory of  
Burt Paulsen by Donna Paulsen.

**November 13, 2016**  
Given in memory of Margery Otterness  
by the Otterness Children.

**November 20, 2016**  
Given by Duane and Marie Benson.

**November 27, 2016**  
Given in honor of  
the baptism of Evelyn Marie Langan  
by grandparents Alan and Lynette Marks.

If you would like to  
sponsor a broadcast (\$160),  
please contact the church office  
by phone at 507-645-4429 or email at  
[office@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:office@StJohnsNorthfield.org).

## Children and Youth

### Important Dates for Children to Remember!

#### Sunday School Schedule (9:45-10:30 a.m.)

December 4	Sunday School
December 11	Sunday School Toddler Time
December 18	Intergenerational Sunday School Event
December 25	No Sunday School (Christmas Break)
January 1	No Sunday School (Christmas Break)

#### ROCK - Wednesday Afterschool Programming

December 7	
December 14	
December 21	No Programming
December 28	No Programming (Christmas Break)

#### Sunday School Christmas Program Rehearsal for 5th Graders

Wednesday, December 7, 5:30-6:00 p.m.

#### Christmas Worship Service with our Sunday School Kids

Sunday, December 11  
10:45 a.m. Worship Service, Sanctuary

#### Let's Go Bowling!

Monday, January 16, 9:00-11:00 a.m.

4th and 5th Grade CATechism Resumes in Jan.

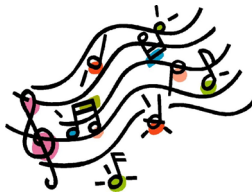


### Children's Communion Instruction Available

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

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

Sunday school children are welcome to participate in the prelude music for the Sunday School Christmas program on December 11th.



We welcome solos or ensembles, short instrumental or vocal pieces. The prelude begins at 10:30 a.m. before the 10:45 a.m. Sunday school program.

Please sign-up in the Commons or give Julie Brehmer a call at 507-645-4429 or email Frances Boehning at [francesboehning@yahoo.com](mailto:francesboehning@yahoo.com) if you are interested in participating.

## St. John's Sunday School Classes Participate in Worship Sunday, Dec. 11

Mark your calendars! St. John's Sunday School classes will be participating in our 10:45 a.m. worship service, Sunday, December 11, in St. John's Sanctuary.

Children who would like to perform either a solo or be part of an ensemble for the pre-service music, can contact Julie Brehmer at [children@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:children@StJohnsNorthfield.org) or 507-645-4429. In the past, children have played instruments and sung solos, usually with a Christmas theme.



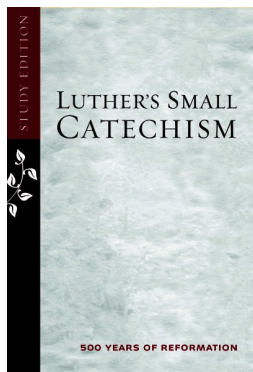
## Toddler Time - December 11

Children who are 2 year olds (by 9/1/16) and Preschool 1, along with their parents, are invited to attend Toddler Time.



Rachel Skunes leads the children in song, games, crafts and story time. Toddler Time meets monthly at 9:45 a.m. in Room 20 (lower level).

Here is our schedule for the remainder of the year: Dec. 11, Jan. 8, Feb. 12, March 12, April 9, and May 14.



## Catechism for 4th and 5th graders will resume in January

CAT classes meet downstairs, 4th grade in Room 19 and 5th grade in the Undercroft, from 4:15-4:45 p.m. Let Julie know if your child would like to ride the Wednesday after-school bus to CAT!

Remember to bring your CAT book!

## Let's Go Bowling!

Monday, January 16th, is a NO SCHOOL DAY so we're heading to the bowling alley!

### Who:

Grades 2-8, Friends are always welcome!

### Where:

Jesse James Lanes  
Hwy 3, Northfield

### Time:

12:30-2:00 p.m.

### Cost:

\$10.00

(2 games & 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(ren) at the bowling alley. If they need a ride or financial assistance to participate, give Julie a call at 507-645-4429 or email at [children@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:children@StJohnsNorthfield.org). Parent or high school chaperones are needed!

## Sunday School Prays for Children Around the World



Each month, our Sunday school kids will be praying for children from another country.

In December we will continue praying for children in the Middle East.

## Children and Youth

### Important Dates for Youth to Remember!

#### Life Groups & Life Group Guides Schedule

9:45-10:30 a.m.

December 4	Life Groups
December 11	Life Groups
December 18	Intergenerational Event
December 25	No Life Groups (Christmas Break)
January 1	No Life Groups (Christmas Break)

#### Confirmation (Grades 6-9)

6:15-7:30 p.m.

December 7	
December 14	
December 21	No Confirmation
December 28	No Confirmation (Christmas Break)

St. John's Children in Preschool - Grade 5 Presents:

### "Light of the World"



Prelude Music begins at  
10:30 a.m. and is provided by  
St. John's Children

St. John's Children's  
Christmas Program  
Sunday, December 11  
10:45 a.m. Service

## Shared Ministry

### Sunday Hospitality Groups

Are you wondering which month your Sunday Hospitality Group is serving?

You can find out by logging on to CCB. Once logged in, look on the left side of the screen. You should see either the word "Groups" or under the little house icon, there appears to be a picture of 3 heads in circles. "Click" on either the word "Groups" or the icon of the heads in the circles. You should then see all of your groups - look for the "Monthly Hospitality Group" you are assigned to in this list.

Note: You can still sign up to serve in other months in addition to the month you are currently assigned to serve.

If navigating CCB is difficult for you, please contact Mary Kelvie in the Shared Ministry office at 507-645-4429, or at [sharedministry@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:sharedministry@StJohnsNorthfield.org).



### Volunteer Opportunities

Did you know you can serve anytime, not just in your assigned hospitality group? Sign up today!

Current **weekly** opportunities available:

- Sundays - greeters, coffee servers, dishwashers, treat makers (or buyers), communion prep and cleanup.
- Wednesday Night Meals - table bussers, dishwashers, dessert makers (or buyers), table washers, pots and pans scrubbers, floor sweepers.

If any of these sound like something you would like to step out and do or learn please contact Mary Kelvie by calling 507-645-4429, emailing [sharedministry@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:sharedministry@StJohnsNorthfield.org), or signing into CCB and signing up yourself.

## Welcome to December!

By Mary Kelvie

This is the time of year we celebrate our Savior's birth. However, if you are like me, celebrating our Savior's birth sometimes gets a little lost in the chaos of the season. There are Christmas parties to attend, Christmas concerts to experience, trees to decorate, presents to buy and then wrap, cookies to make and then decorate, homes to clean and prepare for family to arrive, places to go, things to do, people and family to see, last minute things tugging us in every direction creating a lot of extra...stress. It seems like every moment of everyday is already scheduled out with all of the extra demands of you.

Last year on Christmas Day, my husband and I were dating. He said something I will never forget as it still profoundly impacts me. He said after church on Christmas Day, he was going to take a vacation from himself and serve others by doing dishes for the Christmas Dinner. "Take a vacation from himself." Think about it. Christ, the least selfish person ever, the very one we are supposed to be celebrating at Christmas time. Yet, we commonly become the most selfish during this time. Selfish with our time by saying, "I have too much to do." Selfish with our money by saying, "I want to spend my money for this gift for this person, and not give to this other organization." Selfish with our talents/gifts by saying, "I am too busy doing all this other stuff. I can't help you by..." *Fill-in-the blank... playing my instrument, baking, greeting, setting up or cleaning up for an event, visiting a shut-in, caroling at a place where people feel forgotten or alone, and the list goes on.*

My December challenge to you - take a vacation from yourself. How will you choose to do it? Will you take a vacation from yourself by helping a neighbor? Will you volunteer at a community organization or St. John's that needs your talents? Will you spend time doing something you would rather not do because it is the right thing to do? Will you do something for a family member you would rather not do, simply because you know it would bless them? Notice none of these require money - just your time! What will you do? I hope we all remember in the hustle and bustle of Christmas to celebrate our Savior's birth by being more like him.





## St. John's Advent Fair Wednesday, November 30

Everyone is invited to St. John's Advent Fair on Wednesday, November 30, in St. John's Hall. Come enjoy our Wednesday Night Meal, the Fair Trade Fair, (through SERRV that improve the lives of artisans and farmers worldwide), and Advent activities for all ages. We encourage you to bring friends. The more the merrier!

**Time:** 5:15-6:15 p.m.: Wednesday Meal  
5:45-7:00 p.m.: Advent Fair Activities and Fair Trade Fair

### Can you help with Advent Fair?

- Dinner – set-up, serve or clean-up
- Set up and/or sell handcrafts from around the world
- Help with crafts/shops
- Food demonstration – show how to make your favorite Christmas treat!

Contact Julie Brehmer if you have questions at 507-645-4429 or [childrens@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:childrens@StJohnsNorthfield.org).

## Christmas Dinner Needs Your Help

St. John's will again host the Community Christmas Dinner as our gift to the community in celebration of the birth of Jesus. The organizing group is developing the planning required for a successful gift. Most important is the recruiting of your contribution to this gift.

So why do we do this and who will come? The first part of the question is obvious from our commitment to Christ. Who will come? The community comes!! In the past there are people who would not have a great meal because of economic issues. People come who would otherwise be alone.



People from St. John's and the community come because they want to be part of the celebration.

Between worship services there will be a

table for you to record your contribution to this Christmas Dinner gift. As in past years the project requires many workers and contributions of food. We will be asking you to volunteer for one of a number of 1.5 to 2 hour tasks on Christmas Day and/or to provide a salad, dessert or potato hot dish.

So we invite you to participate in this celebration.

## News and Updates

### 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, December 7**  
Zuppa Toscana and Tortellini Soup

**Wednesday, December 14**  
Smothered Tater Tots

**Wednesday, December 21**  
BBQ Chicken Sliders

**Wednesday, December 28**  
No Meal - Christmas Break



## News and Updates

### Christmas Sharing Tree Nov. 14 – Dec. 4

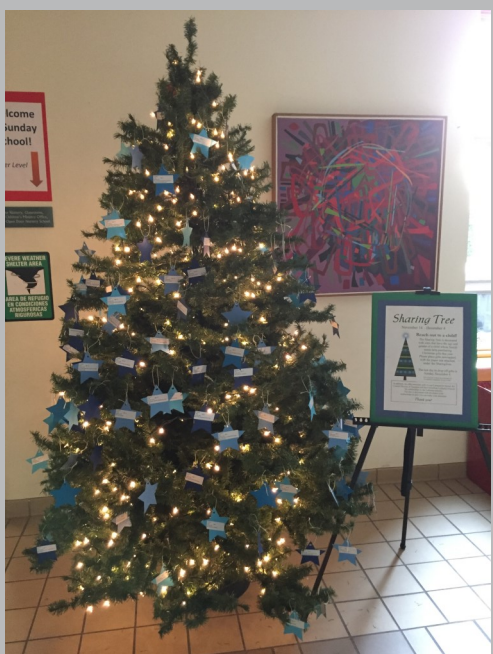
Our annual “Christmas Sharing Tree”, a program sponsored by the Northfield Community Action Center, will be displayed in St. John’s Commons from November 14 - December 4.

The Sharing Tree is decorated with paper stars. Each star has a gift idea, along with the name, age and gender of a child whose family needs help purchasing Christmas gifts this year.

Purchased gifts should be placed, unwrapped, with the paper star attached, and put under the tree by Sunday, December 4.

In addition, we will also offer gifts to our Companion Synod, the Central Diocese of Tanzania and the Colombian Lutheran Church for scholarships for the Lutherans schools. The tree will be decorated with 50 envelopes for making donations.

Thank you in advance for your donations.



## Mark your calendars for an Intergenerational Event! Christmas Dinner Workshop Sunday, December 18, 9:45-10:30 a.m.

Elves of all ages are needed to decorate placemats, make table decorations and roll napkins for our St. John’s Community Christmas Day Dinner.

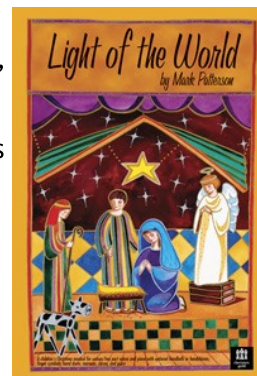


Come join in the Christmas spirit of helping others while enjoying some carols, cookies and camaraderie.

## St. John’s Children’s Christmas Program Sunday, December 11 at the 10:45 a.m. Worship Service

This year, St. John’s Sunday School classes will be participating in our 10:45 a.m. worship service, Sunday, December 11 in St. John’s Sanctuary.

Pre-service music by children in K-Grade 5 begins at 10:30 a.m. Please sign-up in the Commons or give Julie Brehmer a call at 507-645-4429 or email [francesboehning@yahoo.com](mailto:francesboehning@yahoo.com) if you are interested in participating.



If your child is unable to participate please notify his/her teacher or call Julie Brehmer at 507-645-4429.

## Poinsettia Orders

The Chancel Guild will be taking orders for poinsettias between services on Sundays, December 4th and 11th, and on Wednesday, December 5th during the Wednesday Night Meal.

If you would like to order a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone or in celebration of Christmas, stop in the Commons on the above referenced dates. The order form will also be available in the church office and on the website. The last day to have your order form in is Wednesday, December 14th.

The flowers will be used to decorate the church for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.



## Important Reconciling in Christ and Spectrum Survey Forum Sunday, December 4, 9:45 a.m.

The St. John's Church Council has decided that it is time to make a decision on whether to become a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation or not. As elected leaders, the Church Council feels it is their responsibility to make a faithful decision based on congregational input through a spectrum survey. On December 4th, during the adult forum time, there will be a brief review of what it means to become an RIC church, the history of this process at St. John's over the years, and the council's next steps. After this, we will pass out the spectrum survey for people to fill out and turn in. A spectrum survey offers five options of response: *strongly in favor*, *generally in favor*, *neutral/undecided*, *generally not in favor*, and *strongly not in favor*.

The question will be as follows:

I support St. John's becoming a Reconciling in Christ Congregation, and, in doing so, adopting the following welcome statement:

*St. John's Lutheran Church is a community grounded in the promise of God's grace, and called to extend Christ's welcome to all people. Every day, Christ meets us all just as we are, extending love to people of every age, race or ethnicity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental ability, marital or relationship status, economic circumstance, educational achievement, political affiliation, or religious background. While we do not always agree, we choose to walk and grow in faith together, believing that God creates diversity, and loves and welcomes us. We warmly welcome you here.*

If you are not able to attend the forum, the spectrum survey will be available and open through Sunday, December 18th. If you are out of town during that time, please contact Pastors Pam or Jonathan to submit your survey.

## Don't Forget Your Year-End Offerings



As always, St. John's relies on your generosity for all of our ministry together. As we near the end of 2016, we hope you will remember us in your donations, whether pledged or spontaneous. Offerings can be submitted online until midnight December 31st, postmarked by 12/31 by mail, or dropped off in person through noon on January 5th. Thank you!

## News and Updates

### Refugee Family Update

Good news! Paul (the father) is now working full-time. Transportation to his job in Bayport is an ongoing concern, but for now he is able to ride with other workers. Paul started with some command of English and it is very good now. He plans to apply for a MN Drivers License the last week of November.

The seven children are all in school in St. Paul, continuing the daunting task of mastering the English language, American culture and the usual school subjects.

The family is in good health, and relatives living in St. Cloud visit often, providing support and encouragement.

Winter clothing was provided by St. John's and Christ Church Lutheran. Paul and Ariat will assume responsibility for rent and utilities starting in December, and have applied to the County for energy assistance. Their landlord may be able to help with weather stripping. This may be a project for St. John's members.

Paul, Ariat and the family will visit us at St. John's on December 18th, here for Coffee Hour at 10:00 a.m. and the 10:45 a.m. church service; followed by a luncheon with some members of the Refugee Resettlement Team and Church Council. The Team is planning to invite the family to an all-church dinner in the New Year.





## News and Updates

### Holden Village Information Meeting

The summer of 2017 will be a banner year for Holden Village. After nearly five years of disruption to programming because of a major environmental remediation on the old mine site, and enduring a major fire in the area in 2015, the village will (God-willing) be open for guests next summer. Holden offers stimulation for the mind, body and spirit, and a unique sense of community.

Pastor Fickenscher would love to have a group of St. John's members and friends join her for a week next July in the village. Registration will open on January 1, so we need to be ready to say "we're going!" when it is. If you are interested in being part of such a group, please email Pastor Pam at [pfickenscher@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:pfickenscher@StJohnsNorthfield.org).

Travelers will be responsible for making their own travel reservations to and from the village. Holden is very remote – so please read their website "visit" page to understand if it is a feasible trip for you:

<http://www.holdenvillage.org/visit/>.

An informational meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 7, at 5:45 p.m. in the Fireside Room.



***The following is a temple talk given by Emily Westerback at St. John's on All Saints Sunday, November 6. Emily is a first year student at South Central College. Her father, Andy Westerback, was one of the recently departed saints lifted up in prayer this All Saints Sunday.***



For the past few Sundays we have discussed the big topic of Stewardship. To get a better idea of what to write I decided to look up the meaning of stewardship. The dictionary defines it as the following; the conducting, supervising or managing of something. Especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care. Every time I walk through the front door of St. John's I get to witness the stewardship and stewards in this church. Maybe I am not the only one.

On Wednesday, I walk into St. John's Hall after an afternoon spent more or less running after the groups of kids that gather here after school. I get the chance to have a hot meal, and good conversation.

On late Wednesday nights and early Sunday mornings, I get to witness a group of people singing many Carolyn Jennings's works, to sing at service.

I get to be here on a late Friday night to see people putting in time to chaperone, many (many) middle schoolers play a good game of Romans and Christian's.

In times of need, I see people give money, lift up prayers, give a hug, offer time, to those who sometimes really need it.

I get to see relationships form between all sorts of people. The Packer fans form to talk about how the season is going. The young and old talk about their own generations together. People gather to talk politics and the upcoming election. No matter the dividing lines between generations, or political and football views, how we love each other is one of the ways we support our ministry.

Being a witness to all of this my whole life, especially in recent times, I haven't ever doubted the stewardship the people of this place offer up. I even get to see it in the middle of Target. I hope stewardship is the one aspect of this community we don't lose.

I want to leave you thinking about stewardship with a quote John Wesley once said; "Do all you can, do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can." Amen



## Live Generously - Give Joyfully

### From the Stewardship Board

LIVE  
GENEROUSLY;  
GIVE  
JOYFULLY



The campaign phase of St. John's stewardship program is nearing its completion. We pray that you have captured a glimpse of the vision we hope to achieve through our community of faith and ask that you prayerfully consider how you can share in strengthening its local and global impact.

Jesus made it a point to foster a deep sense of community among his disciples. They experienced God's love as they journeyed, broke bread, and prayed together. Then they were sent forth to create that same life changing sense of community throughout the world. They lived generously - for others! They gave joyfully - of their time, of their talent, of their lives!

Their mission is our mission: grounded in the love of Jesus, we now enter the next year excelling in ministry, welcoming both friend and stranger and feeding the community.

If you have yet to join us on this stewardship journey know that it is not too late. You can still participate by doing any of the following:

- Make your gift known by filling out your household **Commitment Card for 2017** and either dropping it off at the church or placing it in the offering envelope
- Sign up for automatic payment - use the back of your **Commitment Card**
- Participate in online giving - go to our website (Click on "Giving" located in blue heading, upper right)

Please remember that our goal is to obtain pledges from 275 households prior to December 15 in order to receive a generous challenge grant of over \$5,500! You can help by participating!

Thank you for your participation.



## News and Updates

### Acknowledging 53 Years of Service to St. John's!

Gordon Mickelsen retired in November from his role as an usher for St. John's after 53 years of service.

We thank Gordon for his commitment to our congregation!



### Planning is Beginning for the Poetry Forum to be held in April

Do you have any suggestions for the format, the focus, the poet or poems?

Would you like to be a part of the planning and/or presentation?

Please send your responses to Judith Stoutland at [judithstoutland@gmail.com](mailto:judithstoutland@gmail.com) or call 507-645-7842.



# the WOMEN'S page



## December Gatherings

### Abigail/Rebecca

Friday, December 8, 2:00pm  
Parkview West Dining Room  
Northfield Retirement Community

### Elizabeth

Friday, December 8, 12:00 noon  
Jo Kleber's home  
616 Meldahl Lane

### Lydia

Wednesday, December 7,  
10:00am  
Anita Hellie's home  
1129 Heritage Dr.

### Martha/Claudia

Thursday, December 8, 11:30am  
King's Room, Buntrock Commons  
St. Olaf campus

### Mary

Friday, December 9, 1:00pm  
Jo Olson's home  
516 Southbridge Dr.

### Sarah

Wednesday, December 7, 9:30pm  
Solveig Bailey's home  
1906 Lincoln St. So.

### Breakfast Group

Saturday, December 10, 8:30am  
Fireside Room, St. John's

### Boomers

Saturday, December 10, 5:00pm  
Julie Zdenek's home  
2121 Ontario Ln.

## CHRISTMAS COOKIE EXCHANGE



- ❄ Hate baking cookies?
- 🌲 Don't have time to bake cookies?
- 🍪 Never, ever baked a cookie?

**NO PROBLEM!** We just want your presence for a fun afternoon! Grab a couple dozen cookies from your favorite store and join us. Rumor has it, there's some fun entertainment in the works.

**Thursday, December 1  
1:00pm  
St. John's Hall  
Bring 2 dozen cookies to share**

**BABY BOOMERS**

**gatherings**

**NEW!**

Lively Conversation  
New Friendships  
Bible Study   
Girls Only!

December 10, 5:00-6:30  
Julie Zdenek's home  
2121 Ontario Ln. N'Fld  
RSVP [julie.zdenek@gmail.com](mailto:julie.zdenek@gmail.com)

**ELCA Women's  
Triennial Gathering**

Saturday, July 15 (morning & afternoon)  
Plenary sessions & workshops \$175  
"Spirit Alive" National Lutheran Choir concert  
8:00pm \$25, (optional)

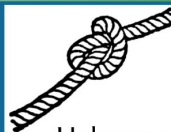
Registration necessary for both events  
<http://www.welcatg.org>  
Scholarships available  
Ride-sharing available  
Contact: Merilyn Calcutt 507.645.2814  
or [merilyn.calcutt@gmail.com](mailto:merilyn.calcutt@gmail.com)

**NEED  
A  
RIDE?**



Transportation to St. John's  
Women's events are available.

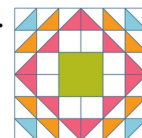
Call Mary Hoff 763.688.4516  
or email: [women.stjohns500@gmail.com](mailto:women.stjohns500@gmail.com)



**CAN YOU TIE  
A KNOT?**

Helpers needed to tie knots for  
Lutheran World Relief quilts.  
No experience necessary.

December 12 & 15 9:30a  
Fellowship Hall



**gather** gather and Café   
Lutheran women's publications: online @  
[www.womenoftheelca.org/publications-pages-7.php](http://www.womenoftheelca.org/publications-pages-7.php)

**Daily Grace**  
Lutheran women's daily devotional  
Sent to your phone or email  
Subscribe:  
[www.womenoftheelca.org/blog/category/daily-grace](http://www.womenoftheelca.org/blog/category/daily-grace)



like us on facebook: "Women of St. John's  
friend us @ Kvinner St. Johns  
(Kvinner: Norwegian for "Women")"

Women's Correspondence:  
[women.stjohns500@gmail.com](mailto:women.stjohns500@gmail.com)  
St. John's Women Publicity:  
Julie Zdenek 618.698.4870

St. John's  
**Women  
of the ELCA**





## From Bread for the World

After a polarizing election, the American voters have spoken, and the United States has elected Donald J. Trump to become our nation's 45th president. With a new president and Congress, next year will bring a lot of uncertainty. However, Bread for the World (BFW) will continue to push policies that put us on track to ending hunger and poverty.



**breadfortheworld**  
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

"Bread for the World members are praying for President-Elect Trump and the new and returning lawmakers

who will make up the 115th Congress in 2017" said Rev. David Beckmann, president of BFW. Later this month we will celebrate the unveiling of BFW Institute's 2017 Hunger Report, "Fragile Environments, Resilient Communities," and in early 2017 we will roll out the new Offering of Letters.

Meanwhile our lawmakers must work together and pass unfinished legislation before the gavel falls on the 114th Congress. A 'lame duck' session is expected to adjourn by mid-December, leaving roughly one month to finish a to-do list that includes: Global Maternal and Child Nutrition Funding, Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bill, Criminal Justice Reform, and the Fiscal Year 2017 Federal Budget. For more details go to [www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org).

## Introducing Ken



Have you noticed Ken at our Wednesday Night Meals with his helper? He is our regular Wednesday night dishwasher.

Ken is from Laura Baker and he loves his job here at St. John's. When you see Ken on Wednesdays, please make him feel welcome. However, don't be surprised, if he keeps on working instead of stopping to chat. He is excited to be here and doing his job well is very important to him!

## St. John's Staff

### Senior Pastor

*Pam Fickenscher*  
[pfickenscher@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:pfickenscher@StJohnsNorthfield.org)

### Associate Pastor

*Jonathan Davis*  
[jdavis@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:jdavis@StJohnsNorthfield.org)

### Visitation Pastor

*John Quam*  
[jequam@rconnect.com](mailto:jequam@rconnect.com)

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### Music Staff

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*Zack Pelletier - Rejoice Ringers*  
[rejoiceringers@StJohnsNorthfield.org](mailto:rejoiceringers@StJohnsNorthfield.org)

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### Youth Ministry

*Mike Skunes*  
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### Congregation President

*Brent Nystrom*  
[brent.nystrom@gmail.com](mailto:brent.nystrom@gmail.com)



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office@StJohnsNorthfield.org

**WEBSITE**

Www.StJohnsNorthfield.org

**OFFICE HOURS**

9 a.m. - 4 p.m. M-Th

9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Fri



## Early Deadline for the Voice!

With the holiday season upon us and a need to keep communication flowing - the deadline for the January Voice is EARLY!

*The deadline for January's Voice is Friday, December 9.*

Please get submissions in by the deadline. If articles are not in, they will not appear in the January edition of the Voice.

Thanks for your help and cooperation.

## Annual Meeting Reports!

For all those who are submitting information for the Annual Report - the due date for reports is **Friday, December 16.**

Please get the reports in on time!

Mark your calendar for the annual meeting on Sunday, January 22.