



DES MOINES, IOWA

Celebrating
150 years
1865-2015

in the city for good

the Eagle Call

Volume 47, Number 08 | August 2015

New Beginnings

Worship

Saturday

5:00 pm

Sunday

8:00 am

10:00 am

Radio Broadcast

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Sunday Mornings

8:30 am

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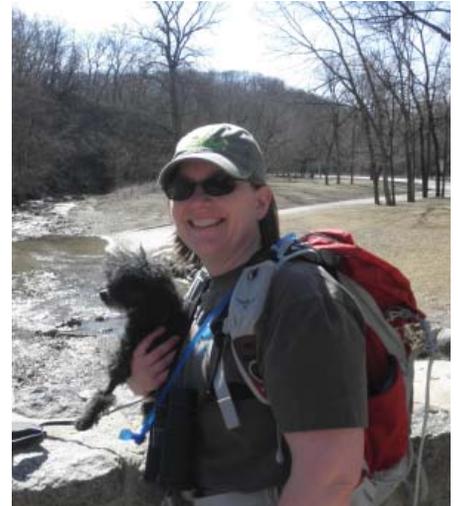
stjohnsdsm.org

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Starting on August 15, Michael Elsbernd will begin work as St. John's Director of Worship & Music / Organist / Choir Director. On page 11 Michael provides more information about his career and background.

Becky Goche begins her seminary internship at St. John's beginning on August 1. Find out more about Becky on page 10.



What's Inside

- 2 A Word from Our Pastors
- 3 Visiting Associate Pastors
- 4 Prepare for Worship
- 5 In the City for Good & WELCA Updates

- 6 Children's Ministry
- 7 Youth Ministry
- 8 Small Groups
- 9 WIRED Events & Fine Arts Updates

- 10 Hospitality & Outreach and Becky Goche Introduction
- 11 Michael Elsbernd & Invitation to 150th Anniversary Gala

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A Word from Our Pastors

By Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

Friends,

We have the privilege of welcoming two new servant-leaders into our midst this month here at St. John's: Michael Elsbernd will begin work as our new director of worship and music on Saturday, Aug. 15, and Becky Goche (pronounced long "o" and long "e") will begin serving her year-long seminary internship on Saturday, Aug. 1. You may see photos of and read a bit more about both Becky and Michael elsewhere in this edition of the Eagle Call.

There is a beautiful story of hospitality in the 24th chapter of Genesis that I would like to remind you of here, a story that conveys the same gracious welcome I hope you will extend to both Michael and Becky...

"Abraham was old and advanced in years" but determined to find a suitable wife for his son, Isaac, before he died. Therefore he called a trusted servant and instructed him to go to Abraham's homeland where God would show him which woman to choose. The servant traveled the distance and rested at a spring of water outside of the city of Nahor. There he encountered Rebekah, who had come to the spring to fill the household water jars and whom, the Lord indicated to the servant, was the woman meant to be Isaac's wife. After giving her several gifts, Rebekah went to the servant to meet her brother, Laban. Hearing his sister's story of the conversation with the servant, Laban immediately said to him, "Come in, O blessed of the Lord. Why do you stand outside when I have prepared the house and a place for the camels?"

I doubt that either Becky or Michael will arrive at St. John's by camel(!), but it is the spirit of Laban's greeting that I enjoy and that I pray will be the spirit in which we greet our new colleagues and friends: "Come right in! We've prepared the house for your arrival!"

Yes, offices have been cleaned and painted, new desks moved in and computers connected. But, more importantly, the "house", that is our community of faith, is prepared for their arrival. We are prepared to sing new songs – as well as old songs in new ways; we are prepared for new ideas to call us ever deeper into worship; we are prepared to help a student find her pastoral voice and style in preaching, teaching and leadership; and we are prepared to surround Michael and his family and Becky and her family with our prayers and other tangible signs of support. (And if they do have camels, we'll find room for those, too!).

Long after Laban welcomed the servant into his house, the Apostle Paul urged the Romans to receive one another in that same spirit of hospitality. "Welcome one another therefore just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." (Romans 15:7). Sometimes we forget that we were welcomed into the household of God by God's grace alone. We didn't earn our place, but received it as a gift. Therefore, let us offer that same gracious gift to Michael and Becky in the days ahead.

With a grateful heart and joyful expectation...

150th Anniversary

Visits from Former Associate Pastors

Associate Pastor David Abrams to Visit Aug. 16

By Rev. David Abrams

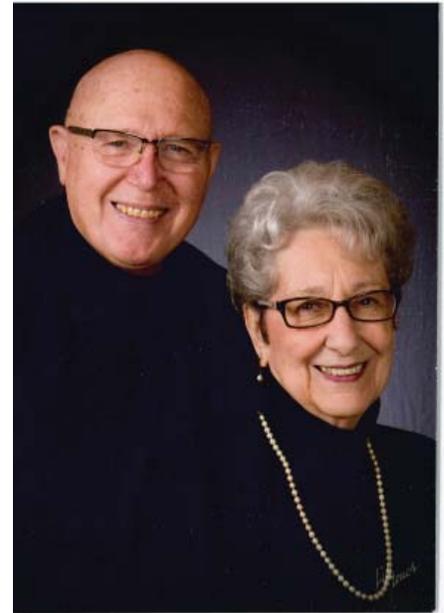
Former Associate Pastor David Abrams will visit St. John's Sunday, Aug. 16, to celebrate with us during our 150th anniversary year. He sent the following paragraphs so we could see what he's been up to since leaving our church in 1973.

"When I came to St. John's in 1968, I had been a naval reserve chaplain. Once I arrived in Des Moines, Pastor Valbracht encouraged me to be sworn into the Iowa Army National Guard where I served for 16 years, retiring as 34th Infantry Brigade chaplain. I was then called by the adjutant general of Nebraska to join his staff to be the state chaplain for the Nebraska Army Guard, where I retired (from the service) at age 57 after Desert Storm ended. I had 33 years of naval and army service.

"In 1973, I took a position at St. Stephen's Lutheran in Urbandale. Pastor Valbracht supported my ministry there and our friendships with the Valbrachts and members of St. John's continued. Joan and I served at St. Stephen's for five years and then at Grace Lutheran, Ft. Dodge, for eight years. After leaving Grace, I was senior pastor at Augustana Lutheran in Boone for 10 years until I retired. After retirement I served several interim pastorates and also mowed parks, cleaned bathrooms for the City of Clive, loaded golf bags onto carts at Hyperion Country Club, Johnston, and worked part-time at the Clive Kohls store where Joan has worked for 12 years.

"While in Boone, I was part of a group of pastors who started a hospice service and a Habitat for Humanity. I have been active with Greater Des Moines Habitat for 14 years, volunteering two to three days a week until this past September. I presently volunteer for the Free Store, make up sacks of groceries at Price Chopper for Des Moines Area Religious Council food pantry, and serve at Cross Ministries food pantry.

"We currently attend Faith Lutheran in Clive where I serve on the MT 25 social-ministry team."



Associate Pastor Chris Olkiewicz here Aug. 30

By Rev. Chris Olkiewicz

The Rev. Christoph Olkiewicz will visit St. John's on Sunday, Aug. 30, a return which will help us celebrate our congregation's 150th anniversary year. He sent the following:

"I have served as lead pastor of Windsor Heights Lutheran Church in Windsor Heights, Iowa, since December of 2009 after serving congregations in Ames and Des Moines. A 1987 graduate of Augustana College, South Dakota, I received my master of divinity (degree) from Luther Seminary in 1995. In addition to parish ministry, I have an interest in ecumenism and the dialogue between science and religion.

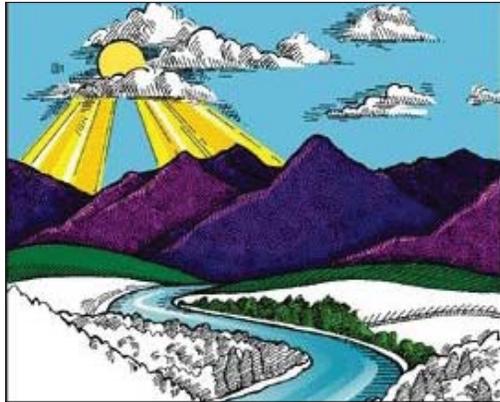
"When not working, I enjoy all things related to bicycles, music (particularly jazz), my family (Beth and Bennett) and books."

Pastor Olkiewicz says he has recuperated nicely from his bicycle accident several months ago. "I am back on the bike and lucky to be feeling as well as I am."



Prepare for Worship

By Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman



The Season of Creation...

As we have the past three summers, this month we will take a “time out” from the Revised Common Lectionary to spend four weeks observing the (optional) Season of Creation. The origins of this season can be traced back to the very beginning: on the seventh day, according to Genesis 1, God celebrated the completion of creation by resting and by blessing that day! The current Season of Creation, which we celebrate along with Christians around the world, originated in Australia and was first celebrated in the U.S. in the mid-1990s.

In a special way, the Season of Creation follows the lead of the psalmists who exhort us to celebrate together with creation – with the forest, the rivers and the fields who praise the Creator in their own way... And, especially, we celebrate the Christ, whose death brings forgiveness for our sins against creation and whose risen presence is the cosmic power at work in reconciling and restoring creation. (“The Season of Creation, A Preaching Commentary,” Fortress Press, 2011)

Sunday, Aug. 2 - Planet Earth Sunday

This Sunday we invite all the domains of Earth to worship with us. In the readings, we discover the story of Earth being born, how the Word continues to be the impulse that creates in Earth, and the amazing truth that the Word is born of flesh and blood on Earth.

Texts: Genesis 1:1-25; Psalm 33:1-9; Romans 1:18-23; John 1:1-14.

Hymns: “Let the Whole Creation Cry” (876); “Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth” (735); “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” (836).

Soloist: Katy McDowell

Sunday, Aug. 9 - Humanity Sunday

This Sunday we worship with all humanity and creation. The readings highlight that we have, in the past, chosen the mandate to dominate over the commission to serve. In Mark 10, we are offered a Gospel answer: the Risen Christ is the source of our hope.

Texts: Genesis 1:26-28; Psalm 34:1-8; Philippians 2:1-8; Mark 10:41-45.

Hymns: “All Creatures, Worship God Most High” (835); “Will You Let Me Be Your Servant?” (659); “Praise the Lord! O Heavens” (823).

Anthems: Kisasa Day Campers

Sunday, Aug. 16 - Sky Sunday

We worship this week with the skies above us. In the readings, we become aware that the skies not only announce the presence of God in Earth, but also that the skies mourn/grow dark in empathy when Earth below is wounded.

Texts: Jeremiah 4:23-28; Psalm 19:1-6; Philippians 2:14-18; Mark 15:33-39.

Hymns: “God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens” (771); “Light Dawns on a Weary World” (726); “Let All Things Now Living” (881).

Soloist: Alex Redding

Sunday, Aug. 23 - Mountain Sunday

This Sunday we worship with creation in the mountains. A special focus for this service is what we call mountain-top experiences. We enter into God's presence in a holy mountain. Like Zion or Sinai, it is the mountain of God. In the readings, we become aware of God's presence revealed on a mountain – on Horeb, Zion and Calvary. We also discover that our mission is to preach the Gospel to all people and all creation!

Texts: Isaiah 65:17-25; Psalm 48:1-11; Romans 8:28-39; Mark 3:13-15, 6:45-46, 9:2-4 and 7, 11:20-24.

Hymns: “O, Sing to God Above” (555); “Touch the Earth Lightly” (739); “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” (733).

Soloist: Alex Redding

Sunday, Aug. 30 - Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 22

Having completed the Season of Creation, we return to the Revised Common Lectionary. In Mark 7, Jesus protests that human customs are revered while God's law is ignored. True uncleanness comes not from external things but from the intentions of the human heart. When we come to the Word every week, we ask God to create in us clean hearts.

Texts: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9; Psalm 15; James 1:17-27; Mark 7:1-8, 14-23.

Hymns: “Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters” (445); “Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether” (470); “Rise, O Church, Like Christ Arisen” (548).

Soloist: Tyler Chen, bassoon

In The City (& The World) For Good!

By Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

We create Jesus in our own image and around our own perceived needs, but there is no Jesus other than the Jesus who lived his life from a position of passion for the poor. Passion for the poor was not just one of many things about which he was concerned; it was central to his deepest being.
– N. Gordon Cosby

Among the poorest of the poor in our world today are refugees displaced by wars, terrorism, gang violence and environmental crises.

Our partners at Lutheran World Relief (LWR) provide immediate, as well as long-term, assistance to people in refugee camps and those seeking to make a new home in a new place. Thanks to the dedication of many members and friends of St. John's, we are celebrating our 150th anniversary as a congregation by sending more than 150 sturdy, handmade quilts to LWR this fall! These quilts will be delivered to people around the world in the year ahead. Along with the quilts, we also are sending school kits to LWR, and I would urge us to set a goal to provide 150 of these as well! Needed for these kits are: #2 pencils, pencil sharpeners, blunt scissors, black or blue ballpoint pens, erasers, boxes of crayons (16 or 24), rulers (must have centimeters on one side), 70-sheet wide- or college-ruled notebooks (approximately 8- by 10-inches). There are collection boxes for these items in the Narthex at church, or you may drop them off at the office during the week any time before Tuesday, Sept. 1. A school kit means the world to a child who has nothing but the clothes on his/her back at this point in life. Let's be generous!

Thanks to all who have "stepped up to the plate" to provide food and service for meals at Central Iowa Shelter and Services on the 18th and 19th of the month. Vacations and other special summer activities often take some of our regular contributors away during July and August, so please continue to check the signup sheets in the Narthex for items needed as we continue this longtime ministry of St. John's.

The After School Arts Program (ASAP) successfully completed both the annual Summer Arts Camp at EK Davis Park in June and participation in the Starfish Academy programming at McKinley, Monroe and King Elementary Schools in June and July. (The Starfish Academy is a partnership supported by United Way, Grubb YMCA and other organizations to combat the "summer slide" in learning for children in Des Moines Public Schools.) Thank you for your continued financial and in-kind support of ASAP. Watch for an announcement of ASAP's annual fundraising event, "Savor," this fall at Hoyt Sherman Place.

Please note: St. John's has been designated a Cooling Center by the Polk County Health Department, providing space for people to get relief from the heat when the county deems it necessary. Our location will be listed on the appropriate website, and signs will be created for our use. If you would like to be on the list of those willing to host when we are notified of the need to serve, please contact Judy Latessa (jlattessa125@gmail.com).

Once again, St. John's was asked to provide an official letter of support as the Family Violence Center (Children and Families of Iowa) applied for a Domestic Hunger Grant from the ELCA Hunger Appeal. We gladly comply with this request whenever we are asked. The grant supports the purchase of food – including particular ethnic

foods – for the emergency shelter. Women and children in crisis value having food to which they are accustomed when they must flee their homes for safety's sake. Your support of the Hunger Appeal makes such grants possible.

A thousand thanks for being a community that cares for all of God's children in need – here at home and around the world!

Women of the ELCA

By Members of WELCA

No summer WELCA group meetings

The Women of the ELCA have taken a break from meeting during the summer months but continue to serve coffee and funeral lunches and gather articles for the Outreach Program. Now is the time to look forward to their fall activities with group meetings that begin on Thursday, Sept. 3. Remember, the future of WELCA will be discussed along with the regular worship, programs and duties.



School Supplies, Breakfasts Needed

Children and Family Urban Movement (CFUM) is the recipient for the WELCA outreach project for August and September. CFUM provides school supplies for Grades K-12 and breakfast for K-5. Pens, pencils, notebooks, rulers, erasers and markers are needed. Suggestions for breakfast items are cereals and family-size 100-percent fruit juice; no sugars please. Cash donations are always welcome so CFUM can purchase things in bulk. Please leave these items in one of our two boxes, located in the reception area and adjacent Neumann Hall.

Thanks to everyone who made donations for our June and July project. We always appreciate your help!

St. John's offers Wi-Fi from Weertz to DDI. Just look for the STJOHNS wireless network and use 'inthecity' for the passcode.





Children's Ministries

By Alicia Karwal

VBS at St. John's

Thank you to everyone who volunteered in some way during Vacation Bible School at St. John's! More than 50 children joined us June 29 through July 2. The children (and adults) enjoyed a week full of laughter, fun, companionship and God's unending love! Led by four exuberant camp counselors from Lutheran Lakeside, the children participated daily in Bible study, music, drama, games and crafts. If the smiles and laughter were any indication, I think we can safely assume that this was a successful week!

Mark your calendars!

Rally Sunday on Sept. 13 and our new program year are quickly approaching! All children ages 3 through fifth grade and their families are invited to come to the Fireside Lounge behind the Sanctuary from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. to join in the fun! There will be a registration table along with instructions for the special Rally Sunday event. Come one, come all!

Then the first day of Sunday School is Sept. 20. All children ages 3 through fifth grade are invited to attend Sunday School each week from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. Children in first through fifth grades begin in the Chapel, while the younger classes go directly to their assigned classrooms. You will receive a welcome letter with more information coming in late August.

Orientation for Children's Volunteers

An orientation for all volunteers working with children and youth at St. John's will be held Wednesday, Sept. 2, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in Weertz Fellowship Hall. Dinner will be provided, and there will be short presentations regarding the specific programs at St. John's. Additionally, if you need child safety training, you will have an opportunity to receive it at this time. If you are considering working with children and youth in some capacity at St. John's, or if you plan to continue your call, you are highly encouraged to attend.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are vital to the success of our Children's Ministries! Volunteers are needed for Rally Sunday, Sept. 13, from 8:30 to 9:45 a.m. Anyone can volunteer! Good times will be had! If you would be willing to help with a station, contact Alicia Karwal (akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org).

Additionally, volunteers for Sunday School and Wednesday evening classes still are needed for the 2015-16 program year. Are you able to help out once or twice a month? Teacher guides are provided, which allows for easy planning at every age level. Please consider sharing your faith, time and gifts as a volunteer in Children's Ministries. It will undoubtedly be a rewarding experience and an opportunity to grow in your own faith! If you are interested in volunteering or have any questions, please contact Alicia Karwal (akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org).



Youth Ministries

By Noah Niermann

Calling All Sixth Graders!

St. John's is excited to begin a new Middle School ministry this fall! We invite all current sixth graders to join us for an hour of fellowship, games and Bible study from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. on Sunday mornings throughout the school year. We will meet in the Do Drop Inn (DDI) on the third floor; programming will be led by Director of Youth Ministry Noah Niermann with the help of adult mentors.

Sixth grade is an important time of transition in the life of our students, and this Middle School ministry is designed to help bridge the Sunday School years and the Confirmation program. In addition to the Sunday morning gatherings, you also can look forward to occasional retreats and special events planned specifically for our sixth graders. We look forward to seeing you in September!

Rise Up! - ELCA Youth Gathering

We hope you enjoy these pictures (*above*) from the 2015 ELCA National Youth Gathering in Detroit! We will have lots of stories to tell soon but, for the moment, we are all catching up on our sleep. Thank you for your prayers and support!

Sincerely, Elizabeth Reed, Daniel Lunde, Sara and Lauren Slinker, Alex and Sam Runkel, Nathan Reyes, Connor Johnson, Aidan Speirs, Ben Kooker, Deb Anderson and Noah Niermann

Celebrate a New Program Year at Picnic!

This year we are inviting all Middle- and High-School students and their families to join us at the All-Congregational Picnic at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 30, to celebrate the start of a new program year! Meet at Raccoon River Park and bring a side dish or dessert to share. We'll have special activities, games and tournaments organized for our youth. We hope to see you there!

Confirmation News

The new Confirmation year officially begins on Wednesday, Sept. 9! Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more information. In the meantime, if you'd like to learn more about our Confirmation program, please go to www.stjohnsdsm.org/youth

High School News

A tentative schedule of events for the new program year is now available on our website (stjohnsdsm.org/youth/). Please take a look!

Small Groups

by Darla Stiles

Mah Jongg: Mondays, Aug. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, 6 p.m., Smokey Row, 1910 Cottage Grove Ave., Des Moines.

Quilting: Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m., Room 308 at church.

Gardening: Wednesday, Aug. 5, 6:30 p.m., home of Kathy and Joel Olah, 1615 Ashworth Dr., West Des Moines.

Lunch Bunch II: Wednesday, Aug. 19, 12:30 p.m.

Recreational Reading: Wednesday, Aug. 19, 4:30 p.m., Smokey Row.

Lunch Bunch I: Thursday, Aug. 20, 11:30 a.m.

St. John's Social Club: Saturday, Aug. 22, 3 p.m., Lake Ahquabi picnic.

Photography: Sunday, Aug. 23, 11 a.m., Neumann Hall at church.

WIRED Book Discussion: Tuesday, Aug. 25, 6 p.m., home of Darla Stiles, 3812 Green Branch Dr., West Des Moines.

EAGLES: Wednesday, Aug. 26, 8 a.m., meet in church parking lot for day trip to Quad Cities.

Scrapbooking Learn and Brunch: Saturday, Aug. 29, 9:30 a.m., Room 8 at church.

150th Anniversary Picnic: Sunday, Aug. 30, 5:30 p.m., Raccoon River Park, 2500 Grand Ave., West Des Moines.

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

More Information

Quilting continues to meet Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. in Room 308 at church.

Mah Jongg will meet Mondays, Aug. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 at 6 p.m. at Smokey Row, 1910 Cottage Grove Ave., Des Moines.

Gardening will meet Wed, Aug. 5, at 6:30 p.m., for a tour of the gardens of Kathy & Joel Olah at 1615 Ashworth Dr., West Des Moines. The Olah's garden is over half-an-acre of mostly perennials and shrubs. In spring, they have around 3,000 bulbs blooming at various times. Several large trees bring lots of shade; the plants in those spots include pulmonaria, bergenia, brunnera, hosta, bleeding heart, hellebore and astilbe. The sunny spots are devoted to native plants like coneflower, phlox and black-eyed susan. Bees and butterflies are attracted to the allium and monarda. Make plans to join us to enjoy this garden. Park on the west side of 16th Street to the north of Ashworth.

Lunch Bunch II will meet Wednesday, Aug. 19, at 12:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining this group, contact Janet Figg (279-6326).

Recreational Reading will meet Wednesday, Aug. 19, at 4:30 p.m. at Smokey Row, 1910 Cottage Grove Ave., to select books to read and discuss this coming church programming year. Please arrive with suggestions.

Lunch Bunch I meets on Thursday, Aug. 20, 11:30 a.m. New members are most welcome! If anyone is interested in joining the group, please call Barb Hyler (401-5721).

EAGLES will meet on Wednesday, Aug. 26, at 8 a.m. in the church parking lot to carpool to the Quad Cities for the day. The group will visit the German-American Heritage Center in Davenport to see the exhibit of a jazz legend, "Zeitgeist: Bix Beiderbecke and the Spirit of His Times," and then will travel to Rock Island to see the Wall of Military Sidearms. Please RSVP to Don Brekke (771-4705 or dlbrekke@juno.com).

St. John's Social Club will enjoy a picnic at Lake Ahquabi on Saturday, Aug. 22. Meet at Lake Ahquabi at 3 p.m. (a map will be provided). Watch for more details. Contacts: Darla Stiles (243-7691 darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org) or Deb Donald (226-0827 or ddonald126@aol.com).



Members of the Social Club during their July outing, touring the State Capitol grounds.

Photography will meet Sunday, Aug. 23, in Neumann Hall after the 10 a.m. worship service. The theme is "travel." Bring a few photos to show.

Scrapbooking will meet Saturday, Aug. 29, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 8 at church for a Learn and Brunch gathering. A couple of people will show the group how to use some newer items. A brunch is planned. RSVP to Darla (darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org).

Continued on Page 9

Continued from Page 8

150th Anniversary All-Congregational Picnic will be held Sunday, Aug. 30, at 5:30 p.m. at Raccoon River Park, 2500 Grand Ave., West Des Moines. This will be a good old-fashioned Lutheran Potluck! The Christian Involvement Team will provide pulled-pork sandwiches, beverages and table service. Everyone else is encouraged to bring a side dish to share. Games are planned. You may wish to bring a lawn chair if you would like to watch the games and visit outside the picnic table area. (Access the park by driving west on Grand Avenue from West Des Moines because Grand Avenue from I-35 east toward the park is closed due to construction.)

WIRED Events

by Darla Stiles



What Does WIRED stands for?

Mark your calendars and plan to stop in to Neumann Hall for a WIRED (Women Interested in Renewal, Education, and Discovery) Open House on Sunday, Sept. 13, from 9 to 10 a.m. or about 11 a.m. (after the 10 o'clock service.) Find out what WIRED is all about and decide whether you would like to join in on some of our activities.

WIRED Book Discussion will meet on Tuesday, Aug. 25, at 6 p.m. at the house of Darla Stiles, 3812 Green Branch Dr., West Des Moines. The book to read and be prepared to discuss is *Cleaning Nabokov's House*, by Leslie Daniels. Bring an hors d'oeuvre to share. RSVP to Darla Stiles (darlastiles@mchsi.com).

Make Pies with WIRED Women's Group

WIRED is making pies! Experience pie-making the old-fashioned way with other WIRED women on Tuesday, Sept. 8, at Living History Farms. We will be using some of the tried and true techniques and recipes of long ago.

Our plan is to have those who attend one of these pie-making classes disperse the knowledge gained to the rest of the WIRED women on Sunday, Oct. 18, when we will make pies for the shelter. Both should be fun experiences!

There will be two sessions at "the farms" on Sept. 18: 1 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m. Choose one and then sign up by calling or e-mailing Carol Lunde (249-7272 or carollunde@q.com).

The Arts at St. John's

by Beth Ann Edwards

Arts Patron Party & Welcome to Michael Elsbernd and Family

Please join us on Sunday, August 23, for the annual Arts Patron Party as we welcome Dr. Michael Elsbernd, our new Director of Worship and Music, and his family to St. John's. The party, located at the home of Kent and Megan Hartwig, 4334 Woodland, Des Moines, Iowa, begins at 4 pm with a brief welcome and program scheduled for 5 pm. The St. John's String Scholars will perform and the 2015-16 Arts programming highlights will be announced. Hors d'oeuvres and beverages will be served. Children are most welcome, and children's activities are available. For more information, and to RSVP by Tuesday, August 18, please contact Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org; 515.490.9408 mobile).



Kisasa Day Camp for children entering grades 3 through 6

A few spots are available at Kisasa Day Camp, held August 6 and 7 from 8 am to 5:30 pm, and August 9 during the 10 am worship service. For more information, please download the information sheet and registration form online at <http://stjohnsdsm.org/finearts/>. Youth grades 7 through adult are invited to join us as volunteer helpers.

Kisasa Campers will actively lead worship at the 10 am worship service on Sunday, August 9. Campers will sing, ring handbells, present a dramatic scripture reading, and display visual art.

Artist of the Month

The After School Arts Program continues its exhibit in Weertz Hall through the month of August. The exhibits highlights the Program in its historical context, explaining how the program has grown from one location here at St. John's to five unique programs throughout the city, serving over 20 schools in the Des Moines school district.

As our 150th Anniversary Year comes to a close, the Weertz Gallery will once again exhibit artwork from local artists and St. John's collaborative exhibits. The Friends of the Arts will once again host an Art Exchange fund-raiser and auction. Please consider donating art from your home that no longer works with your décor. The Arts committee will display these works in April and proceeds from the silent auction will benefit the Arts programming at St. John's. We will accept works any time between now and the end of March. For more information, please contact Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org).

Midweek Music Series Begins October 7

The Series is set, and Asphalt & Stained Glass will start the season on Wednesday, October 7! The schedule is available online at <http://stjohnsdsm.org/finearts/>. Plan now to join us on Wednesdays at 12:05 for music in the Sanctuary, followed by a light lunch served in Weertz Hall. Concerts are free and open to the public, and lunches are \$6 per person.

An Introduction

By Michael J. Elsbernd

Michael Elsbernd of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, our new director of worship and music, organist and choir director, will begin working at St. John's sometime in August. He succeeds recently retired Larry Christensen, who served as director of worship and music for 40 years. Michael sent the following piece about his life and career:

"I found myself drawn to music at an early age. A native of Ossian, Iowa, I grew up surrounded by the liturgical patterns of the Roman Catholic tradition. As an acolyte and organist, I practiced myself into the faith of the church through song and the meaningful rituals of the community.

"The tools necessary for a vocation in church music were given (me) by the hand of God's providence – involving a beautiful series of connections between a local church organist, a piano destined for recycling, nurturing parents, a long line of mentors, a grandfather's vision, and the loving support of my wife, Nichole Colsch, and our two children, Ethan and Abby. Music is an important part of the Colsch/Elsbernd household, with Nichole's beautiful alto voice and the stirrings of Ethan's and Abby's violins (accompanied by our border-collie mix, Gracie, who sings along with anything in the key of D-Major!).

"For the past eight years, I served as director of music ministry and principal organist at First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. A passionate advocate for children and youth music education, I launched a Piano Laboratory Program, designed to reach those students who

would not otherwise have access to piano lessons. I have served terms as repertoire and standards chairperson for the South Dakota Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association and on the executive board of the South Dakota Chapter of the American Guild of Organists as dean and district convener.

"A graduate of Luther College (in Decorah), I hold a master of music degree in organ performance, with distinction, from Westminster Choir College (Princeton, New Jersey) and a doctor of musical arts degree from the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor). My principal organ teachers included William Kuhlman, Eugene Roan, James Kibbie and Marilyn Mason.

"I have served congregations in Iowa, New Jersey, Michigan, Minnesota and South Dakota as a career church musician."

save the date

Celebrating St. John's
150TH
ANNIVERSARY

Gala
Dinner

Saturday,
October 31,
2015

Community Choice Credit Union Convention
Center (Iowa Events Center) • 833 5th Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa

5:30 pm Reception | 6:30 pm Dinner
7:15 pm Gala Celebration

With Special Guest
Reverend Elizabeth A. Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Watch your mailbox and Eagle Call for RSVP
and ticketing information.



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LUTHERAN
CHURCH

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1865-2015

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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 scottl@stjohnsdsm.org.



EAGLE CALL DEADLINE

The next deadline for all Eagle Call content is **noon on Monday, August 17**. Please send articles in digital format to Scott LaBlanc, scottl@stjohnsdsm.org. If you are unable to send it by e-mail, drop it off at the church office.

Thank you!