



the Eagle Call

Volume 49, Number 7 | July 2017

Half Way There



Worship

Saturday

5:00 pm

Sunday

8:00 am

10:00 am

Radio Broadcast

Praise 940 AM

Sunday Mornings

8:00 am

Scott LaBlanc

Eagle Call Editor & Designer

Deb Blume

Eagle Call Copy Editor

Business Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

(Friday - 4:00 p.m.)

515-243-7691

stjohnsdsm.org

The Eagle Call is published monthly by St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA 600 6th Ave, Des Moines, Iowa 50309-1606.

As you may remember, the remodel officially kicked on April 17, which puts us about halfway through this massive undertaking. Over the last few months the only real surprise was an undocumented water line that ended up turning in to an eight-foot geyser in the kitchen. As the project moves forward, the remodel team has had to make decisions about replacing doors on the old boiler room just outside the former Wellness Center, adding a closet to Weertz, which color black to use around the door trim (there quite a few choices!) and what size toilet paper dispensers to buy. It's not very glamorous but members of the remodel committee have done a great job being mindful of the needs of the building and also fiscally responsible with the funds raised through the Bless This House Capital Campaign.

Work has begun to creep up to the Sanctuary level. The library has been torn down and framing started around what will become the men's restroom. Once the restrooms on the ground level are finished work will begin on the women's restroom on the Sanctuary level. Work in the kitchen is on track to be finished before Beloved Community resumes at the beginning of September. The family restroom in Room 7 has experienced a bit of a delay while Neumann Brothers waits for floor tile to arrive; however, there is enough room in the schedule that it will still be finished on time.

Once this remodel is complete, there will be a bit of a break through Christmas then in January of 2018 work will begin on renovating, repairing and cleaning all of our stained glass windows. Thank you for your continued support to the Bless This House Capital Campaign.

If you have any questions about the remodel or future projects please contact Scott LaBlanc at scott@stjohnsdsm.org or call 515-243-7691.

More pictures of the remodel can be found on page 3.

What's Inside

2 A Word from Our Pastors

3 In the City & Kitchen Evolution

4 Prepare for Worship &

Bless This House Update

5 The Arts at St. John's &
An Invitation

6 Rooted Reflections

8 Small Groups &

Children's Ministry

9 Companion Parish Update

10 Hospitality & Outreach &
Global Mission

11 LSI Updates

Pastors

Rachel Thorson Mithelman
Senior Pastor
pastorrachel@stjohnsdsm.org

Robert Speirs
Associate Pastor
pastorbob@stjohnsdsm.org

Gene Anderson
Visitation Pastor
pastorgene@stjohnsdsm.org

Staff

Andy Anderson
Security & Hospitality

Lisa DeGroot
Nursery Coordinator
lisadegroot5203@yahoo.com

Beth Ann Edwards
Director of Arts, Handbells,
& Youth Choirs
bethann@stjohnsdsm.org

Michael Elsbernd
Director of Worship & Music
michael@stjohnsdsm.org

Thom Evans
Custodian

Linda Frisbie
Lead Financial Assistant
lfrisbie@stjohnsdsm.org

Zennida Huff
Nursery

Alicia Karwal
Director of Children's Ministries
akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org

John Kelly
Security & Hospitality

Amanda Kuhlman
Nursery

Scott LaBlanc
Director of Parish Operations
scottl@stjohnsdsm.org

Kim Lamb
Front Office Manager
receptionist@stjohnsdsm.org

Les Moeller
Facilities Assistant

Noah Niermann
Director of Youth Ministry
noah@stjohnsdsm.org

Katie Tippins
Hospitality & Outreach
katiet@stjohnsdsm.org

Dale Schroeder
Security & Hospitality

Darla Stiles
Christian Involvement
darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org

Mark Welsh
Facilities Manager
mark@stjohnsdsm.org



A Word from Our Pastor

by Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

Dear Friends,

Please note on page 5 the invitation to attend the Ordination of our former seminary intern, Becky Goche, on Saturday morning, July 29, 11 a.m., here at St. John's. I know that Becky wants you all to attend because the generous hospitality, patience, guidance and good humor you have shared with her are helping her become a pastor.*

One of my favorite passages in children's literature is a paragraph from "The Velveteen Rabbit" by Margery Williams. The Rabbit, who is new to the population of toys in the nursery, does not understand how toys become real; so he asks the Skin Horse about it....

"What is real?" asked the Rabbit one day when they were lying side by side... before Nana came to tidy the room. "Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?" "Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become real."

"Does it hurt?" asked the Rabbit. "Sometimes," said the Skin Horse... "Does it happen all at once, like being wound up?" he asked, "or bit by bit?" "It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse. "You become. It takes a long time..."

Whatever our vocation, it is true – we become. For pastors, once we have accepted our first call and arrive in the parish, we realize our seminary education has given us a solid foundation in the Word and the ability to think theologically, but it is the people whom we promise to love and serve who will help us become a pastor. It is in sharing meals and sharing stories, in baptizing the babies and teaching the children, in ministering to the sick and burying the dead, in showing up in times of crisis, in studying, proclaiming the Word, in praying for and walking alongside each other that a pastor becomes a pastor. And, as far as I know, it goes on until the collar is taken off for good and the stoles are gifted to the next generation.

Over the years, you have helped many seminary interns and new graduates become faithful pastors of the church. No doubt some of them do the same thing I do as I drive to church early on Sunday morning: offer a prayer of thanks for you and for every other faith community that has helped me become. Now, as we look forward to Becky's ordination, I thank you for your role in her becoming, as well as the ways in which, over the last 12 years, you have done the same for Pastor Gemechisa Mosa and soon-to-be-pastor Megan Clausen.** Your loving and gracious witness is a gift to the church and to the world.

In his letter to the Romans, St. Paul writes: *But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him (Christ)? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent?* Thank you for the role you continue to play in supporting and helping new servants become those who are sent to proclaim Christ in word and deed.

*A potluck meal will follow the service. Bring something to share!

**More news soon about Megan's plans!

In the City (and World) for Good!

by Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop....
Blessed Mother Teresa

Mother Teresa was right. Sometimes it seems that the meal we serve, the donation we make, the prayer we pray for those in desperate situations “is just a drop in the ocean.” Yet, no one else can contribute that particular drop, and, indeed, the ocean is made up of innumerable “drops” like ours. So let us continue doing good, seeking justice, working for peace in confidence that God will bring what is needed in God’s time...

Thank you for your generous support of the June meals at Central Iowa Shelter & Services! The summer months seem to be the most difficult for us to secure adequate amounts of food and servers, but you stepped up to the plate in June and we are grateful! Please do so again in July when the 18th & 19th fall on a Tuesday & Wednesday. You are encouraged to invite a friend who has a heart for this ministry to join you in providing food and/or coming downtown to serve.

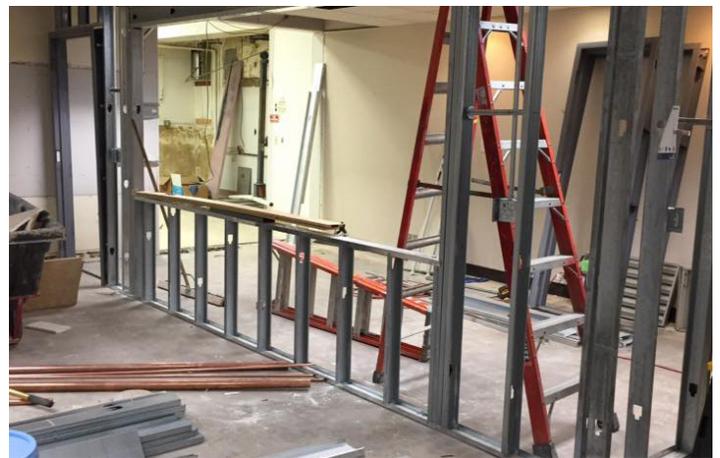
What do the countries of Angola, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Georgia, Honduras, Mali, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Peru, Serbia, Tanzania and Uganda have in common? Children in these countries were beneficiaries of the 191,720 LWR School Kits distributed in 2016. Find the article in this edition of the *Eagle Call* with the list of items needed for the kits and start shopping! In many parts of the world, having a school kit is the difference between a child being allowed to go to school or not.

The Donation of the Month at the DMARC Emergency Food Pantry is...FRESH VEGETABLES! As your garden starts to produce, please set some items aside to take to the Food Pantry. Also needed on a regular basis are peanut butter, tuna packed in water, whole grain pasta, and rice – regular or “minute.” And, of course, diapers, baby wipes and personal hygiene items are always needed, too.

Are you hosting a birthday party, anniversary gathering or other celebration this summer? Tell your guests that while a card would be nice, a donation of cash or food or volunteer hours for the DMARC Emergency Food Pantry system would be even better!

Remember to stock up on fairly-traded coffee, tea, nutrition bars, etc. from the baker’s rack in the narthex. Envelopes for your payment are available and may be put in the offering plate or dropped off at the front desk. Your purchases make a difference for low-income communities enabling them to build and improve schools, clinics and offer other community services.

With thanks for your “drop in the ocean.” It matters...



Prepare for Worship

by Michael Elsbernd

July 2 – Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 13

Readings (semi-continuous): Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 10:40-42.

In the semi-continuous reading from Genesis, we encounter the story known as the testing of Abraham. God recognized Abraham's obedient faith, and Abraham offered the sacrifice of a ram in the place of his son, Isaac. From Matthew's Gospel, we hear Jesus' words, "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me." (Matthew 10:40) Jesus also promises to reward those who support all who aid and support the ministry of his disciples.

Hymns: "As We Gather at Your Table" (522); "All Are Welcome" (641); "The Church of Christ, in Every Age" (729).

July 9 – Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 14

Readings (semi-continuous): Genesis 24:34-38; Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30.

Today we hear comforting words of Jesus from Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to me all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." In our semi-continuous reading from Genesis, we hear the story of the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah. Through this marriage, God fulfills the promise to Abraham and Sarah that they will be the ancestors of many nations.

Hymns: "Lord of All Hopefulness" (765); "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say" (611); "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" (742).

July 16 – Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 15

Readings (semi-continuous): Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 119:105-112; Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23.

Considered to be one of the most memorable parables, Jesus uses the images of the sower and the seed to proclaim the good news of God's coming kingdom. The same Word goes out, yet the effect on those who hear it is often different. Nevertheless, God brings forth a bountiful harvest from even the smallest of seeds. Precious and useful, seeds bring forth great abundance which sustains and nourishes the community. Through Holy Communion, we are given bread of life – sown from seeds – and are empowered to share the good news of God's abundant grace.

Hymns: "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty" (533); "The Word of God is Source and Seed" (506); "Sent Forth By God's Blessing" (547).

July 23 – Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 16

Readings (semi-continuous): Genesis 28:10-19a; Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24; Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43.

In the parable of the wheat and the weeds, recorded in Matthew's Gospel, we recognize that good and evil are always a part of our lives. With patience, we await the day of judgment when God – not humankind – will "separate the wheat from the weeds." At "the end of the age," God will come to remove all sin and those who spread evil throughout the world. In our semi-continuous reading, we hear of Jacob's encounter with God after Jacob cheated his brother, Esau, out of his birthright. Jacob makes a promise to God that he will give a tenth of everything to God if he is able to return to his father's house in safety.

Hymns: "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" (807); "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" (693); "On What Now Has Been Sown" (550).

July 30 – Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 17

Readings (semi-continuous): Genesis 29:15-28; Psalm 105:1-11, 45b; Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52.

As Jesus and the disciples continue to proclaim the coming of God's kingdom, we hear another collection of parables describing what the kingdom is like: A mustard seed, yeast, treasure hidden in a field, a merchant in search of fine pearls and a net thrown into the sea. The riches of God's grace surround us in great abundance and often in the ordinary and overlooked places. In one of the most comforting passages from scripture (Romans 8:12-25), we are assured that we are kept forever in the deep, abiding care of God. In Genesis, we come to the story of Laban and the marriage of Jacob to Rachel.

Hymns: "Blessed Assurance" (638); "Children of the Heavenly Father" (781); "Sent Forth By God's Blessing" (547).

Bless This House
FOR GOOD. FOR ALL.

Thank you for your continuing support of the Capital Campaign. If you have not returned your pledge card, would like to make a donation or receive more information about the Campaign please contact Linda Frisbie at linda@stjohnsdsm.org or call 515-243-7691

Campaign update as of June 21:

- Pledged to Date: \$1,588,330
- % of Goal 88.24%:
- Pledges Received: 230
- Households Pledging: 65.53%

The Arts at St. John's

By Beth Ann Edwards

Summer Arts Events

Sunday, Aug. 6, 11:15 a.m.

Pop-Up Organ Recital with Dr. Joby Bell

A pop-up organ recital by Dr. Joby Bell will be held Sunday, Aug. 6, at 11:15 a.m. Dr. Bell, organ professor at Appalachian State University and church organist at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Boone, N.C., performs throughout the United States and is featured on several recordings. His travels have brought him to Des Moines, and he has visited St. John's on more than one occasion. We are grateful for this opportunity to share his organ proficiency in a short concert following the 10 a.m. worship service. For more information about Dr. Bell, please visit jobybell.org.

Friday, Aug. 18, 7:30 p.m.

Zenith Chamber Music Festival

St. John's has been chosen to host a chamber-music concert as part of the Zenith Chamber Music Festival. The concert will be Friday, Aug. 18, at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The Zenith Chamber Music Festival, which highlights national and international guest artists and local artists, is held annually in Des Moines and is sponsored by Drake University. The festival takes place Aug. 15-19, and all concerts are free and

open to the public. For more information, please visit zenith.wordpress.drake.edu.

Sunday, Aug. 27, 4 to 6 p.m.

The Friends of the Arts Annual Patron Party

Join us at the Iowa State Bar Association headquarters for the St. John's Friends of the Arts Annual Patron Party on Sunday, Aug. 27, from 4 to 6 p.m. This facility, built in 1902 originally as the Des Moines Western Railway Freight House, is located at 625 E. Court Ave., Des Moines, and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The event provides an opportunity to celebrate our patrons, artists and the Arts at St. John's. Light refreshments will be served, and music will be provided by the St. John's String Scholars and friends. The 2017-18 St. John's arts calendar of events and exhibits will be announced at that time.

Artist of the Month - On Summer Hiatus

Art exhibits in Weertz Fellowship Hall will resume in September when the kitchen and bathroom remodeling projects are complete. A few spots remain on the calendar. If you or someone you know would like to exhibit, please contact Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org).

Youth Handbell Choir in Chicago

The Youth Handbell Choir, with 13 ringers and seven adults, travels to Chicago, Illinois, July 7-10. They are looking forward to staying at Irving Park Lutheran Church and ringing in worship, visiting with Erik Christensen at his urban store-front church, exploring Chicago and attending the Broadway musical "Hamilton." A portion of the monetary donations from the St. John's congregation will be given to Erik Christensen and Logan Square Lutheran Church for its urban ministries. Fundraiser forms, designed as "Hamiltons," are available in the Reception Area and the Fireside Lounge. All donations are welcome.

By the grace of God and
the call of the church

Rebecca Sue Goche

will be ordained
to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament
in Christ's one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church

on Saturday, the twenty-ninth day of July
in the year of our Lord
two thousand and seventeen
at eleven o'clock in the morning

at St. John's Lutheran Church
600 6th Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa

The Reverend Craig Satterlee, Ph.D.
Bishop of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, presiding.

Your prayers and presence are requested.

*All ordained, consecrated and commissioned
ministers are invited to process.
The color of the day is red.*

A potluck luncheon will follow the service.





Youth Ministry

Reflections on Rooted, Our Senior High Service-Learning Trip

By St. John's youth and chaperones

Thanks to tremendous love and support from the congregation, 10 youth and two adults represented St. John's in a partner-synod journey, "Rooted," June 11-17. Our group joined with 250 others from the Southeastern Iowa Synod to visit congregations in the Grand Canyon Synod of the ELCA. We traveled from Las Vegas to the Mexican border, learning about homelessness, human trafficking, refugees and immigration, while enjoying abundant hospitality from local Lutheran churches along the way.

To show our gratitude for your support of St. John's Youth Ministry, we wish to share the following trip reflections from each participant:

"This trip was a great experience. I learned about homelessness, human trafficking and immigration. Highlights were definitely meeting new people and getting to spend time with my friends." ~ Max Bauer

"My favorite moment of the trip was when we went to Nogales and prayed at the Mexican-American border. That day we had learned about how hard it was for Mexicans to cross, and about how building a bigger/better wall wouldn't solve the problem, and how it isn't even possible to do because of the dangerous terrain. As we were praying for those who had been deported and those who had died trying to cross, I saw a bird fly over the wall, and it reminded me that there is always hope." ~ Nora King

"Some people just ignore problems. Others do help and do their best. I was blown away that some people devote their lives to helping others. This really opened my eyes. It surprised me how much human trafficking occurred – how so many just ignore it." ~ Matthew Joy

"The highlight of my trip was when the homeless lady told us that another homeless man had been unconscious for a few days, and we got him an ambulance. Even though the lady had nothing to gain, she still stuck her neck out for a stranger and potentially saved his life." ~ Dylan Cowden

"Highlights: Getting to know my church buddies better. Seeing what life is like in Arizona. Seeing the beautiful mountains. Helping the homeless. Evening worship." ~ Will Fajen

"A particular memory that I'll keep forever was our prayer circle at the international border. We were all standing in the heat (115 degrees), praying and contemplating the stories of people who'd died or been injured and, just as I felt like the heat was too much, I felt a very cold breeze. It felt like God was watching over us and was proud of what we were doing." ~ Brita Ossian

"One of my highlights was working around the community and helping others out." ~ Neil Fajen

Continued on Page 7

Continued from Page 6

"I really enjoyed going out and getting knowledge and helping the people we helped. The homeless part of the trip, when we went out and helped people on the street, was uplifting. I say this because I thought they would respond in a negative way but instead were kind and very social once you got to know them. We saw a man on the street dehydrated. (He was unconscious.) That really shocked me. Overall, I learned a lot on this trip." ~ Saul Benavides

"One big highlight for me was seeing both sides of society. We saw the rich, lucky and pretty side of huge buildings in Vegas. But then we also saw the not-as-good side, homelessness and human trafficking." ~ Nathan Joy

"My favorite part of the trip was going down and visiting the border city of Nogales, Arizona. Just knowing that once I crossed over a wall I would be in another country was pretty cool. Also, knowing the struggles people go through to cross over the border was pretty amazing." ~ Aidan Speirs

Reflections from the two St. John's chaperones:

Brian Joy:

- "As with most things in life, you get out of things, what you put into them. Youth (from inside and outside our congregation) who were willing to leave their comfort zone, branch out, meet new people, and fully engage in the experience and the worship opportunities, tended to find more intense personal fulfillment from the experience.
- "It is good to know that there are organizations like the Nevada Homeless Alliance, Red Light Rebellion and Kino Border Initiative taking a lead role in their respective areas. Not only do they serve people in need; they help open the eyes of our youth (and adults) as to these issues to which we often don't give a second thought.
- "Many of our youth came away from the homeless volunteer event as changed people. Witnessing what one termed as the Holy Spirit at work, by intervening when someone needed emergency medical help, reminded them that we are all God's children.
- "Many of our teens (and adults) were moved to tears by the powerful story of a survivor of human trafficking, who managed to escape from an utterly hopeless situation, and who gained the confidence to spread the word, speaking out and speaking up on behalf of so many who are unable to escape ... and, if they do, are unwilling to speak up and educate others.
- "Fully understanding the group dynamics of teenagers requires a sociology degree. Youth directors are amazing people.
- "Reaching out and showing God's love to others starts at home with each one of us – all together as our local church. If we are unable to see those who are suffering in our midst, how can we hope to help those who are remote from us (geographically and otherwise)?"

Terri Mork Speirs:

"The issues we explored were hard, the chaperoning was harder, and hardest of all were the questions that confronted me regarding my parenting style. I gained a greater respect for professional youth ministry workers. The observations of our youth deeply impacted me, and I was moved by the generous hospitality of the Grand Canyon Synod."

Note: Additional photos and reflections are posted on St. John's Facebook photo album.



Small Groups

by Darla Stiles



Mah Jongg: Mondays, July 10, 17, 24 and 31, 6 p.m., Smokey Row. For questions, contact Darla Stiles (darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org).

Quilting: Tuesdays, July 11, 18 and 25, Room 308 at church.

Gardening: Wednesday, July 12, 6:30 p.m., home of Jack and Jennifer Hilmes.

St John's Social Club: Sunday, July 16, noon, Prairie Meadows, camel, zebra and ostrich races. Also, Thursday, July 6, 6:30 p.m., Terrace Hill, Jazz in July, and Thursday, July 20, 6:30 p.m., Hoyt Sherman, Jazz in July.

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

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

EAGLES: Watch for announcement of date, time and place to meet for breakfast or lunch.

Next Adventure: Watch for announcements.

Taking a break this summer: Recreational Reading, Scrapbooking, Photography and Yoga.

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

Mah Jongg will meet Mondays, July 10, 17, 24 and 31 at 6 p.m. at Smokey Row if the weather is nice. If you would like more information, contact Darla Stiles (darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org).

Quilting will meet Tuesdays, July 11, 18 and 25, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 308 at church. If you have questions, contact Nancy Budrevich (nancy812@q.com).

Gardening will meet Wednesday, July 12, at 6:30 p.m. to tour the gardens of Jack and Jennifer Hilmes.

St. John's Social Club will meet Sunday, July 16, at noon at Prairie Meadows to enjoy a buffet and watch the camel, zebra and ostrich races. Meet in the Triple Crown Buffet (just to the left of the main entrance) and watch the races starting at 1 p.m. If you are able to attend, RSVP to Darla Stiles (darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org). **JAZZ IN JULY:** Those who are available may also gather at 6:30 p.m. for Jazz in July events on Thursday, July 6, at Terrace Hill to hear Rose Colella and Thursday, July 20, at Hoyt Sherman to hear the Foxtrot Hotshots. Bring a lawn chair and beverage and snacks of your choice.

Lunch Bunch II will meet Wednesday, July 19, at 12:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining this group for lunch on the third Wednesday of each month, contact Barbara John (279-5089).

Lunch Bunch I will meet Thursday, July 20, at 11:30 a.m. If anyone is interested in joining this group, call Barb Hyler (401-5721).

EAGLES will meet for breakfast or lunch and to socialize, but the date time and place have not been determined. Watch for announcements.

Next Adventure Group has not determined its next event. Watch for announcements

WIRED will be gathering school supplies this summer to donate for the children at Children and Families Urban Movement (CFUM). Watch for more information on specific items needed.

Children's Ministries

By Alicia Karwal

Update on God's Global Barnyard

Due to additional generous contributions to our Sunday School service project, we were able to gift two more animals to the God's Global Barnyard program. As a reminder, the Sunday School classes donated money that they had collected throughout the program year, providing gifts that support the sustainable development projects of ELCA World Hunger. In May, their donations allowed us to purchase the following gifts: one goat, two pigs, two roosters, four sets of chicks and one honey bee hive! In June, we were able to also purchase a share of a cow and an additional rooster. Thank you to our St. John's Sunday School classes for helping families around the world!

VBS Registration Deadline is July 9!

Our Lutheran Lakeside VBS Day Camp will be held at St. John's Monday, July 31, through Thursday, Aug. 3, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for all children entering kindergarten through sixth grade. I hope to see everyone there for another fun week of VBS! It would be greatly appreciated if everyone would register as soon as possible! There will continue to be forms on the tables outside of the sanctuary in the upcoming weeks. You can also pay on the St. John's website. Forms may be turned in to Alicia Karwal or dropped off at the front desk in the reception area at church. Questions? Please contact Alicia (akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org).

Hosts Needed!

If you are interested in hosting a camp counselor (or two) from Lutheran Lakeside this summer during VBS week at St. John's, please contact Alicia Karwal (akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org). We will likely need to host four or five counselors. Also, if you would be willing to volunteer as a helper during our VBS Day Camp on one or more of the days, contact me. It is great fun! Thank you for considering these opportunities.

Companion Parish

By Carol Fisher

News from Mramba



We received a call from Ched, our Mramba project manager (*pictured right*), early (on a recent) Friday morning. We had not heard from him for a while and thought something was amiss. Well, as it turned out, we were right. Ched has been diagnosed with malaria and has been very ill. Malaria is a disease that is never cured and never goes away; it only varies in intensity. I'm

fairly sure he is on very strong medication and needs much rest. During our call that Friday morning, he sounded like the Ched we know, and he is feeling much better.

As you may recall, the Youth Group of St. John's decided after the 2015 Youth Auction that they would like to donate a percentage of their funds to a Mramba project. They decided it would be a worthy project to donate money toward the building of new toilets for Giriama Primary School, which had only two toilets for 265 students, and those two were sliding down the mountainside. The septic tank is in and several toilets have been completed. (Others at St. John's who support our Companion Parish mission contributed as well.) Ched explained, however, that there was a problem: the students wanted to use the new toilets, but the headmaster would not allow usage until Pastor Rachel could arrive and bless the new toilets. I assured him that I was just certain it would be okay with Pastor Rachel for the kids to use the toilets. Problem solved; she will bless them on the next visit!

The sewing project has finally started. The men assembled the sewing machines and officially handed them over to the women in the sewing group. The Mramba Parish house will be home to the sewing project. A local tailor has been hired to train the women to sew school uniforms. The women are happily stitching away, learning a new skill and earning money. It is planned that on our next trip to Mramba the St. John's women will sew with the Mramba women!

The kindergarten building is progressing, the villagers have made all the bricks and the walls are up. Only the roof and floor need to be completed. This project is funded by St. John's members Dennis and Kim Weis in memory of their son, Lucas.

There will be much to discuss on our next trip to Tanzania in 2018. An exact date has not been set.

WE'RE IN YOUR neighborhood!

LSI'S GLOBAL GREENS FARMERS' MARKET
 SATURDAYS 9AM - 1PM
 MAY 20TH THROUGH OCTOBER 28TH
 3200 UNIVERSITY AVENUE
 (ACROSS FROM DRAKE UNIVERSITY)

LSI
 LUTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA

DMARC
 FOOD PANTRY NETWORK

DONATION of the MONTH

FRESH VEGETABLES
 potatoes, onions, peppers, squash, tomatoes, greens, carrots, etc.

JULY 2017

Hospitality & Outreach

By Katie Tippins

Why Do We Suffer?

If you really want to love Jesus, first learn to suffer, because suffering teaches you to love. – St. Gemma Galgani

As some of you may know, our St. John's family lost five members within the past two weeks. A couple of these deaths were expected (but that doesn't make them easier); others were a surprise. In some circumstances, the individual's passing put an end to their personal suffering. But, in all cases, the pain continued with those left to mourn.

The definition of "suffer" is to be in the state of undergoing pain, distress or hardship. A simpler definition is "when we are not in control."

We are all familiar with different manifestations of pain: physical, emotional, acute and chronic. You hear people ask why God allows or makes people suffer. The cynics comment every time there is a disaster – horrific violence, weather-related calamities, events we simply can't comprehend. There is no way our God of love, forgiveness and redemption causes tragedies, but I do believe we are given grace and strength to get through them and assist others in doing so.

Why do bad things happen?

I recently read a quote from Helen Keller: "Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired and success achieved." I believe the lady knows of what she speaks.

Scripture also gives us insight. In 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, Paul writes, ". . . but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.' I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me. Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong."

Am I a fan of suffering? Of course not! Most of the time, I do my utmost to avoid it as I suspect we all do. I have, however, come to grudgingly accept that I learn more and grow more through adversity. The smooth path doesn't teach us much. While I appreciate a good (justifiable) defense as much as the next person, let's face it, by not acknowledging that our actions have consequences, we are deprived of learning from our errors. As the saying goes, those who do not learn from history are destined to repeat it.

Think about the hard lessons we learned growing up. Think of raising your own children. We are abdicating our responsibility if we don't guide and educate as to acceptable and non-acceptable behavior. As we are God's children, why should our spiritual and moral education be any different or easier?

I recently read an article on St. Francis of Assisi. Francis was raised as a rowdy child of wealth but, at the age of 25, he suffered a severe illness that led him to a spiritual crisis.

His conversion was not instantaneous. Over time, however, he began to see other people outside of his paradigm of privilege and went on to found the Franciscan Order. Francis discerned that part of his vital message was that people let go of the fear of suffering. The quest for prestige, possessions and power needed to be abandoned. What he called "the small self" was to become essential – this was the core of who he was in God and, therefore, who he really was. With that acceptance, Francis said his house was built on "bedrock" (Matthew 7:24).

One of the fruits of this discipline is our ability to heal – internally for ourselves and externally in aiding others. Francis also warned that our false self does not give up without a fight. So again, if suffering is whenever we are not in control, then our suffering is necessary to teach us how to live beyond the illusion of control and give that control back to God.

At that point, we become usable instruments for God because that is the only source of power. "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

We will never be abandoned in our suffering. We will learn and grow and be healed by our loving Creator and Physician. Always cling to God's mercy.

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



Global Mission

By Phyllis Olson

School Kits for Lutheran World Relief

During July and August the St John's Global Mission Ministry Team will be collecting school supplies to create school kits to send to Lutheran World Relief (LWR). Children around the world are given the opportunity to get an education when they have the supplies needed to go to school. You may contribute all or part of the kit supplies. Each kit is contained in a 14" x 17" drawstring backpack-style cloth

Continued on Page 11

Continued from Page 10

bag with string straps. If you would like to make these bags, directions are available on the LWR website, or you can get the pattern from Phyllis Olson (paolson@mchsi.com).

The following items are needed for each school kit:

- FOUR 70-sheet notebooks of wide- or college-ruled paper, approximately 8" x 10 ½" (no loose leaf paper)
- ONE 30-centimeter ruler or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other
- ONE pencil sharpener
- ONE pair of blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)
- FIVE unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers (secure together with a rubber band)
- FIVE black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink) (secure together with a rubber band)
- ONE 16- or 24-box of crayons
- ONE 2½" eraser
- ONE sturdy drawstring backpack-style cloth bag, approximately 14" x 17" with shoulder straps (no standard backpacks)

Please place items in the LWR collection boxes in the Narthex or Reception Area at church. Thank you for your contributions. St John's continues to be "In the WORLD for Good."

Quilts Bees Set

Thanks to everyone for returning quilt tops for Lutheran World Relief! Quilting Bees are scheduled for the Saturdays of July 22, Aug. 26 and Sept. 30 from 9 a.m. to noon. We will tie the quilts in Neumann Hall while Weertz Fellowship Hall is being remodeled. No experience is necessary. We have a little coffee, something good to eat and a lot of conversation while working. Please join us.

Update from LSI

by the Staff at Lutheran Services in Iowa

God's work. Our hands.

As a social ministry organization of the ELCA, Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) is so thankful for your partnership in ministry! Thanks to you, we're able to provide education for young parents and empowerment to some of Iowa's most vulnerable children and families. This month, we would like to give special thanks for those of you who have made LSI a focus of a "God's work. Our hands." project.

This project is part of the anniversary celebration of the ELCA, and it's a way to reach out to your communities and build a stronger Iowa. This year September 10th is the date when congregations are encouraged to participate in a project for "God's work. Our hands." This is a perfect opportunity to do good deeds or raise money as a church body for a non-profit like LSI.

We thank you for your witness of God's love and your service! If you are interested in supporting those served by LSI and would like to know more about current needs, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at deborah.whitford@LSIowa.org.

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 www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Coping through creativity

Therapy can be a great way for kids, adults, and families to overcome past trauma. But for some, it takes a little extra innovation and creativity to find a therapeutic technique that can help them thrive.

Sherry, an LSI therapist, struggled to find a technique that worked for several children she saw each week. They didn't want to open up to her. They said "no" to participating in any activities or conversations. That's when she turned to her "workbooks," which focus on a child's love of drawing and coloring.

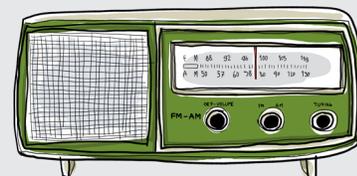
"It's really about connecting with the kids where they're at," Sherry says. "They get to express their feelings through something that might be more comfortable than talking about them."

For instance, Sherry asked one child to draw what the word "love," meant to her. The child drew a picture of a child and parent hugging and through that, Sherry learned the child wanted love and support from her parent at home.

Sherry says the technique has been a breakthrough for several of the kids, and they're becoming more and more comfortable talking in each session.

"This book is something that's theirs," Sherry says. "They can look back through their images and see the progress they've made and how far they've come."

St. John's weekly radio broadcast
is on Praise 940 AM at
8:00 am every Sunday morning



St. John's Lutheran Church
600 Sixth Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-1606
515-243-7691

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Des Moines, Iowa
Permit No. 2401

Return Service Requested

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 Tippins at katiet@stjohnsdsm.org.



EAGLE CALL DEADLINE

The next deadline for all Eagle Call content is **noon on July 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!