



St. John's Lutheran Church

The EAGLE CALL

Volume 46, Number 01
January, 2014

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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*For all that has been – Thanks!
To all that shall be – Yes!
Dag Hammarskjold*



WHAT'S INSIDE

A Word from our Pastors	2	Help the Good Samaritan Fund.....	5	Hospitality & Outreach.....	9
Notes from the Council, WELCA		Small Groups.....	6	Looking back at 2013	10
Update & Our "New" Organists.....	3	Children's Ministry	7		
Prepare for Worship &		Youth Ministry &			
The Arts at St. John's	4	Travel with Grand View.....	8		

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In the City for Good!
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Next Eagle Call Deadline
January 20 at noon



A Word from Our Pastors

Pastor Bob Speirs

*"An intelligent mind acquires knowledge,
 and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge."*

Proverbs 18:15

One of the areas of responsibility that I happily agreed to when I began my call here at St. John's was the task of organizing and implementing the Sunday morning Adult Education hour. It has been for me a challenge, but also rewarding to find, meet and put together a schedule of presenters whom I believe have provided our church members with some very thought-provoking, enjoyable sessions. Topics have ranged from Bible studies to Lutheran theology, from financial planning to climate change, from the work of our local homeless shelter to domestic abuse issues and more. Thankfully, over the past few years, I have had help from many of our church folks in putting this program together.

I believe our education ministry here at St. John's is one of the best things we do. We offer several opportunities for Bible study: Tuesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in Room 8, led by Pastor Bob; Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in Neumann Hall, led by Pastor Rachel, and Saturday mornings, which is held offsite, led by Ellen Fisher and others. Several of our adults also have a marvelous opportunity for learning as they mentor our seventh- through ninth-grade Confirmation students. There also are marvelous opportunities for learning through our W.I.R.E.D. (Women Interested in Renewal, Education and Discovery) ministry, led by Darla Stiles and others. A good resolution for this year (and well worth the effort) would be to join us for one of these education offerings – to learn, meet new people and just have some fun.

Once again, over the past couple of months, our Adult Education committee has been seeking presenters for our Sunday morning Adult Forum's winter/spring session, which runs Jan. 12 - May 11. Members of the committee are Doug Holmgren, Andy Anderson, Ron Taylor, Beth O'Connor, Diana Sickles and me. Thanks to them for their time, willingness and ideas.

Winter/Spring Adult Forum Schedule:

- **Jan. 12** Dr. Mark Mattes, Professor of Religion, Grandview University. "The Afterlife in Different Faith Traditions."
- **Jan. 19** Dr. Mark Mattes (second of two parts).
- **Jan. 26** Paul Turner, AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy organization). "How AMOS is Working with Criminal Justice Issues."
- **Feb. 2** No Adult Forum due to Annual Meeting of the Congregation.
- **Feb. 9** Dr. Norma Hirsch, Assistant Professor of Bioethics, Des Moines University. "Passing on My Faith Story Before I Die."
- **Feb. 16** Ben Hengesteg, Funeral Director, Dunn's Funeral Home. "What Happens When a Loved One Dies?" (from the perspective of a funeral director).
- **Feb. 23** Dr. Norma Hirsch (second of two parts).
- **March 2** Dr. Mark Mattes, Professor of Religion, Grandview University. "Luther on God and Beauty."
- **March 9** Dr. Mark Mattes (second of two parts).
- **March 16** No Adult Forum due to Spring Break.
- **March 23** Terry Lantz, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. "Charitable Giving."
- **March 30** No Adult Forum due to Coffee with the Council meeting.
- **April 6** Pastor Gregory Davis, "An Introduction to the Faith/Science Debate."
- **April 13** Pastor Gregory Davis, "The Role of Emotions in Human Rationality."

Continued on Page 3

Continued from Page 2

- **April 20** Easter (No Adult Forum).
- **April 27** Pastor Eric Carlson, Assistant to the Bishop, Southeast Iowa Synod. "An Up-to-Date Report on the Work of the Synod and How It Interacts with Local Congregations."
- **May 4** Pastor Diana Sickles, "The Hungry Children of Des Moines: How One Group is Attempting to Feed Them."
- **May 11** Thrivent Financial for Lutherans (speaker to be announced), "Money Matters."

Our forums begin at 9 a.m. in Neumann Hall (coffee and doughnuts are available!). Adult Education brochures for the coming sessions will be available after Jan. 1. All are welcome!

May all of us have a Blessed and Happy New Year!

Pastor Bob Speirs

Notes from the Council



Be Generous

God has been generous to us, and we in response are called to be generous. You have seen this message in your stewardship packets and on posters around the church. Throughout the year, we will emphasize how we can put this generosity into action as we welcome, pray, praise, serve and grow in faith.

In January and February, we celebrate that we are a welcoming community of faith and we continue to encourage people to join St. John's Lutheran Church. We welcome everyone to join us in worship, singing and study. Be sure to extend a hand or hug in worship and to those you meet. Make an effort to introduce yourself to someone you don't know. Invite a friend, co-worker or neighbor to church.

Welcome others to join in whatever way you are involved in the life of the church. Come to Bible study, adult education or become a confirmation mentor. Welcome people to join in service and outreach – help serve communion, teach Sunday School or be a cook for Beloved Community. Encourage others to bring food to the shelter, work in the faith garden, support our mission in Tanzania or serve one another here at church.

The people of St. John's welcome intergenerational community, diverse conversation and community-wide involvement. We are in the city for good. There are always new friends to make and visitors to welcome. Be Generous!

Kris Gregersen
President, Congregational Council

Women of the ELCA

Outreach Project News

The January project for Women of ELCA will be Harbor of Hope. The men need underwear, socks and t-shirts. Mittens, stocking caps, ear muffs or warm scarves also are useful. Donations can be placed in either one of our boxes: one is located near Neumann Hall, the other is adjacent the office reception area.



About 120 Christmas gifts were collected for New Directions shelter in December. The women and children at this shelter will select from these items to give to one another for Christmas. Thanks to all who gave these gifts and gift wrap. Their Christmas will be a little brighter because of your generosity.

January Meetings

- **Lois group** will meet Thursday, Jan. 2, at 12:30 p.m. in Neumann Hall at church.
- **Sarah group** will meet Thursday, Jan. 9, at 10 a.m. in Neumann Hall at church.

Our "New" Organists

So how do you fill a demanding, high-profile, work-intensive organ position with a capable, experienced, talented, high-quality musician/organist with only part-time pay to offer? You hire two such people to share the work-load!

Our former Principal Organist, Nancy Stafford, has agreed to return to the bench at St. John's and share the duties equally with Deanna (Pullen) Snyder. Deanna applied for the position this fall and has played a majority of the services. But when she realized the scale of the job and what was needed, she began to reconsider. Fortunately, both women are qualified, talented, love to play, and easy to work with. The outcome is that Nancy and Deanna work out between them how to cover the rehearsals and services, and we are the beneficiaries of this arrangement.



Prepare for Worship

Sunday, January 5, 2014, Epiphany of Our Lord

Epiphany means "manifestation." On this day we celebrate the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles - that is, to all nations. Some Christian traditions celebrate three great epiphanies on this day: the magi's adoration of the Christ child, Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, and his first miracle in which he changes water into wine. The word and sacraments are for us the great epiphany of God's grace and mercy. We go forth to witness to the light that shines brightly in our midst.

The readings for Epiphany of Our Lord are Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; and Matthew 2:1-12. The hymns will be ELW 311, "Hail to the Lord's Anointed," ELW 314, "Arise, Your Light Has Come," ELW 665, "Rise, Shine, You People" and ELW 301, "Bright and Glorious is the Sky." For offering at 10 am, Asphalt & Stained Glass will sing "Home by Another Way" for offering and during communion Cathedral Choir will sing "Arise, O God, and Shine," by Mack Wilber and A&SG will sing "Nothing but a Child," by Steve Earle.

Sunday, January 12, 2014, Baptism of Our Lord; Lectionary 1

In the waters of the Jordan, Jesus is revealed as the beloved Son of God. Through this great epiphany, Jesus fulfills all righteousness and becomes the servant of God who will bring forth justice and be a light to the nations. In the waters of baptism we too are washed by the Word, anointed by the Spirit, and named God's beloved children. Our baptismal mission is to proclaim good news to all who are oppressed or in need of God's healing.

The liturgy will begin with Thanksgiving for Baptist, then, in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., renewer of society, martyr, whose birthday is January 15, we will use portions of ELW setting 6, the gospel music-style setting. The readings will be Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43; and Matthew 3:13-17. The gathering song at 5 pm Saturday and 8 am Sunday will be ELW 673, "God, Whose Almighty Word" and at 10 am "Washed Anew" by Thomas Keesecker. Other hymns include ELW 305, "When Jesus Came to Jordan" and ELW 459, "Wade in the Water." For offering at 10 am Cathedral Choir will sing, "As Jesus Walked into the Stream," by Susan Borwick.

Sunday, January 19, 2014, Second Sunday after Epiphany; Lectionary 2

Today's gospel opens with further reflection on Jesus' baptism. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and the one anointed by the Spirit. In the liturgy we come and see Christ

revealed among us in word and meal. We go forth to invite others to come and worship the Holy One, and to receive the gifts of grace and peace made know among us.

The readings are Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; and John 1:29-42. The hymns will be ELW 627, "O Day Full of Grace," ELW 715, "Christ Be Our Light," and ELW 507, "O God of Light." During communion at 10 am Cathedral Choir will sing "Behold the Lamb of God," G.F. Handel, from *Messiah*. We will use ELW setting 9 for the remained of the Epiphany season.

Sunday, January 26, 2014, Third Sunday after Epiphany; Lectionary 3

Jesus begins his public ministry by calling fishers to leave their nets and follow him. In Jesus the kingdom of God has come near. We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light. We see this light profoundly in the cross - as God suffers with us and all who are oppressed by sickness, sin, or evil. Light dawns for us as we gather around the word, the font, and the holy table. We are then sent to share the good news that others may be "caught" in the net of God's grace and mercy.

The readings are Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9; 1 Corinthians 1:10-18; and Matthew 4:12-23. The hymns will be ELW 511, "Thy Strong Word," ELW 798, "Will You Come and Follow Me," and ELW 325, "I Want Jesus to Walk with Me." At 10 am Cathedral Choir will sing "The Lord is My Light and My Salvation," by John Leavitt.

The Arts at St. Johns

Time for New Year's Resolutions: Join a Choir or Musical Ensemble!

Most of us resolve - at least informally if not formally - that as we start over with a new calendar we are going to do some things better than we have in the past year: make better choices, do more of what we love, and make a positive difference in our communities and the lives of those we care about. Being part of a choir or musical ensemble at St. John's can, for many people, accomplish all those goals at once. If you have loved making music in the past and miss it, if you care about the quality of music in the liturgies at St. John's and perhaps joined here for that reason, and if you want to be part of strengthening the mission, ministry, and worship life of St. John's, please prayerfully consider whether 2014 is the year you make all those resolutions real. Contact Larry Christensen or



Continued on Page 5

Continued from Page 4

Beth Ann Edwards for more information or to have your questions answered. Renew yourself and your faith community this year.

Artist of the Month: ASAP Photography and Fine Art

This month we honor the young After School Arts Program (ASAP) artists who share our space on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. The photography exhibit is part of the CultureALL Photo Ethnography program, a collaboration of ASAP, Very Special Arts and Orchard Place.

Students were encouraged to identify signs of their culture and capture them with photography. From these photographs, the students created an exhibit that has traveled throughout central Iowa and has been shown in several venues, including churches, corporate headquarters and the Iowa State Fair.

Sharing our exhibit space in January is fine art from the ASAP painting studios taught by Beth Ann Edwards. Young artists are taught the basics of painting, including composition, color theory, realism and abstract, and mixed media.

Youth Handbell Choir: Change in Rehearsal Time

Our Youth Handbell Choir, for youth in Grades 7-12, continues to grow in number and musicality. This choir has shared its talents in worship several times this fall, including ringing with Kisasa in a double-choir piece on Dec. 22.

Youth Director Noah Niermann and Beth Ann Edwards have been examining plans for strengthening youth involvement in Confirmation, music and worship. Beginning Jan. 8, the Youth Handbell Choir will rehearse Sunday mornings from 8:45 to 9:30 a.m. in the Fuller Rehearsal Room. This schedule change provides several advantages. The entire Confirmation class can take advantage of the 90-minute meeting time, and handbell rehearsals will not be positioned between classroom times on Wednesday nights. A Sunday morning rehearsal time allows those students who cannot attend on Wednesdays an opportunity to take part in Youth

Handbell Choir. A 9:30 a.m. dismissal time will allow youth to visit with each other and prepare for participation in worship.

If you have questions about our new handbell choir rehearsal time, or would like to start ringing with this choir, please contact Beth Ann (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org).

Arts Visioning Team Prepares for All-Out Artistic Spring

St. John's arts program starts off the year with an active spring calendar, and all are invited and encouraged to participate. Please consider hosting or providing food for Augustana students on Saturday, Feb. 22, donating a cake for our Shrove Tuesday cake walk and, of course, attending our Fine Arts events. For more information, please contact Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org).

- Augustana College (Rock Island) concert Saturday, Feb. 22, and worship, Sunday, Feb. 23
- Shrove Tuesday celebration with Ballyhoo Foxtrot Orchestra Tuesday, March 4, festivities include a traditional pancakes-and-sausage dinner, desserts and beverages served by our Senior High students, and a fund-raising cake walk.
- Choral workshop and concert with David Cherwien Saturday and Sunday, March 29-30

Midweek Music

Join us in the Sanctuary each Wednesday at 12:05 p.m. for music that will warm your soul! The 25-minute concerts are free and open to the public, and the lunch that follows in Weertz Hall is only \$6 per person.

Upcoming Midweek Music Schedule

- January 8 - Kathleen Hurley and Dancers
- January 15 - Brian Joens, singer/songwriter
- January 22 - Rebecca Gruber, soprano
- January 29 - Ballyhoo Foxtrot Combo, early 20th-Century jazz

Old Christmas Lights

Good Samaritan Fund Needs Your Christmas Lights & Pull Tabs

Christmas lights and pull tabs are being collected to raise money for the St. John's Good Samaritan Fund. The collection boxes are located near the office reception area.



Small Groups

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

CALENDAR

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

Zumba: Mondays, Jan. 6, 13, 20, 27 at 5 p.m., third-floor Multi-Purpose Room at church.

Mah Jongg: Mondays, Jan. 6, 13, 20 and 27, 6 p.m., reserved room at Smokey Row, 1910 Cottage Grove Ave., Des Moines.

Restaurant Visitation/Christian Involvement: Tuesday, Jan. 7, 6 p.m.

Hardanger: Wednesday, Jan. 8 and 22, 9 a.m., Neumann Hall at church.
Facilitator: Arlene Field, 964-3363.

EAGLES: Friday, Jan. 10, 9:30 a.m. We will plan next year's activities.

Lunch Bunch II: Wednesday, Jan. 15, 12:30 p.m.

Lunch Bunch I: Thursday, Jan. 16, 11:30 a.m.

Photography: Sunday, Jan. 19, 11 a.m., Neumann Hall at church.

Recreational Reading: Wednesday, Jan. 22, 4:30 p.m., Rose Holm Room at church.

Scrapbooking: Saturday, Jan. 25, 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

St. John's Social Club: Saturday, Feb. 1, 4 to 7 p.m., home of Bob and Mary Miller, 1105 Oakwood Dr., Polk City. We will be planning 2014 activities.

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

Lunch Bunch II will meet Wednesday, Jan. 15, at 12:30 p.m. If interested in joining this group, contact Janet Figg at 279-6326.

Lunch Bunch I will meet Thursday, Jan. 16, at 11:30 a.m. New members are most welcome! If you are interested in joining the group, reserve a space by calling Dorothy Parry at 255-6049.

Photography will meet Sunday, Jan. 19, at 11 a.m. in Neumann Hall at church. The theme: a photo that reminds you of something new or creative for the New Year.

Recreational Reading will meet Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 4:30 p.m. in Rose Holm at church. The book to read for January is *The Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafon. Facilitator is Carol MacDonald, macpac00@mchsi.com.

Scrapbooking will meet Saturday, Jan. 25, between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Bring materials you are working on for scrapbooking or card-making.

St. John's Social Club will meet Saturday, Feb. 1, from 4 to 7 p.m. at the home of Mary and Bob Miller at 1105 Oakwood Dr., Polk City. We will be planning 2014 activities. Please bring an appetizer. A light meal and beverages will be provided. RSVP to the Millers at mmiller588@aol.com.

MORE INFORMATION:

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

Zumba will meet Mondays, Jan. 6, 13, 20 and 27 at 5 p.m. in the third-floor Multi-Purpose Room at church. Our certified Zumba teacher is looking forward to continuing at St. John's. Cost is \$5 per class. You may sign in when you attend and pay at the end of the session on Feb. 24. Please join us for any or all of the classes, which are open to everyone.

Mah Jongg will meet Mondays, Jan. 6, 13, 20 and 27 at 6 p.m. in the reserved room at Smokey Row, 1910 Cottage Grove Ave., Des Moines.

Hardanger meets Wednesday, Jan. 8 and 22, at 9 a.m. in Neumann Hall at church. Facilitator Arlene Field is willing to teach anyone interested. If you have questions, contact Arlene at 964-3363.

EAGLES group will meet Friday, Jan. 10, at 9:30 a.m. to plan activities for the coming year. Coffee and bagels will be provided. If you have suggestions to add to the list for Jan. 10, contact Darla Stiles at darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org or by calling St. John's at 243-7691.



Christmas caroling with the St. John's Social Club

WIRED Night Out is planning a winter gathering. Watch for more details. Facilitators are Darla Stiles, 225-3499 or darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org, and Jacque Warming, jrwarming@msn.com.

Children's Ministry

Here we go again!

Sunday school resumes on Jan. 5, 2014. All children are invited to join us from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. each Sunday. The 3-year-olds meet in Room 5, preschoolers meet in Room 6 and kindergartners meet in Room 7. First- through fifth-graders meet in the Chapel first and later move to their classrooms on the second floor. During the second semester, we will be studying the Old Testament. Our schedule for the month of January follows:

- January 5: Daniel and the Lions (Daniel 6:1-28)
- January 12: The Wedding Banquet (Matthew 22:1-14)
- January 19: Jesus Feeds 5,000 (John 6:1-14)
- January 26: The Disciples (Matthew 4:12-23; 9:9-13; 10:1-4)

New policy for Sunday School Families

In January, we begin a new policy for Sunday School drop-off and pick-up. Parents/caregivers will now be asked to sign their children in and out of their classrooms to ensure the safety of all children at all times.

This will require that a parent or caregiver walk their child to and from their designated classroom. For those children who meet in the Chapel, there will be a clipboard for each grade level and classroom at the back of the Chapel. Then the Sunday School teachers will take the clipboards to their respective classrooms so the parent/caregiver can sign their child out at the end of class.

Likewise, the clipboards for the 3-year-olds and preschoolers will be taken to Room 7 with the children so that the appropriate clipboards will be available for signing out after music time.

There will likely need to be some fine-tuning to this new practice as we go along. I welcome any feedback. Thank you in advance for helping to keep our children's safety at the forefront. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org.

Below: Pictures from the Children's Advent Program



Youth Ministry

St. John's and the Chocolate Factory!



Youth Fundraising Auction & Dinner Friday, Feb. 28 6:30 – 9:30 p.m. @ Forte

This winter you're invited to celebrate with the whole St. John's community as we join together to raise money for our young people and have a lot of fun while we're at it! This yearly auction and dinner is organized to support the 40-plus young people in our church who are actively involved in important youth programs.

The money raised directly supports life-changing camp experiences and mission trips during which our kids learn what it means to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Your donations also support our service activities here in Des Moines! Our hope is that money will never be a deterrent when it comes to participation in church-sponsored events. All are welcome!

The theme for this year's auction is *St. John's and the Chocolate Factory*. We figure, who doesn't like chocolate? Please consider items or services you might be able to donate this year. Here is a short list of ideas and items we are looking for:

- Week-long get-away at a family cabin
- Set of season tickets for a sports team in Iowa or elsewhere
- One week at a time-share property
- Concert, theater or symphony tickets
- Hand-made creations
- Artwork
- Lessons in your specialty – be it underwater basket-weaving, fly-fishing, baking, etc.
- Chocolate (This one is a gimmie.)

We hope to see you at Forte on Friday, Feb. 28! Dinner, auction, childcare and world-class entertainment will make for a wonderful evening. If you have any questions about the night, please talk to Tammi Reyes, Lora Simpson, Heidi Slinker or Director of Youth Ministry Noah Niermann (noah@stjohnsdsm.org or 243-7691).

Confirmation Update

Beginning Wednesday, Jan. 8, the Youth Handbell Choir will begin rehearsing on Sunday mornings from 8:45 to 9:30 a.m. in the Fuller Rehearsal Room. This adjustment will allow the Confirmation Class to take advantage of the full 90-minute meeting time on Wednesday nights without forcing half the group to choose between class and handbell participation. Our hope is that this change will strengthen group cohesion among our Confirmation Class while at the same time providing the Youth Handbell Choir the dedicated time slot it deserves. Confirmation will still end at 8 p.m. on Wednesday nights.

Office Hours

Beginning Thursday, Jan. 9, I will start holding open office hours at Smokey Row, 1910 Cottage Grove Ave., from 7 to 9 p.m. every Thursday! Come stop by, grab a caffeinated beverage – if you have a long night ahead – and visit about whatever topic you wish. Smokey Row has yet to be informed of these office hours, but I know I'm excited about coffee for \$1.75 and free refills.

Blessings and Peace this New Year,
Noah Niermann

Travel with a Grand View

You are invited to join Grand View University faculty, alumni, staff, and friends on an exciting trip to St. Petersburg and Moscow, Russia from July 28 through August 12, 2015. See the palaces and churches of the Tsars (such as Peterhoff Palace and St. Isaac's Cathedral), world-class art museums (such as the Hermitage), historic Red Square in the Kremlin, the Yusupov Palace (where Grigory Rasputin was assassinated), and dozens of other places you've read about in history and heard about in the news. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to visit places not frequented by tourists such as a hospital, a school, and the St. Petersburg State University. You will learn about Russia in ways most Americans never do. Tour hosts include Professor Dmitry Yarushkin who was raised in St. Petersburg. You can be confident that you will have an expert navigating you through Russia. Your official tour guide, Sergey Fedorov, is an expert on Russian history, culture, and trip logistics, as well as an effective communicator with Americans. Total cost for the trip is approximately \$4,000.00 per participant, which includes not only airfare to Russia and train fare within Russia, but also double occupancy hotel rooms, three full meals a day, visas, the tour guide, and tickets to all the museums, performances, and local transportation. Don't miss out on this opportunity. Become acquainted with Russia, and its magic and charm, for an unforgettable, life-changing experience.

The experience of a 2006 participant: "I enjoyed traveling with the Grand View group. Each participant brought a wealth of experience to the trip. Walking the streets of St. Petersburg, seeing where the Revolution occurred and other historical sites, such as the Church on Spilled Blood, as well as the Kremlin and Red Square in Moscow, enlivened my imagination. Attractions included visiting a hospital and enjoying an evening concert. The tour guide

Continued on Page 9

Continued from Page 10

was excellent and helped me challenge my preconceptions about Russia. Indeed, the warmth of the Russian people was a highlight. “ Mr. Leonard Larsen, retired from Lutheran Services of Iowa

Further information can be found at this link: <http://www.grandview.edu/asp/audience/content.aspx?pageid=347&aid=6>

Any questions? Don't hesitate to contact Dr. Mark Mattes, Grand View University, at mmattes@grandview.edu or Prof. Dmitry Yarushkin at dyarushkin@grandview.edu. Hearing from you before March 15 will help us determine the total number of participants.

Hospitality & Outreach



Ready or Not – Year 2014 is Here!

A new year traditionally signals new beginnings. In reality, every day is new. In fact, every second is new. What thoughts can I offer on the New Year that someone else hasn't said first and better? For some ideas, I went searching the internet and found quite an assortment of tidbits.

Jonathan Edwards: **“Resolution one: I will live for God. Resolution Two: If no one else does, I still will.”** What a wonderfully succinct statement! This quote seemed like a good place to start, so the first thing I did was look up Jonathan Edwards. Per Wikipedia, he is either a singer/song writer who wrote *Sunshine (go away today)* in 1972, or he is a theologian and preacher who lived in the early 1700s. I'm betting on the latter.

Live for God. If only we did. If we could deny our personal desires, judgments, ambitions, envy, etc. If we could distance ourselves from that and be led by the guiding light of the Spirit and lived only for God, what a world we would inhabit! And, knowing how difficult it is to get people to agree on anything, even if no one else lives for God, I still will! What a feeling it would be to KNOW that I am living as God wishes me to live. What it would mean to not feel the pain and shame of knowing that I fail – every day and in every way.

While the sentiment is good, what are the chances of actually living up to that resolution? Not good.

So, let's search for some encouragement. For that, look no further than Pope John XXIII: **“Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do.”**

What is possible for us to do? *Anything* is possible! What's more, this gives permission, absolution if you will, to not get bogged down in failing. I don't know about you, but I tend to be very discouraged when I acknowledge my weaknesses and sins. But Pope John XXIII recommends that we not think about that. We are told to let it go and move on.

We humans are curious beings. Not only do we try and fail, we beat ourselves up about what we've done or not done. Inertia takes over, and we find ourselves mired in depression and despair. And to me, my friends, that is the biggest failing of all. And, one of which I stand truly convicted.

So now I have authorization (from a Pope, no less, and a good one at that!) to forgive myself, and am also given the directive to live for God. And when I fail yet again, and I will, I will try to get over it and get on with it!

Let me share a few more New Year's quotes:

- Henry Ward Beecher: **“Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith.”** (Make your own choice.)
- Bill Vaughan: **“An optimist stays up until midnight to see the New Year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves.”** (Which one are you?)
- Ralph Waldo Emerson: **“Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year.”** (This too is a conscious decision – every minute of every day.)
- From *Islamic Illuminations*: **“We open our eyes and find ourselves, by God's grace and mercy, in a new year, with a fresh opportunity to change ourselves, our families, our communities and our world.”** (We never know where we'll find something inspiring, do we?)

Please let me know any way I may help you to make this your best year.

God's blessings to you in our New Year!
Katie Tippins







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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.



NEXT EAGLE CALL DEADLINE

The deadline for all Eagle Call information is **Monday, January 20.**

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!