



St. John's Lutheran Church

The EAGLE CALL

Volume 45, Number 10
October, 2013

Worship

Saturday

5:00 pm

Sunday

8:00 am

10:00 am

Radio Broadcast

KRNT 1350 AM

Sunday Mornings

8:30 am

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God writes the Gospel, not in the Bible alone, but also on trees, and in the flowers and clouds and stars. Martin Luther



St. John's 7th annual sojourn to Jester Park Lodge for worship and fellowship is Sunday, Oct. 6!

The schedule for the day at Jester:

9:30 a.m. Sunday School at the Jester Park Lodge

10:30 a.m. Worship in Jester Park Lodge with orchestra and choirs

11:45 a.m. One Great Lutheran Potluck! (Bring a dish or two of your potluck favorites)

This event is a highlight of the year for hundreds of St. John's members and friends. We hope to fill the beautiful Jester Park Lodge once again with song, Word, prayer and fellowship!

Please note: The 5 p.m. Saturday (10/5) and 8 a.m. Sunday (10/6) worship services will be held at St. John's as usual.

WHAT'S INSIDE

A Word from Our Pastors	2
LWR Quilts & Companion Parish...	3
Prepare for Worship &	
The Arts at St. John's	4
Small Groups.....	6

In the City (and World) for Good....	7
Youth Ministry	8
Artist of the Month, Children's	
Ministry & Farewell Judi.....	9

News from the Garden &	
Hospitality and Outreach	10
Women of the ELCA &	
DDI Renovations	11

St. John's Lutheran Church
In the City for Good!
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Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday
 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.,
 4:00 p.m. Friday

Next Eagle Call Deadline
October 21 at noon



A Word from Our Pastors

Pastor Bob Speirs

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The summer is over, Labor Day is past, and I hope you're as excited and grateful as I am to be into our new program year. We have gotten off to a great start. On Aug. 28, we had our annual kick-off event for the Confirmation and high school program. Despite the hot weather, many of our 7th-12th graders and their families came to my home for an evening of fun, good food and conversation, a chance to reacquaint with old friends and an opportunity to meet the new kids and families who are beginning Confirmation. Joel Lunde and Hospitality and Outreach Coordinator Katie Tippins did a great job putting together the informational packets that outline our hopes and expectations for students and their families and what they can expect from our Confirmation staff (pastors, youth leaders, mentors).

I'm excited and grateful that we have hired a new, full-time youth director, Noah Niermann, who joined our staff Sept. 16 and began to immerse himself immediately into our youth program and the full life of this congregation. (For background on Noah, see his biography elsewhere in this edition of the *Eagle Call*). Noah will focus his time on many of the programs and activities piloted by Megan during her ministry with us, including middle school activities, Confirmation, high school youth programming and mission trips. Noah brings to this position his own unique experience and will gradually implement his ideas as we grow together in ministry with our youth, families and faith community.

I'm excited and grateful because we have gotten off to a fine start with our Wednesday evening Beloved Community meals and worship time. This time we have together to enjoy a wonderful meal, engage in conversation and have a few moments to relax (unless, of course, you're working on the cooking team that evening) seems to set the tone for the rest of the evening activities, i.e. choir practices, bible study, Confirmation, bell choir and Journeys in Faith, our high school program, etc. Thanks to all our volunteers and staff for your efforts in making this a very enjoyable evening each week.

I'm excited and grateful because of the excellent mentors who have agreed to work with our Confirmation and youth again this year. In particular, thanks to Donovan Hill, who has graciously stepped forward in Megan's absence, to lead and teach our 7th and 8th grade Confirmation class until Noah has a chance to become familiar with our youth and curriculum. Thanks also to Rod Snavelly, Joel Lunde, Micholyn Fajen, Shana and Matt Patrick, and Brian Joy for sharing their time and expertise with our youth.

I'm excited and grateful because on Sunday, Oct. 27, at our 10 a.m. worship, we will confirm six of our 10th grade students. These students are Cassidy and Kennedy Berkenpas, Alex Runkel, Daniel Lunde and Sara and Lauren Slinker. All of these youth have come up through our Sunday school program and have been very involved in the life of our church as crucifers and Communion assistants during worship. It has been a great joy for me to get to know them, and I look forward, with hope and confidence, to their continuing presence and work with our ministry here at St. John's.

Finally, I'm excited and grateful because as of Oct. 1, I begin my seventh year as St. John's Associate Pastor. My family and I thank all of our friends here at St. John's for the wonderful opportunity you have given us to serve this faith community. Thank you for the prayers, support and love that you give us now and into the future. We have had a wonderful experience and are blessed and honored to be part of this amazing congregation. I look forward to, with great hope and enthusiasm, our continuing ministry in the years ahead.

Blessings and Peace,
 Pastor Bob

LWR Quilting Project



We Met our Goal – and More!

Last spring the Global Mission Ministry Team set a goal to make 50 quilts for Lutheran World Relief (LWR). Mary Liechty, Melody Pontious and Nancy Budrevich cut quilt blocks out of donated material and placed the blocks in 50 packages, enough for one quilt top each. People were asked to take a package home, sew the top together, and return it at a later time. We had an overwhelming response to our call for help. Then we held four quilting bees this summer to sandwich and tie the quilts. Obviously, the idea caught on because we ended up with 72 quilts. On Oct. 13 all the quilts will be displayed in the Sanctuary for a special blessing.

Many people around the world will feel really special when they receive a nice warm quilt from LWR. Below are the names of the people who helped sew quilt tops or tied the quilts or both. Thank you everyone.

Marilyn Staples, Betty Wiedemeier, Candy Clark, Blanca Hanson, Marty Ahnen, Jean Williams, Linda Rieck, KarenVanHoever, Frieda Griffin, Julie Lowe, Virginia Fedson, Betsy Busick, Casey Smith, Joyce Burch, Jill Geadelmann, Janet Figg, Melissa Schrof, Jeanne Dreves, Judy Latessa, Mary Ann Thorsheim, Marsha Hansen, Everrette Stewart, Ellen Fisher, Barb John, Beth O'Connor, Bruce Remmey, Pam Hanna, Sarah Thorn, Melody Pontious, Nancy Budrevich, Mary Liechty, Barb Hyler, Bonnie Strom, Ann Strom, Brenda Brandt, Carol Bogan, Carol MacDonald, Delaine Marker, Desney Sanderman, Dorene Hickey, Jan Finke, Julie Juffer, Lisa Samuelson, Margaret Townsend, Marge Sexton-Randels, Mary Ann Bender, Pastor Bob Spiers, Phyllis Olson, Roma Youngquist, Wanda Havard, Kelly Espeland and her son Cole Espeland.

Thank You One & All!

Thanks to all of you St. John's members, the Companion Parish Ministry Team has had another successful fundraising event for the Most Vulnerable Children's Club in Tanzania. The funds you have donated have accomplished many things for the 50 children in this club for at-risk children, including:

- All have new T-shirts for Saturday club meetings.
- All have new government school uniforms and shoes so they can attend primary school or secondary school.
- Three club members passed their standard tests and will move to secondary school in January 2014.
- Five more students will complete the standard tests this month, and we expect that they too will move to secondary level in January 2014.
- Children's Club members are contributing food from their garden to the primary school hot-lunch program. To expand their knowledge of gardening, we have given them vegetable seeds from the World Vegetable Centre in Arusha, TZ, to experiment with growing different vegetables.
- The chicken-cooping project is growing, and so are the chickens. We have sent additional funds to purchase more chickens. This will provide another source of protein to the children and eventually their families.
- Our three teachers have spent a week at Compassion International in Same, TZ, learning additional skills to enhance the programs they currently have in place.

We continue to monitor the progress of the club and are working with our colleagues in Tanzania to ensure the money is spent wisely and is directed to projects for the Children's Club or Mramba Village.

Additionally, we have helped the three primary schools: Vuje, Mgambo and Giriana. We have contributed funds for roofs at Vuje school, floor repair and latrines at Mgambo, and two additional classrooms and a new roof for Giriana.

Your generosity has made many very important improvements to the lives of the Mramba villagers. You are making a difference on the other side of God's world!

Prepare for Worship

Sunday, Oct. 6 Seventh Annual Jester Park Service 10:30 a.m. at Jester Park Lodge

We spent four weeks this past summer exploring various themes of God's good creation, but this first weekend in October we once again make our annual pilgrimage into nature at Jester Park.

Departing from the lectionary, the readings will be 1 Kings 19:1-18, Psalm 46 and Luke 5:12-16. The hymns will be ELW 556, "Morning Has Broken," printed in bulletin, "All You Works of God," ELW 737, "He Comes to Us as One Unknown" and ELW 879, "For the Beauty of the Earth." Joyful Noise and Kisasa will sing "Shall We Gather By the River" as an invitation to gather. The Adult Handbells will ring "Peal con brio," by Karen Thompson. The assembly will sing "Be Still and Know," by Anne McNair, and during communion Amy Walman Madden and Chris Frantsvog will sing "Hallelujahs," by Chris Rice. Our Chamber Orchestra will accompany the assembly's singing. See the cover page of this Eagle Call for more details of the whole event.

Sunday, Oct. 13 Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 28

It's a miracle! Multiple miracles! The waters of holy baptism have healed us. The body and blood of Jesus in holy communion have made us clean. We have died with Christ and been raised with him. For all this we have returned to offer thanks, and from this place we are sent on our way rejoicing to share the good news.

The readings are 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c, Psalm 111, 2 Timothy 2:8-15 and Luke 17:11-19. The hymns will be ELW 858, "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," ELW 845, "Voices Raised to You," ELW 864, "Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven." Offering music will be by Asphalt & Stained Glass, and music during communion will be Cathedral Choir singing "It Is Well with My Soul," arranged by Yu-Shan Tsai.

Sunday, Oct. 20 Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 29

Pray always. Do not lose heart. This is the encouragement of the Christ of the gospel today. Persistence in our every encounter with the divine will be blessed. Wrestle with the word. Remember your baptism again and again. Come regularly to Christ's table. Persistence in our every encounter with the divine will be blessed.

Our readings are Genesis 32:22-31, Psalm 121, 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5 and Luke 18:1-8. The hymns will be ELW 698, "How Long, O God," ELW 706, "The People Walk," ELW 624, "Jesus, Still Lead On." For offering at 10 a.m., Cathedral Choir will sing

"Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross," arranged by Thomas Kees-ecker. Kisasa Choristers will sing during communion.

Sunday, Oct. 27 Reformation Sunday

On this day we celebrate the heart of our faith: the gospel of Christ – the good news – that makes us free! Though we give thanks for the events of the 16th-century Reformation that brought renewal to the church of that time, we pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to unite the church today in its proclamation and witness to the world. In the waters of baptism, we are made one body; we pray for the day that all Christians also will be one at the Lord's table.

The readings for Reformation are always the same: Jeremiah 31:31-34, Psalm 46, Romans 3:19-28 and John 8:31-36. The hymns will be ELW 652, "Built on a Rock," ELW 665, "Rise, Shine, You People!" and ELW 654, "The Church's One Foundation." For offering at 10 a.m., Cathedral Choir will sing "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" in a setting by Paul Weber that uses the original rhythmic tune. For communion Cathedral Choir will be joined by our Chamber Orchestra in "God is Our Refuge," by Johan H. Roman.

The Arts at St. Johns

St. John's Handbells and Choirs

Fundraiser Update

Thank you to all who donated to the handbell refurbishing fundraiser last year. In about two months we reached our goal of \$10,000. New cases (with wheels) were purchased to replace the 40-year-old cases, and some of our bells now have cases for the very first time (the old cases have been repurposed within the music department). The bells were taken to Minneapolis in May, and all five octaves were refurbished. All parts, except the bronze castings, were replaced, so all the bells are now once again under warranty. The C3 bell, our largest, had an existing crack and needs to be replaced. Through the generosity of Two Rivers Chapter #31170 of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, we received a grant of \$1,100 to replace our C3 casting.

Handbell Event Nov. 15-16

To celebrate our newly revived handbell program and our newly refurbished handbells, St. John's Arts Visioning Team is sponsoring a handbell event for Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15-16. Friday evening's program will feature a director's roundtable



Continued from Page 4

and clinic for church handbell musicians. On Saturday, handbell choirs from the Des Moines area are invited to work with Ed Rollins from Columbia, MO, to get an expert's perspective on handbells in worship. The 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 16, worship service will feature a performance by handbell choirs that have participated in the clinic. An extended prelude from 4:30 to 5 p.m. will feature handbell music.



Handbell Choirs

Our three handbell choirs continue to blossom. Kisasa Handbells (Grades 3-6), Youth Handbells (Grades 6-12) and the Adult Bell Choir have begun rehearsing for the program year. Rehearsals take place on Wednesday evenings, and new members are always welcome. If you are interested in learning more about handbell ringing, contact Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org).

Midweek Music Series

Plan to attend the Midweek Music Series concerts each Wednesday, beginning at 12:05 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Please join us for a mix of classical, folk and blues, Broadway, and more! This 25-minute concert is free and open to the public. After the concert, audience members are invited to head downstairs to Weertz Hall to meet with friends, old and new, over a light lunch, priced at \$6. Check out our October concert schedule:

- Oct. 2 - Mary McAdams
- Oct. 9 - Lyric Winds
- Oct. 16 - Ray Songayllo
- Oct. 23 - Scott Davis Brass Quartet
- Oct. 30 - Sarah Plum and Drake string studio

Our Wednesday lunch teams are looking for a few assistants. If you are willing to provide food, help serve and/or clean up, we can work you into the rotating schedule. For more information, contact Beth Ann Edwards at bethann@stjohnsdsm.org.

2013-14 Performing Arts Series

The Talented David Cherwein to Present Hymn Festival Here

The Arts Visioning Team has added a special event to our 2013-14 season: David Cherwein, noted organist and improviser, composer and artistic director, and conductor of the National Lutheran Choir, will be here Saturday and Sunday, March 29-30, 2014, to work with our Cathedral Choir and present a concert and hymn-sing Sunday afternoon. David dedicated our Schlicker organ in 1998 – when it was new – by performing a hymn festival for which we commissioned a piece to accompany text written by his wife, Susan Palo Cherwien. David is in the very top tier of contemporary Lutheran musicians: He is a heck-of-a nice guy, who is funny and fun to be around. St. John's is quite honored to host David. Please mark your calendars for this event!

Here is the entire 2013-14 season:

Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15-16

Handbell event with clinician Ed Rollins

Saturday, Feb. 22, 2014

Augustana Choir from Rock Island, IL

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Shrove Tuesday event, featuring Ballyhoo Foxtrot Orchestra with John Benoit

Saturday and Sunday, March 29-30, 2014

Choral event and hymn festival
David Cherwien, clinician



A shot of the performers of Bach's Magnificat, one of the high points from the 2012 - 2013 Performing Arts Series

Small Groups

Questions? Contact Darla Stiles, Small Groups Coordinator
243.7691 or darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org

CALENDAR

Quilting: Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. in Room 308.

Restaurant Visitation/Christian Involvement: 6 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 1, Nick's Bar & Grill, 9769 University Ave. (corner of 100th St.), Clive.

Saturday AM Bible Study: 8:30 a.m., Saturdays, Oct. 5, 12, 19 and 26, location to be determined. Contact: Ellen Fisher, 274-5236 or ellenfisher123@gmail.com.

Zumba: 5 p.m., Mondays, Oct. 7, 14, 21 and 28, third-floor Multi-Purpose Room (MPR).

Mah Jongg: 6 p.m., Mondays, Oct. 7 and 14, Smokey Row Coffee, 1910 Cottage Grove Ave., Des Moines.

Hardanger: 9 a.m., Wednesdays, Oct. 9 and 23, Neumann Hall at church. Facilitator: Arlene Field, 964-3363.

EAGLES: Noon, Friday, Oct. 11, progressive potluck lunch beginning in Weertz Hall at church and then proceeding to other locations downstairs.

WIRED Fall Retreat: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 12, Park Fleur Condominiums, 3131 Fleur Dr., Des Moines.

Lunch Bunch II: 12:30 a.m., Wednesday, Oct. 16.

Lunch Bunch I: 11:30 a.m., Thursday, Oct. 17.

Photography: 11 a.m., Sunday, Oct. 20, Neumann Hall at church. Bring a couple of photos to share of "Iowa Waterways," the theme for October.

WIRED Luncheon and Program: 11:15 a.m., Sunday, Oct. 20, Weertz Hall at church. "In the City for Soup"—tips on soup-making and a pottery project.

St. John's Social Club: No meeting in October (plan to meet in November).

Recreational Reading: 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 23, Rose Holm Room at church.

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 at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesdays in Room 308 at church. If interested, contact Dorothy Parry at 255-6049.

Restaurant Visitation/Christian Involvement will meet at 6 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 1, at Nick's Bar & Grill at 9769 University Ave. (on the corner with 100th St.).

Saturday AM Bible Study will meet at 8:30 a.m., Saturdays, Oct. 5, 12, 19 and 26. Location decided later. For more information, contact Ellen Fisher at 274-5236 or ellenfisher123@gmail.com.

Zumba will meet at 5 p.m. on Mondays, Oct. 7, 14, 21 and 28 in the Multi-Purpose Room on the third floor at church. Kelli, a certified Zumba teacher, is looking forward to continuing the class at St. John's. It is open to all at no charge. Join us for any or all classes.

Mah Jongg will play at 6 p.m. on Mondays, Oct. 7 and 14, at Smokey Row Coffee, 1910 Cottage Ave., Des Moines. The group will decide other dates, places and times at that meeting.

A new beginner Mah Jongg class may be set up this fall if there is enough interest. If you are interested in learning, contact Darla Stiles at church at darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org or 243-7691. The class would start mid-October.

Hardanger will meet at 9 a.m. on Wednesdays, Oct. 9 and 23, in Neumann Hall at church. The Hardanger group meets every second and fourth Wednesday of the month. Facilitator Arlene Field is willing to teach anyone who is interested in learning. If you have questions, she can be contacted at 964-3363.

The EAGLES will meet at noon on Friday, Oct. 11, in Weertz Hall at church for a progressive potluck luncheon. The group will enjoy salad, soup and dessert at different locations downstairs. Please bring a salad or a dessert. Ginny Pauling and Carol Dittmer will make soup for the main course, and beverages will be provided as well. To make your reservation, call Ginny or Carol by Monday, Oct. 7. Contact Ginny Pauling (285-4709 or rg.paul@att.net) or Carol Dittmer (287-7860 or dittmercl@msn.com).

Lunch Bunch II will meet on Wednesday, Oct. 16, at 12:30 a.m. If you are interested in joining this group, contact Janet Figg at 279-6326.

Lunch Bunch I will meet Thursday, Oct. 17, at 11:30 a.m. New members are most welcome. Anyone who would like to join the group should reserve a space by calling Barb Hyler at 401-5721.

Recreational Reading will meet Wednesday, Oct. 23, at 4:30 p.m. in the Rose Holm Room at church. The book to read for October is *In One Person*, by John Irving. Facilitator Carol MacDonald (macpac00@mchsi.com).

Continued on Page 7

Continued from Page 6

St. John's Social Club will not meet in October. An activity will be planned for November.

Photography will meet Sunday, Oct. 20, at 11 a.m. in Neumann Hall at church to share a couple of photos with the theme, "Iowa waterways." The group also will submit photos for the October Artist of the Month display in Weertz Fellowship Hall at church.



A **WIRED Fall Retreat** on the Enneagram is planned for Saturday, Oct. 12 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Park Fleur Condominium, 3131 Fleur Drive in Des Moines. We all approach life wearing a particular lens. The Enneagram describes nine such lenses and how they affect the way we see ourselves, the way we look at and judge others, and the way we approach God. Spend a day with your WIRED friends to discover more about yourself, particularly how your lens concerns your relationships. Certified Enneagram instructor Mary Nilsen, who is also a spiritual director, will lead the retreat. The cost will be \$30, which includes the retreat, lunch and a snack. You can sign up in the lounge or by contacting Darla Stiles (darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org or 243-7691).

WIRED: In the City for Soup will be Sunday, Oct. 20, at 11:15 a.m. in Weertz Fellowship Hall at church. A chef will give tips on soup-making, and artist Deb Anderson will lead a pottery project. Sign up in the Fireside Lounge by Sunday, Oct. 13. The cost for the event will be announced soon.



In the City (and World) for Good!

May I live with the kind of presence that enables others to feel at home...
(Macrina Wiederkehr)

There are many, many ways that we at St. John's attempt to be in this city – and this world – to make the Good News of God's love known. Below are some opportunities for ministry that allow us to help others know God's love and feel "at home."

At the Oct. 12 & 13 services we will dedicate the quilts and kits assembled over the summer for the ministry of Lutheran World Relief (LWR). Once blessed, these items go to a warehouse in Minneapolis from which they are shipped to people in need around the world! *LWR recently announced that \$4.3 million worth of quilts and kits have been shared with refugees from the war in Syria.* The LWR website, www.lwr.org, has instructions for how to assemble all sorts of quilts and kits. Assembling them is a great family project to work on throughout the year!

The Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) is moving both its office and food warehouse to downtown this fall – into the former Central Iowa Shelter & Services facility (once remodeling is completed)! Thank you for your ongoing gifts of food and garden produce. And please remember that financial gifts to the food pantry are always welcome. The DMARC dollar has about six times the purchasing power as the dollar you take to the grocery store.

We serve the evening meal at Central Iowa Shelter & Services on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 18-19. Please indicate how you can help on the sign-up sheets in the Narthex at church or at www.volunteerspot.com. Thanks for your faithfulness to this ministry!

Hygiene Kits can be made with the large Zip-Loc bags you will find in the Narthex, each with a shopping list inside. Please take a bag, fill it with the necessary items, and return it. We distribute these kits to local shelters and other sites where those who are homeless receive services.

Please continue to advocate – with your congressional representatives – for the passage of a Farm Bill that includes adequate funding for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – food stamps.) The loss of funding to this program will leave thousands of children (and their parents) hungry in this so-called "land of plenty!"

And, finally, thank you for your generous support of the Johanna Scholarship for women students at Usangi Leadership & Training College! Through a special emphasis in September, we raised more than \$2,400, which is enough to provide full scholarships for four students!



WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE AN ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THE EAGLE CALL?
E-mail businessoffice@stjohnsdsm.org and request the eEagle Call. Help us save on the cost of postage, use less paper, and see each issue in **FULL COLOR**.

Youth Ministry

Mark Your Calendars

Each Wednesday:

- Beloved Community meal – 5:30-6:30 p.m. in Weertz Fellowship Hall.
- 7th-8th Grade Confirmation – 6:30-8 p.m. in third-floor Multi-Purpose Room (MPR).
- 9th-Grade Confirmation – 6:30-7:30 p.m. in Room 307.
- Youth Bell Choir practice – 7:30-8 p.m. in Fuller Music Room.
- High School Journeys in Faith – 8-9 p.m. in Do Drop Inn (DDI).

Each Sunday, except Oct. 27: Breakfast Club – 9-9:45 a.m. in Rm. 307.

Sunday, Oct.13: 10th-Grade retreat with Pastor Bob – 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. in Room 8.

Saturday, Oct. 19: Service project for all youth – More information to follow.

Wednesday, Oct. 23: 10th-Grade interviews with Church Council – 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 26: Affirmation of Baptism dinner for 10th-Graders and families – 5:00-7:00pm in Weertz

Sunday, October 27: Affirmation of Baptism for 10th grade 10:00am service with reception after service

Special Upcoming Event in November – 7th-9th grade Confirmation Retreat Friday, November 1-Saturday November 2 at Y-Camp in Boone, leave Friday around 5:00pm and return Saturday between 4:00-6:00pm. More information to come in the coming weeks.



Dear St. John's Lutheran,

Hello and thank you! My name is Noah Niermann, and I am very excited to begin serving St. John's as the new Director of Youth Ministry. I am writing this introductory biography on my first day of employment in a very green office, feeling a little green myself, and don't quite know where to begin. But, upon a little reflection, I don't think I can go wrong if I start with thanksgiving! So, let me simply say thank you for your warm welcome into this church, and thank you for the very big invitation to serve this community as your Director of Youth Ministry. I feel very lucky. I look forward to meeting all of you, hearing your stories about this place, and working with you to realize the hopes and visions you

have for your youth and young adult ministries!

My wife Katie and I are new to Iowa, new to Des Moines, and new to St. John's. We moved from the Twin Cities to Des Moines a little over a month ago on Aug. 5, and Katie began medical school at Des Moines University on Aug. 6. Two days earlier, on Aug. 4, we were in Istanbul, Turkey, celebrating the last of our honeymoon while everyone around us celebrated Ramadan. The summer has been full! We are happy to finally be settling into Des Moines and learning more about our new home.

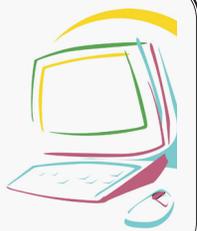
I am originally from Elgin, IL, and the youngest of seven children. My dad is a Lutheran pastor, and my mom teaches ESL part-time at a local community college. In 2006 I graduated from St. Olaf College with a B.A. in English, and in the seven years since I have learned how to speak Russian, teach middle- and high-school youth while navigating post-Soviet society in rural Kazakhstan, drive a school bus up and down 3,000 vertical feet of switchbacks, and live in a remote Lutheran retreat center. I've also become a phlebotomist, coordinated the ins and outs of hosting a high-school exchange student, and most recently have been receiving lessons in puppy training from our 16-week-old Swedish Vallhund named Sauna. There's nothing you can't do with an English major!

I am very excited to be a part of this vibrant community of faith, and I look forward to getting to know all of you. Please don't hesitate to introduce yourself. I can be reached at noah@stjohnsdsm.org at any time.

Peace,
Noah Niermann

DID YOU KNOW?

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



Artist of the Month



St. John's Photography Small Group is an opportunity for our St. John's community to learn, discuss and share an interest in photography. There is an opportunity most months to gather together and show off our recent photos, to encourage one another in the art of photography and to build bonds within our community. One of the highlights of this group is the opportunity to show our work on the walls of Weertz Hall.

All photographers from St. John's are welcome to provide photos for future shows of our work. To join this group, simply contact St. John's Lutheran Church and let us know you want to be included in email notifications for the Photography Small Group. We will love having you participate with us.

There is no theme for the show in October, but it is always amazing how our photos find a comfortable home on the walls of Weertz Hall!

Children's Ministry

Sunday School is off to a wonderful start! Thank you to all who have volunteered their time to share your faith and knowledge with our young children at St. John's. In this first semester, we will be exploring Bible stories from the Old Testament.

Each week, a *Family Page* will be sent via e-mail with activities to enhance your child's learning at home. Please take a minute to ask your child each week about what they learned in Sunday School and challenge them to think about how they might apply these lessons to their home and community. The *Family Page*, along with weekly communication from me, should be helpful in guiding your child towards a better understanding of the Bible story and how we might apply that learning to our everyday lives.

While we have a terrific group of people dedicating themselves to helping our children grow in faith, we continue to need more volunteers to teach and help with Sunday School. If you are interested in learning more about these possibilities, please contact Alicia Karwal at 243-7691 or akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org.

"Pennies for the Pantry" - A Children's Ministries Service Project

St. John's Lutheran Church Children's Ministries will be taking part in a new service project this fall! Together, we will be collecting coins to support the Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC). In addition to other programs, DMARC helps to support 13 food pantries throughout the Des Moines area.

Every child who is interested in participating will be given a collection box. Each week the children of St. John's will be able to bring their coins to add to

the big container; together we will watch the pile of coins grow. Our goal is to fill the container by Thanksgiving! This opportunity allows your child to practice stewardship by giving to those who are less fortunate in our very own communities. The project allows your children to demonstrate that they care for all people.

Did you know?

- \$35 can feed a child for 15 days!
- 33,000 people were served in 2012.
- 400 to 500 new families applied for help within recent months.
- Cash donations allow DMARC to purchase two to six times the amount of food you might donate due to their ability to purchase wholesale.

For more information, go to movethefood.org

Farewell Judi



May God Bless & Keep You!

Our own Judi Langholz, who has served in many leadership positions at St. John's over the years, will leave in mid-October for northern Tanzania, where she will serve two years as an ELCA Volunteer in Mission, teaching English at Usangi Secondary School for Girls.

Judi retired from Iowa Network Services earlier this year, sold her home in Johnston, and upon arriving in TZ will spend the first several weeks in Swahili school. She will eventually settle in Usangi, sharing a home with Southeast Iowa Synod Pastor Mary Jo Maas, who teaches English at Usangi Leadership and Training College. (Yes, the school where we sponsor four women students.) If you would like to send Judi a note before she leaves the U.S., her temporary address is: 114 Augusta Cir, Waverly IA 50677-9256.

News from the Garden

Learning in the Garden

The St. John's Faith Garden volunteers had a formidable challenge the last week in August with temperatures in the upper 90s to over 100 degrees – and still no rain. DeAnna Axness and Jean Rothfus asked if it was worthwhile and good stewardship to water everything every day during such hot days, especially so late in the season.

"If the tomatoes are deep-watered," Tim Andersen said, "I don't think they need to be watered every day." He also recommended water for the peppers, which were still filling out, and the new beans. After a thoughtful discussion among several gardeners, Pastor Bob, the proprietary arbiter, decided in favor of saving at least the tomato plants that were still producing. After all, his team was on duty the week of the brutal temperatures and had to brave the heat while watering the garden.



St. John's Faith Garden volunteers continue to learn about gardening through experience, self-education and advice from veteran gardeners. Jean has kept a critical eye on the new bean plants planted by the Kisasa kids, and wrote in an email:

"They are looking better every day, since there are new healthy leaves coming on. They were still wet with morning dew, so I was careful not to touch them. Because of the danger of rust (which we developed on the old beans), we do not want to touch them when they are wet, and we want to water [in the morning] so they can dry out by evening. We are to water under the plants and not on the foliage." Good advice for all garden plants!

Wanda Havard e-mailed that while she was watering the garden she noticed that the tomatoes were too close together. "We need to plant them further apart next year," she wrote. "It's even hard to find the tomatoes sometimes. We just keep learning."

And Jean warned: *"Blight likes to occur when the plants are crowded. They need air movement between them. With this hot, steamy weather, they are really 'sitting ducks' waiting for this to happen. Usually with blight, the plants die, and the fruit ripens on dead plants (not ideal)."*

The garden volunteers met after the last service on Sunday, Sept. 8, to talk about what worked this season and what needs to be changed next year. Diana and Phil Sickles reported results of garden soil testing by the Iowa State Soil and Plant Analysis Lab. On Oct. 19 our gardeners will meet to tear down the garden, add nitrogen and lime, plant a winter cover crop of rye, and celebrate the 2013 season.

As of the mid-September *Eagle Call* press deadline, the St. John's garden volunteers have delivered 443.5 pounds of produce to DMARC for distribution to hungry people. The produce is from our entire "faith community garden," Pastor Speirs noted, not just from the garden in the Speirs' yard, but also produce donated from St. John's members' gardens in their own yards. Watch for the season's total poundage in the November *Eagle Call*.

Together we are the Faith Garden!

Hospitality & Outreach



How is Your Jesus Constructed?

Some time ago I read an article entitled "Goodbye, Styrofoam Jesus." The author relayed the story of a 62-foot-tall Jesus statue that resided in southwestern Ohio. The massive statue was known locally as "butter Jesus" (no rationale given) or "touchdown Jesus" (with a nod to Notre Dame). The structure, which appeared to be secure and stable, was demolished when on the receiving end of a lightning strike. The church that constructed the figure was named "Solid Rock," so it was assumed that it was solidly built with a steel-frame structure. The townspeople were shocked and dismayed to learn that the statue, although its frame was steel, was filled internally with Styrofoam and had a fiberglass coating. No match for a lightning bolt (pun intended).

The article started me thinking about construction of MY Jesus. I think most of us want to relate to Isaiah 40:28-31: *"Don't you know? Haven't you heard? The LORD is the eternal God, Creator of the earth. He never gets weary or tired; his wisdom cannot be measured. The LORD gives strength to those who are weary. Even young people get tired, then stumble and fall. But those who trust the LORD will find new strength. They will be strong like eagles soaring upward on wings; they will walk and run without getting tired."* (Contemporary English Version)

MY Lord can withstand anything. MY God can do anything. Of course!

Continued on Page 11

Continued from Page 10

My Lord and my God are on this earth in the presence of His Spirit and in the form of mere humans; we do get weary, and we do stumble and fall, far too often. I totally love and want to relate to the images of strength and soaring eagles, but am very aware of my weaknesses and limitations.

I fully believe that no person gets through life without pain, disappointment, loss, fear. We all experience it to varying degrees. Some life events are disruptive, some demoralizing, others completely devastating.

I've seen people react to minor irritants with vehement rage. And I've seen others bear life's greatest losses and tragedy with grace, humility and trust.

Some people blame God for any adversity they face: "God could have cured my loved one, but didn't. God could have gotten me that job, but I was overlooked. God helped them (neighbor, coworker, even an 'enemy'), but didn't help me."

Then there is the counter-balance: "God gives me strength and sustains me. I don't deserve the blessings God has granted me, but I accept them with a grateful heart. God will not leave me."

It is amazing how we never seem to deserve bad things, but feel righteous, even vindicated, when "good" happens. Of course, we deserve that, we've earned it.

There are many ways to construct Jesus, a myriad of available materials, and countless chances to witness to others about the strength of our construction.

Take an example from children's literature: You have the Three Little Pigs' homes built with straw, sticks and bricks. Of course, we know bricks are destructible too. Don't think so? Check out the results of two very ticked-off ladies, Sandy and Katrina.

Take an extremely painful lesson from our recent history: two large towers made of steel and glass, and blood, sweat and millions of tears. They stand no longer.

Just yesterday I saw a headline that touted a new "invisible" tower. I didn't read the article. Whatever and wherever it is constructed, it also will have the possibility of being destroyed. Whatever humans can build; humans can destroy.

So maybe the answer is not in strong physical materials, but in strength of the inner core and foundation of belief. The strength is in the physical response to the counter-action. The strength is IN the soul/spirit of the entity ... and that entity is us. It's all we need; we simply need to remember it, claim it and rely on it.

"Christ gives me the strength to face anything."

Philippians 4:13 (Contemporary English Version)

Katie Tippins

Women of the ELCA

Women of the ELCA will meet Thursday, Oct. 3

Sarah Group will meet at 10 a.m. in Neumann Hall. Their program is about Backpack Buddies, and Mary Liechty is their leader this month.



Lois Group will meet at 12:30 p.m. in Neumann Hall. Their program will be the Bible study in the September issue of *Gather* on "Hannah's Hope, Our Hope."

Board Meeting Is Monday, Oct. 28

The WELCA board will meet at 9:30 a.m. in Neumann Hall on Monday, Oct. 28. If you have any questions on membership or mission, please call Mitzie McCloskey at 277-1200.

Mission Project for October

Thanks to all of you, well over 100 school supply items were donated during August and September. We appreciate your support in our mission.

The October project is Meals in a Bag; recipes and bags will be made available for you to fill. These meals will be donated to DMARC.

DDI Renovation

A group of hard working volunteers have spent the last few weeks renovating the Do Drop Inn so it can be better utilized by our Youth Ministry. They have removed the loft, dry-walled, painted, installed new carpet and still have more projects on the horizon.



October 2013
Volume 45, No. 10

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.



NEXT EAGLE CALL DEADLINE

The deadline for all Eagle Call information is **Monday, October 21.**

Please send information or articles in digital format to Scott LaBlanc, scottl@stjohnsdsm.org.

If you cannot send it by e-mail, drop it off at the church office.

Thank you!