



# the Eagle Call

Volume 50, Number 04 | April 2018

## “Be Not Afraid, Sing Out for Joy! Christ Is Risen, Alleluia!” (Repeat!)

This simple chant, ELW #388, from the Taize Community is what we sing at the Easter Vigil (many times over) as we welcome the story of the resurrection of Christ into our midst. We accompany it with bells and as many rhythm instruments as we can find. The first “Alleluia” that we have tasted for six long weeks become a cacophony of joyous sound! Welcome to the Easter season!

We often forget that Easter is not only one Sunday but a SEASON lasting 50 days – literally a week of weeks. And here at St. John’s we continue the celebration, singing Alleluias, rejoicing in the mystery of new life coming forth from death with drama, music, honored guests and celebrations, including:

- Three Marys Dramatic Presentation: Sunday, April 8 at 9:00 a.m.
- Dorian Festival Event & Concert sponsored by Luther College: Tuesday, April 10, tickets on sale starting at 6:30; concert begins at 7:00 p.m.
- The Rev. Michael Burk, Bishop of the Southeast Iowa Synod of the ELCA, will be with us Sunday, April 15, 8:00 & 10:00 a.m. services.
- A reception honoring Darla Stiles upon her retirement from the staff: Sunday, April 29, after the 10:00 a.m. service.

### **Worship**

#### **Saturday**

5:00 pm

#### **Sunday**

8:00 am  
10:00 am

#### **Radio Broadcast**

Praise 940 AM  
Sunday Mornings  
8:00 am

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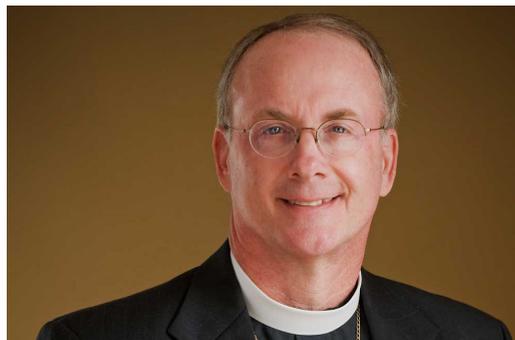
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#### **Business Office Hours:**

Monday – Thursday  
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## A Word from Darla

by Terri Mork Speirs

Darla Stiles has announced her retirement after serving on staff with St. John's since September 1989.

If you ever find yourself attempting to capture the impact of Darla's significant work -- three decades of building community -- you may learn a thing or two. You will attempt to sit with Darla for a brief interview. And you will learn that Darla doesn't sit. Her event schedule is full.

Plus, she will say, she's uncomfortable with attention. She will insist there are better things to do than highlight her. And then she'll remind you that the *Eagle Call* deadline is at hand, and offer to speed up the process by getting to the point. She will email her reflections within 24 hours.

That is Darla: no frills yet tremendously beautiful. Practical yet deeply insightful.

And so, in a very Darla-esque manner, we move forward in this article with efficiency and thought. We present a straightforward interview that crescendos into the meaning of Christian life, ala Darla.

### What is your exact job title?

Christian Involvement & Small Groups Coordinator

### How did you come to this position?

I had just stopped teaching at Hoover High School when an associate pastor left St. John's. Pastor Richards decided instead of replacing with another associate pastor, he would hire four members of the congregation part-time to address the areas of:

- Social ministry: Jean Williams
- Men's programming and youth ministry: Cecil Brewton
- Outreach (new members): Deb Donald
- Inreach (activities for members): me

### When people ask you "what is your job" how do you describe it?

I help members to connect with other members and form friendships through all-congregational activities and small groups

### How many pastors have you worked with?

18! Three senior pastors and 15 associate, visitation, and interim pastors

### What is the definition of a small group?

A group that has a common interest in a specific area

### What do small groups do?

Gather to learn, share, become involved in an activity and enjoy time with other Christians

### Why are they important?

When members participate in groups, they form friendships and become more involved in church activities as well as support each other in life situations

### Do you have a count of how many small groups have formed during your tenure?

Probably over 50

### Any idea how many events you have facilitated?

No but TONS!

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*Continued from Page 2***Has your job changed or evolved in any way over the years? If so, how?**

Yes. It started out as "Inreach Coordinator" which involved

- Volunteer appreciation
- Time and Talent — helping members fill out a time and talent sheet to figure out their gifts and how they could use them in areas in the church and community
- Coordinating seven or eight pictorial directories
- Helping start the After School Arts Program (ASAP) and coordinating it for two years
- Helping plan the 140th, 145th and 150th Anniversaries of St. John's

Eventually my job morphed into helping members connect by planning all-congregational events and starting small groups.

All congregational events included:

- St. John's Olympics (with 16 teams and 16 different games or challenges)
- Miniature golf throughout the church
- Wacky Winter Bowling
- BBQ Cook-offs
- Chili Cook-offs
- Shrove Tuesday events
- Wii Tournaments
- Octoberfests
- Nine to Dine events
- And many others!

Small Groups included:

- 5 Bible Study groups
- 2 Prayer Shawl groups
- 5 3D groups (diet, discipline, and discipleship)
- Possibly 50 or so other special interest groups over the years including book clubs, gardening, bicycle group, 30 Something, Mah Jongg group, Leisure Club, EAGLES, Social Club, scrapbooking, Next Adventure, Lunch Bunch groups, WIRED (Women Interested in Renewal, Education and Discovery) including WIRED small groups (cooking, book discussion, cooking, Night Out, Spirituality, zumba, yoga) and many, many others

**Can you offer a highlight or two of your tenure?**

- 1) Starting the ASAP program and seeing how it has grown enormously into a very successful and far-reaching program that helps students who would not be able to afford art classes at the Art Center or other places. It has been so rewarding to see how it gives them a confidence they did not have before enrolling in the program.
- 2) 150th Anniversary celebrations including a kick-off event at the Consistory, many receptions for previous pastors who returned over the year to celebrate with us, and a final celebration event at HyVee Hall.

**What are your hopes for the community and for St. John's in particular?**

I hope St. John's continues to keep as a high priority helping those in need in the community (through the Shelter, Connection Café, DMARC Food Pantry, collecting items needed for school children in the fall, hats and gloves collection, ASAP programming, etc.

Three hopes for St. John's: continue building community (through small groups, congregational activities, Beloved Community, etc); keep Arts and Music alive and thriving; strive to be more of a welcoming church that is accepting of ALL people

**What would you like to say to the congregation?**

I have absolutely loved working with the people, pastors and staff at St. John's over the years. I thank each of you for the opportunity to work with you and for all the help you have given me as we have worked together on various projects, receptions and events. God Bless!

**Do you have a favorite Bible verse? Or poem? Or story?**

When I was confirmed, each of us were given a Bible verse to remember as we traveled through life. Mine was a short version of a verse: "Lo, I am with you always." It has been a comfort to me along life's path.

Thank you Darla Stiles.

**A note from Pastor Rachel Mithelman...**

I doubt that it is possible to count the number of friendships made among the members of St. John's because of Darla's commitment to connecting us as brothers and sisters in Christ. She has been a gift of God's grace to us all, and I am so grateful for her dedication to this community of faith. Though you will still find Darla (and Bill) in their usual spot on Sunday morning – lectern side, half-way down the west aisle – we shall certainly miss all of the gifts she has brought to our life together as part of St. John's staff: her willingness to lend her organizational skill and creativity to any project, her caring nature and her wonderful sense of humor.

We plan to honor Darla for her years of ministry at St. John's with a reception on Sunday, April 29, following the 10 a.m. worship service. I hope that you will be present to thank her for all she has given to our community.

## Prepare for Worship

By Michael Elsbernd

### April 1 – Resurrection of Our Lord – Easter Day

**Readings:** Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Mark 16:1-8.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia! Our Lord has acted! We share in the joy and promise of new life through Christ's resurrection. In Acts 10:34-43, we hear the words of Peter's first sermon, that everyone who believes in Christ "receives forgiveness of sins through his name." The darkness of sin and death has been overcome by the power of the resurrection.

**Hymns:** "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" (365); "Thine Is the Glory" (376); "Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds" (367).

#### Assisting with Worship:

- Cathedral Choir, String Scholars, Brass Ensemble: "Christ the Lord is Risen," by Johann Helmich Roman; "Thine Be the Glory," arranged by J. Marty Cope.

### April 8 – Second Sunday of Easter

**Readings:** Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1:1-2:2; John 20:19-31.

The seven Sundays of Easter invite us into the mystery of Christ's presence as we hear (mostly) from the Gospel of John. On this second Sunday of Easter, we hear the story of Thomas, who asks for a sign. Like Thomas, we look to the pierced hands and side of the wounded Jesus – found in the broken bread and the cup of wine shared for all people.

**Hymns:** "Christ the Lord is Risen Today; Alleluia" (369); "We Walk by Faith" (635); "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing" (385).

#### Assisting with Worship:

- Cathedral Choir: "Peace I Leave With You," by Walter Pelz.

### April 15 – Third Sunday of Easter

**Readings:** Acts 3:12-19; Psalm 4; 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48.

On the third Sunday of Easter, we often hear stories of the risen Jesus sharing food with the disciples. In the appointed text from Luke, Jesus helps the disciples understand that he is indeed the Messiah. The meaning of his suffering, death and resurrection is revealed through the Word and the Meal.

**Hymns:** "Alleluia! Jesus is Risen" (377); "By Your Hand, You Feed Your People" (469); "Rise, O Church, Like Christ Arisen" (548).

#### Assisting with Worship:

- Cathedral Choir: "Stay With Us," by Walter Pelz.

### April 22 – Fourth Sunday of Easter

**Readings:** Acts 4:5-12; Psalm 23; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18.

Jesus, the good shepherd of the sheep, knows and loves his flock. The image of the good shepherd as one who is willing to lay down one's life for others is reinforced throughout the second reading and Gospel. "We know love by this, that Jesus Christ laid down his life for us – and we ought to lay down our lives for one another" (1 John 3:16).

**Hymns:** "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee" (836); "Have No Fear, Little Flock" (764); "All People That on Earth Do Dwell" (883).

#### Assisting with Worship:

- Cathedral Choir: "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need," arranged by Virgil Thompson.

### April 29 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

**Readings:** Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8.

In John's Gospel, we hear Christ's words, "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15:5). Just as the vine nourishes the branch, we are nourished and sustained by Christ through Holy Communion. Through baptism, we are made a part of Christ's life (the vine) – as well as the lives of others (the branches). In 1st John, we are reminded that the essence of God is love. In love, we are sent out to bear good fruit for the sake of God's world.

**Hymns:** "When Morning Gilds the Skies" (853); "Thine, the Amen" (826); "Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing" (389).

#### Assisting with Worship:

- Cathedral Choir: "I Am the Vine," by Raymond Haan.

## LSI Updates

by Members of the Lutheran Services in Iowa Staff

### National Child Abuse Prevention Month

According to the Iowa Department of Human Services, 8,892 Iowa children were found to be abused in 2016. The most common forms of abuse included denial of critical care, physical injury, exposure to illegal drugs and sexual abuse.

Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) helps combat child abuse through prevention, safety, and stability services, as well as mental and behavioral health treatment.

Through regular in-home visits to families, LSI's Early Childhood Services prevent child abuse by giving parents the support, education, and resources they need to build a



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healthy, stable home for their children. In 2017, our Early Childhood programs provided more than 15,000 in-home visits to families.

LSI's Family Safety, Risk, and Permanency Services help children and families already involved in a crisis or abuse situation to become safer and more stable, and LSI's Brewood and Beloit Residential Treatment Centers serve many children and youth who have experienced trauma from past abuse or neglect.

You make a direct impact on these children and families through your support of LSI. Thank you!

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at [LSIowa.org](http://LSIowa.org) and [Facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa).

### Building a Stronger Family

Stacy's daughter, Danikah, was a happy and playful toddler. But things began to change when her baby brother, Parker, was born. She was happy to see him in the hospital at first, but she struggled to adjust to a new child at home, especially when it came to sharing a room with Parker.

Stacy found LSI's New Parent Program shortly after Parker was born, and she hoped it could help her daughter adjust to the changes at home. The free, voluntary program provides support and education to families during and after pregnancy. Through the program, Stacy gets to meet other families in her community, and Danikah gets to interact with other children who have siblings.

Danikah is learning how other siblings share their toys and interact. Meanwhile, Stacy is learning to adjust to her children's developmental stages. Through the program, she has learned to potty train Danikah and manage her daughter's temper tantrums.

At home, Stacy and her children receive regular visits from their LSI team. Each week, the team brings creative new crafts Stacy can make from materials around the house. Danikah, now 5, is always eager to learn a new activity from her LSI worker during each visit. She's even starting to share her homemade toys with Parker.

"The program is fun for the kids, but you can also do things as a family," Stacy says. "You get that time with your child, and you're building a better relationship in the process."

## In the City (and World)! for Good!

by Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

*Love and ever more love is the only solution to every problem that comes up. If we love each other enough, we will bear with each other's faults and burdens. If we love enough, we are going to light that fire in the hearts of others...It is love that will make us want to do great things for each other. No sacrifice and no suffering will then seem too much.* Dorothy Day

"Love and ever more love..." can be shown in a host of ways through God's mission for St. John's...

**If you know someone who needs support after a loss from suicide**, please share with them that a "Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group" meets every third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center in Urbandale. There is no cost for those who would like to attend.

**Financial gifts to the Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) Food Pantry** received through April 30th will be matched dollar for dollar up to a total of \$20,000 through the Douglas M. Woods Challenge Hunger Campaign. Mr. Woods, a retired West Des Moines police officer, offers this challenge for the 6th year, doubling his commitment from \$10,000 last year to \$20,000 in 2018! It's a great time to give. Donations may be mailed to DMARC, 1435 Mulberry St., Des Moines, 50309 or be made online at [www.dmarcunited.org](http://www.dmarcunited.org).

**Are you "spring cleaning?" Do you have furniture and/or household goods you would like to donate to those in need?** A non-profit organization called

"FreeStore" – dedicated to providing household goods to clients of domestic violence services and other agencies – gladly accepts items in good condition. They will even pick up furniture donations at your convenience! The FreeStore does not accept clothing or large kitchen appliances, but living room and bedroom furniture and small appliances, dishes, linens are all needed. Call 515-282-3733 for more information or to arrange for furniture pick-up. You may also visit their website, [www.thefreestore.org](http://www.thefreestore.org).



**And a reminder that it is "love and ever more love" that feeds our friends at Central Iowa Shelter & Services** on the 18th & 19th of every month. In April, those dates are on a Wednesday and Thursday. Please sign up to provide food/assistance on the clipboards in the narthex and consider bringing a friend along to learn about this ministry.

Thanks for participating in God's mission "to bless, save, restore and reconcile the world" through acts of "love and ever more love."

## Youth Ministry

By Maggie Evans

### Thank You for Making Youth Auction Great!

Thank you to everyone for a wonderful youth auction! We had a full house with people and auction items filling the Windsor Heights Community Center. I am so grateful to all of our donors and volunteers for making this night possible, and a special thank you to the youth group for doing a tremendous job! We received nearly \$9,000! This will help cover costs for registration, transportation, food and lodging for our summer youth trips. Thank you! (Photos taken by Jacquie Warming)



### Save the Date for Sam's Kick-a-Thon

The third-year confirmation capstone projects have been designed, and our first one is ready to be announced!

Please plan to join us for student Sam Benschoter's Kick-a-Thon! All (ages 15 and older) are invited to Farrell's Southside Memorial Day Kick-a-Thon from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Cash donations will be accepted for the Puppy Jake Foundation (PJF). PJF trains service dogs to assist wounded military veterans. Please help Sam raise money for veterans on Memorial Day, so we can give back to those who have given us so much.

Farrell's Southside is located at 4230 Fleur Dr., Suite B. Please arrive 10 minutes early to complete paperwork and receive loaner gloves. If you have any questions or can't attend but want to make a donation to PJF, please email Michelle Benschoter ([michellebenschoter@extremebodysaping.com](mailto:michellebenschoter@extremebodysaping.com)).



### Confirmation Student Worship Notes

As some of you know, one of the requirements for our confirmation students is to complete worship-response notes (aka sermon notes) throughout the class year. This requirement helps the students develop their understanding of and connection to the weekly message.

The students are asked to reflect on the sermon for personal meaning, talk with a friend, fellow parishioner (you) or family member about something they found especially meaningful in the service and re-tell a reading in their own words. Every week I am blessed with the great joy of reading the completed sermon notes, and every week I am moved by the insights and connections the students find in the service.

If you see a student working on sermon notes either in paper form or electronically during the service, feel free to ask them what they found meaningful that day. I promise you will be glad you did!



## Children's Ministries

By Alicia Karwal

### Important Dates for Children's Ministries:

- Sunday, April 1: Easter (no Sunday School classes).
- Sunday, April 22: Registration opens for VBS at St. John's.
- Sunday, May 6: Last day of regular Sunday School classes for the 2017-18 program year.
- Sunday, May 13: Sunday School end-of-the-year celebration (all ages meet together).
- Wednesday, May 16: Final Beloved Community for this program year.

### First Holy Communion Class

There will be a First Holy Communion class on Saturday, May 5 at 9:30 a.m. If you are interested in having your child participate or would like more information, at your earliest convenience contact Alicia Karwal ([akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org)) or Pastor Bob Speirs ([pastorbob@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:pastorbob@stjohnsdsm.org)).

### Vacation Bible School Registration Reminder

Registration for Vacation Bible School (VBS) at St. John's will begin Sunday, April 22. A Lutheran Lakeside VBS Day Camp will be held here Monday, July 16, through Thursday, July 19, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. All children entering kindergarten through sixth grade are invited to participate. As always, it promises to be a fun filled adventure in faith and fellowship! Friends are welcome!

Scholarships are available. Volunteers from St. John's are needed and vital to this program! Youth are invited and encouraged to volunteer as well. We will also need families to host one or more of the camp counselors the evening of Sunday, July 15, through the morning of Thursday, July 19.

The registration fee is \$15 per child, not to exceed \$30 per family. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Alicia Karwal ([akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org)).



## Small Groups

by Darla Stiles

**Mah Jongg:** Mondays, April 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 6 p.m., Neumann Hall at St. John's.

**Quilting:** Tuesdays, April 3, 10, 17 and 24, Room 308 at church.

**Christian Involvement:** Tuesday, April 3, 6 p.m., place to be announced.

**Yoga:** Thursdays, April 5, 12, 19 and 26, 5:45 p.m., Fireside Lounge at church.

**St. John's Social Club:** Friday, April 6, 5 p.m., Mainframe Studios.

**Photography:** Sunday, April 15, 11:15 a.m., Neumann Hall at St. John's.

**EAGLES:** Sunday, April 15, 1:30 p.m. Meet at Social Club for the play, "The Christians."

**Lunch Bunch II:** Wednesday, April 18, 12:30 p.m.

**Lunch Bunch I:** Thursday, April 19, 11:30 a.m.

**Celebrating Katy:** Thursday, April 19, 7 p.m., Exile Brewing. (New small group)

**Scrapbooking:** Saturday, April 21 (note change in date), 9:30 a.m. to noon, Room 8 at church.

**WIRED-sponsored luncheon/program** on human trafficking: Sunday, April 22, 11:30 a.m., Weertz Fellowship Hall. Open to all.

**Recreational Reading:** Wednesday, April 25, 4:30 p.m., Rose Holm at church.

**Next Adventure:** Saturday, April 21, 9 a.m. to noon, Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge.

**WIRED Night Out:** Date to be announced. Movie, "Leisure Seekers."

*Keep up to date with all events by subscribing to our weekly email newsletter (sign up on the homepage of our website) or keep an eye on [www.stjohnsdsm.org/news](http://www.stjohnsdsm.org/news)*

**Mah Jongg** will meet on Mondays, April 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30 at 6 p.m. in Neumann Hall at church. Questions? Contact Darla Stiles ([darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org)).

**Quilting** will meet on Tuesdays, April 3, 10, 17 and 24, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 308 at church.

**Yoga** will continue on Thursdays through May 31 at 5:45 p.m. in Fireside Lounge. Cost is \$10 each Thursday or \$100 for the 11-week session. If you can attend or have questions, contact Corrine Lambert ([callingwisdom1@hotmail.com](mailto:callingwisdom1@hotmail.com)).

**St. John's Social Club** will visit Mainframe Studios, 900 Keo Way, on Friday, April 6, around 5 p.m. We will be attending their regular First Friday Open House, giving us the opportunity to see a whole host of art studios (with works in clay, paint, plants and glass). Mainframe is on the west side of Keo. Shortly before 7 p.m. we will go to The Walnut, 1417 Walnut St., downtown, to our own private space for dinner, drinks and conversation. Provide your reservation for Mainframe Studios, The Walnut or both to Deb Donald ([Ddonald126@aol.com](mailto:Ddonald126@aol.com) or 707-3712).

**WIRED Night Out** will see the movie, Leisure Seekers, at a date to be determined. The WIRED Book Discussion group read and discussed the book upon which the movie is based.

**Photography** will meet on Sunday, April 15, at 11:15 a.m. in Neumann Hall. The theme for this month is funny photos. All are welcome to come and view the photos regardless if you have any to show.

**EAGLES** will attend the play, "The Christians," Sunday, April 15, at the Iowa Stage Theater (Social Club). Meet at the Social Club at 1:30 p.m. when the doors open; the play begins at 2 p.m. If anyone else would like to join them for the play, they are most welcome. The group rate is \$20 each if there are 10 or more. One check is needed for the group, so you will need to pay Barb Hyler by Sunday, April 8. RSVP to Barb ([b.hylar@mchsi.com](mailto:b.hylar@mchsi.com) or 401-5721).

**Lunch Bunch II** will meet on Wednesday, April 18, 12:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining the group for lunch the third Wednesday of each month, contact Barbara John (279-508).

**Lunch Bunch I** meets on Thursday, April 19, at 11:30 a.m. New members are most welcome. If you are interested in joining the group, call Karen Schoenenberger (276-8730).

**Scrapbooking** will meet on Saturday, April 21, between 9:30 a.m. and noon in Room 8. Note this date is different from our usual fourth Saturday due to an event that will use most of the church on our usual date. Bring scrapbooking or card-making materials to work on and enjoy the camaraderie.



**WIRED-sponsored luncheon and program** on human trafficking will be held Sunday, April 22, with lunch starting at 11:30 in Weertz Fellowship Hall followed by a program by Michael Ferjak, executive consultant for human trafficking, and Kellie Markey, who started Dorothy's House to serve survivors of human trafficking. This program is open to anyone interested in learning more about this topic. Cost for lunch is \$10. Sign up in the Fireside Lounge beginning Sunday, March 25, or online ([www.stjohnsdsm.org](http://www.stjohnsdsm.org)).

**Recreational Reading** will gather on Wednesday, April 25, at 4:30 p.m. in Rose Holm for a book discussion. The book we will discuss is *The Book of Joy*, by the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. If you have questions, contact Carol MacDonald ([caroljomac@gmail.com](mailto:caroljomac@gmail.com)).

**Next Adventure** will celebrate Earth Day on Saturday, April 21, from 9 am to noon at Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge by helping restore prairie and oak savanna ecosystems and participating in stewardship activities (lunch is free). For more information, see [www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal\\_Smith/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal_Smith/) Pre-registration is required, so notify Deb and Greg Anderson ([debgrega@aol.com](mailto:debgrega@aol.com)).

**Celebrating Katy** is a new small group that will meet monthly to visit a local microbrewery to celebrate the hospitality of Katharina von Bora, the wife of Martin Luther, who was herself a home brewer. These are the dates to put on your calendar:

- April 19, Thursday, 7 p.m. - Exile Brewing Company, Des Moines
- May 10, Thursday, 7 p.m. - Firetrucker Brewery, Ankeny
- June 6, Wednesday, 7 p.m. - Confluence Brewing Company, Des Moines
- July 11, Wednesday, 7 p.m. - Peace Tree, Des Moines
- August 9, Thursday, 7 p.m.- Iowa State Fair, Iowa Craft Beer Tent, Des Moines

If you have questions about this group, contact Rod Snavely (494-3178).

**Gardening tour schedule** will be coming out soon. Watch the bulletin announcements for it.



Save the Date:

## “Picnic at the Beach”

by Darla Stiles

An all-congregational event, “Picnic at the Beach” will be held on Sunday, June 10, at 1 p.m. at Big Creek State Park north of Saylorville Lake. There will be a picnic, lawn games, sand-castle construction and an opportunity to rent kayaks, canoes, pontoons, paddle boats, etc. Put the date on your calendar and plan to attend. You won't want to miss this!

# The Journey Through Grief

Six-Session Educational Grief Group

**Because Life After Loss Can Be Difficult.**

Just us to learn about grief, discover tools for dealing with loss, and develop a new support network.

Third Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm  
 March - August 2018  
 St. John's Lutheran Church  
 600 6th Ave. in Des Moines

For Registration and Questions,  
 Contact Anne Alesch  
[anne.alesch@unitypoint.org](mailto:anne.alesch@unitypoint.org)  
 (515) 557-3169



**Learn.** 

**Connect.** 

**Grow.** 



UnityPoint Hospice



## Hospitality & Outreach

By Katie Tippins

### “Pray Without Ceasing”

Straight to you from 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

We've read it, heard it and thought about it. In my head, it's quickly followed by, “Are you serious?” I have work to do, places to be, people to talk to. Nothing will get done if I'm praying all day.

Then my memory takes me back to a retreat I attended nearly 30 years ago. (I am still amazed when I trip back 25 to 35 years and wonder how time has passed so quickly!) One of the speakers was Sister Dorothy Mrock, a Franciscan from Ohio. Back then it was highly unusual for a religious woman to share the podium with priests. All three retreat leaders were good, but she was something special. She spoke in terms of everyday life, understood daily demands and obligations. She was practical in terms of offering suggestions on how our most routine, ordinary, and yes, even boring activities are our prayers.

As family members, every time we perform a task that contributes to the household, we offer it as an act of love, and that is prayer. The list is endless. For adults: meals, laundry, cleaning, lawn care, snow shoveling, home maintenance. The list, as we all know, is endless. Those chores contribute to the safety and wellbeing of the family. For children: do what is asked of you with a cheerful heart – setting the table, washing dishes, doing homework without being forced, respecting your parents and siblings.

Outside of home and family: General rule of thumb – be kind. Let slights and hurts pass without a sharp retort. Breathe deep and let it go. In Catholic language, we'd say “offer it up.” Easy? No. Unfortunately, I'm living proof of that. But it is possible when we ask God to guide our basic human reactions and strengthen our spiritual resolve.

There is so much dis-harmony in our world, so much distrust and fear. It is not going to change unless WE change. The only way to do that, in my opinion, is through God's grace. So simple, and yet, so hard. I am trying, as a Lenten discipline, to offer each day to God, asking that my thoughts, words and actions be guided and accept them as prayer. I plan to continue even as Lent ends and Easter joy takes its place.

In addition to actions as prayer, there is always heartfelt and spiritual prayer. There are so many prayers for so many things. But prayer from memorization or rote seems a bit too easy. With God as our loving parent, I opt for conversational prayer – not excessive or flowery – simple, earnest and honest conversation. We don't have to convince God about our needs, fears and desires; they are already known. “Do not babble like the pagans, who think they will be heard because of their many words” (Matthew 6:7). Prayers of humility and honesty keep us connected with our God.

When prayer can be hard, and words won't come:

*“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.”* (Romans 8:26)

I hope the following quotations will help:

*“Believe in the power of prayer. The world is weak, prayer is powerful, and God can do anything.”* (Unattributed)

*“Lord, I need your help that I might control my thoughts and words today. I want to be a blessing to others, to fill them up that they might see your goodness. I pray because the need flows out of me all the time, waking and sleeping. It doesn't change God; it changes me.”* (C.S. Lewis)

If you are looking for an opportunity for personal prayer, I have something for you. On the back of the worship cards in the pews, there is a place for prayer requests for the published prayer list in the bulletin. There is also a place for the prayer chain. The chain is a group of eight very faithful “pray-ers” who receive a list of people who are requesting support in prayer. We have many requests, and this group is becoming known for answered prayers! If you would like to join this ministry, just pop me an email or give me a call.

*As coordinator of hospitality and outreach, I am available to discuss joining St. John's, volunteer opportunities and connecting you with like-minded people who have shared interests – whether they be service, social and/or spiritual. Contact Katie (katiet@stjohnsdsm.org or 243-7691).*

## The Arts at St. John's

By Beth Ann Edwards



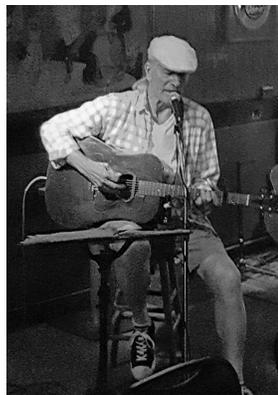
### Three Marys Drama Features St. John's Actors

**Sunday, April 8, 9 a.m., Sanctuary**

Three Marys, a short 35-minute play, will be performed Sunday, April 8, at 9 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Jesus has been crucified. It is now the dark night before Easter sunrise when three of Jesus' disciples are hiding out, escaping arrest, mourning their loss, and gritting out some courage to leave their hiding place and confront whatever awaits them as the sun rises. That day before the empty tomb, before the women discover the stone rolled away, what darkness filled the world? The three Marys will be portrayed by St. John's members DeAnna MacDonald, Megan Hartwig and Rachel Almlie.

### Midweek Music Series

Midweek Music returns to St. John's Wednesday, April 4, at 12:05 p.m. with singer, songwriter, guitarist and St. John's member Bill Matykowski. Bill uses an acoustic blend of standards and oldies, soft rock and pop. He is sure to entertain!



#### Midweek Music Series Schedule

- April 4 - Bill Matykowski, singer/guitarist (pictured to the right)
- April 11 - Amadeus Trio (Joyce Wheeler, clarinet; Janean Schaefer Denhart, bassoon; Sue Odem, oboe)
- April 18 - Sarah Plum/Drake String Studio
- April 25 - Cristina Deeds, French horn; Michael Elsbend, piano
- May 2 - Foxtrot Hotshots with John Benoit

All Midweek Music Series performances are free and open to the public. Following the performance, a light lunch, priced at \$6 per person, is available in Weertz Fellowship Hall at 12:35 p.m.

### Nathan Joy & String Scholars Pop-up Concert

**Sunday, May 6, 11:15 a.m., Sanctuary**

The St. John's String Scholars and Nathan Joy will perform Mozart's Bassoon Concerto on Sunday, May 6, at 11:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary, following the 10 a.m. worship service. Mozart wrote the bassoon concerto in 1774 when he was 18 years old, and it was his first concerto for a wind instrument.

Nathan Joy is a high-school senior at Southeast Polk High School and has been sharing his musical talent with St. John's since he was in Kisasa.

### Local High Schools & Luther College Choir Concert

Tuesday, April 10, 7 p.m., Sanctuary

A one-day Dorian event taking place at St. John's and sponsored by Luther College will culminate in a concert featuring Luther College's top choral ensemble, Nordic Choir, and vocal choirs from four local high schools: West Des Moines Valley, Johnston, Lincoln Des Moines and Waukee. Tickets are \$5 per person and can be purchased at the door beginning at 6:30 p.m.



### Artist of the Month

Photographer Margaret Townsend and her sister Reta Caldwell, a painter, will present a joint exhibit during the month of April. Margaret has shared her photographs with Reta, who then created paintings based on the photographs. The exhibit will be available for viewing in the Weertz Fellowship Hall gallery space through April 30.

### Plant Sale Pick-up Wednesday, May 2

Thank you to all who ordered plants for the youth handbell fundraiser. Pick-up is scheduled for Wednesday, May 2. A few extra plants have been ordered, so if you did not place an order, please check to see what is available. For more information, contact Carol Lunde ([carollunde@q.com](mailto:carollunde@q.com)).



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## **Serving at Central Iowa Shelter & Services**

On the 18th and 19th of each month St. John's prepares and serves meals at the shelter. If you would like to help prepare, serve or donate to this wonderful ministry located in the heart of downtown Des Moines, please call 243.7691 or e-mail Katie at [katiet@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:katiet@stjohnsdsm.org).



## **EAGLE CALL DEADLINE**

The next deadline for all Eagle Call content is **noon on April 16**. Please send articles in digital format to Scott LaBlanc, [scottl@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:scottl@stjohnsdsm.org). If you are unable to send it by e-mail, drop it off at the church office.

Thank you!