



# the Eagle Call

Volume 46, Number 12 | December 2014

## Advent & Christmas at St. John's...

By Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

Advent begins with the simple chorus, *We are waiting, we are waiting for the Lord, we are waiting.* You will find yourself humming it as you leave worship, as you get ready for work in the morning, and as you light the candles of your Advent wreath when evening comes.

And then, on a long winter evening, we glimpse God's glory, in the least likely form and in the least likely place – as a helpless infant, sleeping in a manger. And we call to one another, *Come, O Come, All Ye Faithful and together we adore Him, Christ the Lord!*

The worship schedule for **Christmas Eve** includes three services:

- **5 p.m. Children's Service**, telling the story in a simple, straightforward manner with hymns and carols and a manger scene.
- **8:30 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service**, with pre-service music beginning at 8 p.m. This is a full festival Eucharistic liturgy with organ, brass, handbells and choir.
- **11 p.m. Candlelight Carol Service**, with pre-service music by the Odyssey Trio, the Adult Handbell Choir and the Luther College organ instructor, Brad Schultz.

**On Christmas morning, the 10 a.m. service is simple** – carols and hymns, preaching and Holy Communion. A special Christmas coffee follows in the Fireside Lounge.

*This is the 150th Christmas celebrated by our community of faith! As a note in a 1910 worship bulletin says, "You will not be absent I am sure."*

### 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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9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

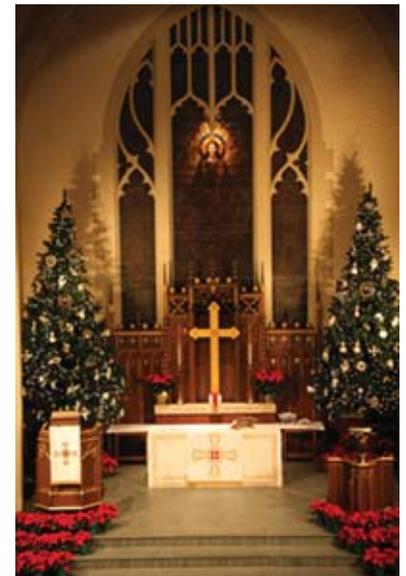
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*The St. John's Sanctuary decorated for Christmas over the years.*



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**A Word from Our Pastors**

*by Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman*

The phone call came while I was on the road between church and home – in the era before cell phones – and my husband met me at the door with the message: call the church. There's been vandalism you need to know about immediately...

It was Christmas Eve – technically, Christmas morning – about 12:30 a.m. Members of the Altar Guild were putting away the last of the communion ware following the 11 p.m. service when they heard a noise down the hall. Aware that they were the only ones left in the building, they walked to the Fellowship Hall together to find that the four large picture windows on the east side of the room had been broken and there was glass spread across the tables, chairs, and floor. In the mess they found four matching malt liquor bottles that someone, walking up the alley on that side of the church, had methodically thrown at every window... (In the morning, we found a fifth bottle and broken window in the choir room.) It was, of course, bitterly cold, and I soon discovered that the companies listed in the Yellow Pages advertising 24-hour emergency glass repair did not include Christmas in that 24-hour coverage! The police were called, and then the janitor and members of the Property Team assembled to spend a couple of hours boarding over the windows... No one was ever charged with the crime although the janitor and I had a good idea of who the culprit was – a person who had become angry when asked to leave the property a few weeks earlier because he was drunk and harassing the staff.

I was struck by the contrast between the anger physically inflicted on our church home and the candlelight and Christmas hymns which had filled it just hours before, and I remembered the very heart of the Christmas proclamation: *The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood.* (John 1:14, "The Message.") Our neighborhood was poor and received much less attention than the new housing and business development both north and south of downtown. There was hunger in that neighborhood, high unemployment, housing in desperate need of repair. And, obviously, there was anger. But Christ was there as well, through the ministry we and our partners sought to do in His name. Indeed, there is no neighborhood in this troubled world of ours that is worth less than another. In Christ, God has moved into each one, and we are those through whom God's love is made known.



St. John's neighborhood is large, extending from downtown Des Moines to a mountaintop in Tanzania. As we celebrate our 150<sup>th</sup> Christmas as a community of faith, we thank God for the privilege of ministry in this amazing neighborhood and ask to be strengthened to continue to be Christ's body in this neighborhood "for good." †

## Council Update

by Kris Gregersen, council president

### “Happy People Make Other People Happy”

“Everyone needs to be needed. It brings tremendous satisfaction to know that you have such a vital purpose in life, one that surely contributes to your happiness and contentment.” – Harvey Mackay

This quote is taken from an article Harvey Mackay wrote on happy people for the *Des Moines Register* business section. He further wrote that researchers found “people who buy gifts for others and make charitable donations report being happier than people who spend their money primarily on themselves. It illustrates the point that knowing that others have need of you brightens your outlook.”

Mackay may not have been writing to our community of faith, but I could not help thinking we must be pretty happy at St. John's. We know that we are needed. We are needed by our children to teach Biblical stories and to model Christ in our actions. We are needed by each other when we offer a hug, a prayer or support in good times and bad. We are needed by the community when we open our doors for Midweek Music, display an art exhibit, bring lunch to Connection Cafe, serve meals to the shelter, open our building for other events, and offer volunteers for the After School Arts Program.

**We are people of faith, and our happiness comes from knowing that the greatest gift is God's love, giving us forgiveness and salvation.**

We have GRATEFUL HEARTS for the saints of St. John's – for those who came before us to build and develop this Christian community. Today, we are the saints growing in faith and serving one another. So be generous with your time and your money to be a center of faith in our community. And then live with JOYFUL EXPECTATION, knowing God's love supports us in the days and years ahead.

Be happy! †

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



## In the City (and the world!) For Good!

By Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

*God is in the midst of the suffering. So how can we not be there, too? God longs for us to share our resources sacrificially: to be active advocates for the children, the jobless, the homeless, the elderly; to raise money; to advocate for legislation which will make this a great nation... N. Gordon Cosby*

A heart-wrenching report from the Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) received at the end of October reminds us to listen to God's call to be in the midst of those who suffer from hunger and food insecurity here in Des Moines. The report highlights the **double digit percentage increases** in use of its Food Pantry Network compared to last year. In September of this year, DMARC food pantry partners served 4,738 families – a 19.1 percent increase compared to 3,978 families served in September 2013.

Why has there been such a huge increase in pantry use? In the report, the Rev. Sarai Schnucker Rice, executive director of DMARC writes: *I think it's important to know what's driving these kinds of numbers. Since cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) went into effect in November (2013), the DMARC Food Pantry Network is serving more people in Greater Des Moines than ever before. In addition, as the economy improves and families make a little more money, they stop qualifying for SNAP even though they're still thousands of dollars away from a sustainable income.*

St. John's has supported the work of DMARC since its founding in 1952. While DMARC does much more than provide food to individuals and families in our community – including a strong emphasis on interfaith education and conversation – the Food Pantry Network is by far DMARC's largest cooperative ministry in the community. **Your continued support and year-end financial gifts are needed more than ever to continue this ministry!**

What can your financial gift do?

- **\$5** provides one day of food for an elderly couple.
- **\$25** provides clean diapers for one week for a toddler.
- **\$50** provides a five-day supply of food for a family of four.

Purchased food donations are always welcome, but monetary donations go farther because DMARC can purchase food in bulk for maximum savings. Please give generously – through St. John's or directly to DMARC at 1435 Mulberry St., Des Moines, IA 50309, or on-line [www.dmreligious.org](http://www.dmreligious.org)

Thank you for responding sacrificially and generously! †

## Christmas Eve Potluck Dinner

by Beth Ann Edwards

Many volunteers, musicians and staff members are involved in more than one worship service on Christmas Eve, and dinner sometimes takes a back seat. This year a potluck dinner will take place at 6 p.m. in Weertz Hall. Bring a dish to share and, if possible, your own table service, to minimize cleanup duties. Everyone is welcome! For more information, or if you would like to assist with setup and cleanup, contact Beth Ann Edwards ([bethann@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:bethann@stjohnsdsm.org)). †

## Prepare for Worship

By Larry Christensen

### Sunday, Dec. 7, Second Sunday of Advent

*John the Baptizer called people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing would get in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones.*

The readings this week are Isaiah 40:1-11, 2 Peter 3:8-15a and Mark 1:1-8. At the 10 a.m. service we will use only the Old Testament reading from Isaiah and the gospel from Mark. For many of us, verses from Isaiah 40 are set to the music of Handel's *Messiah*, and we will be using some of those arias and choruses within our 10 a.m. worship. The assembly's song will include the chant "We Are Waiting" and hymns ELW 266, "All Earth is Hopeful," and ELW 239, "Hark, the Glad Sound!" Movements from *Messiah* will include the orchestral "Sinfonia," "Comfort Ye My People," "Every Valley Shall Be Exalted," "And the Glory of the Lord," "O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion," "The People That Walked in Darkness" and "He Shall Feed His Flock/Come Unto Him." Soloists include Paul Stageberg, Erik Horak-Hult, Alex Redding, Mackenzie Lyons and Maddy Wiegers. There will be spoken reflection, Holy Communion and healing offered. Musicians for the Chamber Orchestra for this service will be paid for by the Holstad Memorial Harpsichord Fund.

### Sunday, Dec. 14, Third Sunday of Advent

*"Rejoice always," begins the reading from First Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. "All God's Children Got a Robe" go the words of the spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes that make us feel happy just to put them on. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God's party.*

The readings are Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11, Psalm 126, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 and John 1:6-8, 19-28. The assembly's song will include our Advent entrance chant, "We Are Waiting," and the hymns ELW 710, "Let Streams of Living Justice," and ELW 843, "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness." During the gospel reading the Cathedral Choir will sing the gospel motet, "This is the Record of John," by Orlando Gibbons, with Paul Stageberg as the evangelist/soloist. For offering Cathedral Choir will be joined by a string quintet for "I Rejoice in the Lord," by James Biery. For communion the Adult Handbells will ring "Humbly We Adore You," *adornate devote*, arranged by Rob Glover.

### Sunday, Dec. 21, Fourth Sunday of Advent

*God keeps the promise made to David, to give him an everlasting throne. The Angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."*

The readings are 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16, Luke 1:46b-55, the New Testament canticle we call the "Magnificat," Romans 16:25-27 (not read at 10 a.m.) and Luke 1:26-38. The assembly sings "We Are Waiting," ELW 882, "My Soul Does Magnify the Lord" and ELW 723, "Canticle of the Turning." (ELW 882 and ELW 723 are hymn paraphrases of Mary's Magnificat in African American gospel and Celtic styles respectively.) Music during offering will be a new setting of "The Angel Gabriel," by Larry Christensen, with dance by Kathleen Hurley. During communion Youth Handbells will ring "Creator of the Stars of Night" and Cathedral Choir will sing Hugo Distler's setting of "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming."

*(Visual art and liturgical appointments in the sanctuary will change each week as the Advent Season advances and moves toward the Nativity of Our Lord.)*

**See page 1 for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.**



### Sunday, Dec. 28, First Sunday of Christmas

*In the psalm all the natural world praises God, including all humanity, young and old. The voices of Simeon and 84-year-old Anna join the chorus today, recognizing what God is doing in Jesus. Simeon's song is often sung after communion for we have seen God's salvation in the assembled community and have held Jesus in our hands in the bread. Then, like the prophet Anna, we speak of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.*

The readings are Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Psalm 148, Galatians 4:4-7 and Luke 2:22-40. The hymns will be G.S. ELW 269, "Once in Royal David's City," H.D. ELW 313, "O Lord, Now Let Your Servant," and S.S. ELW 282, "It Came upon the Midnight Clear." †

## Children's Ministries

By Alicia Karwal

### God's Love Is Written in Our Hearts

All are invited to attend the Children's Advent Program at 9 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 14, in the Sanctuary. We get ready for Jesus through this celebratory event.

The children have been learning the meaning of Advent, the season of hopeful waiting. In Advent, as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth, we also watch for his second coming. We are reminded that despite the darkness that so often surrounds us, there is a promise of light. Jesus is that light! With joyful anticipation, we invite you to be a part of this special time as we lift up our voices in Jesus' name.

A reception will follow the Advent Program and 10 a.m. service in Fire-side Lounge. We will host a hot-chocolate bar with all of the fixings in celebration of this joyous event. We hope you will join us!

We will be collecting the following items: marshmallows, candy sprinkles, candy canes, whipping cream and plastic spoons. If you wish to make a donation, any of these items may be given to Alicia Karwal or dropped off at the front desk. Thank you in advance!

### Sunday School Schedule

Sunday, Dec. 7

- **3 year olds/Preschool/Kindergarten:** *Woman at the Well*, John 4:5-42; Advent Program Rehearsal in Room 7 for last portion of class time.
- **1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades:** Advent Program Rehearsal in Room 307.

Saturday, Dec. 13

- **1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades:** Advent Program Dress Rehearsal from 9 to 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary.

Sunday, Dec. 14

- **All Sunday School Classes:** Warm-up in the Chapel at 8:15 a.m.
- **Children's Advent Program at 9 a.m. in the Sanctuary.**
- Children's Advent Program Reception following the 10 a.m. service in the Fireside Lounge

Sunday, Dec. 21, & Sunday, Dec. 28

- NO SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

Sunday, Jan. 4, 2015

- Epiphany Event

### Epiphany to be Celebrated

Children and their families are invited to a special Epiphany event from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. on Sunday, Jan. 4, 2015, in Weertz Fellowship Hall. Volunteers are needed. If you would like to help, please contact Alicia Karwal ([akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org)). †



### The Mitten Tree

by Margaret Townsend

The Mitten Tree is ready for your gloves, mittens, scarves and hats. The cold came early this year. All sizes are needed for school children and shelters in the Des Moines Area. †

### Women of the ELCA

Information provided by members of WELCA

#### Blue Sashes?

Have you noticed that the members of Women of the ELCA are wearing blue sashes? We wish to be more visible to the congregation; please talk to us about our activities and service.



#### Group Meetings

All women of the church are encouraged to attend group meetings on Thursday, Dec. 4. Both groups are to bring unwrapped gifts for the mothers and children at the shelter.

**Sarah Group** will meet at 10 a.m. at Jean Williams' home at 314 42nd St. Bring cookies for the shut-ins.

**Lois Group** will meet at 12:30 p.m. in Neumann Hall for their Christmas celebration. †

## Small Groups

by Darla Stiles

### Upcoming Events

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

**Mah Jongg:** Mondays, Dec. 1, 8 and 15, 6 p.m. at church. Contact Darla Stiles ([darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org)).

**Restaurant Visitation/Christian Involvement:** Tuesday, Dec. 9, 6 p.m., home of Pam and Mike Hanna.

**Hardanger:** Tuesday, Dec. 9, 11:30 a.m., Valbracht Room at church.

**EAGLES:** Friday, Dec. 19, 10:45 a.m., tour of Jordan House, 2001 Fuller Rd., West Des Moines; followed by lunch at Bambino's, 2025 Grand Ave., West Des Moines.

**St. John's Social Club:** Sunday, Dec. 14, 5 p.m., Christmas Party, home of Judy and Phil Latessa, 4209 125th St., Urbandale.

**Lunch Bunch II:** Wednesday, Dec. 17, 12:30 p.m.

**Recreational Reading:** Wednesday, Dec. 17, 4:30 p.m., Rose Holm Room at church.

**Lunch Bunch I:** Thursday, Dec. 18, 11:30 a.m.

**Photography:** Will not meet in December.

**Scrapbooking:** Will not meet in December.

**Yoga:** Will resume after the holidays.

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

### More information

**Quilting** members continue to meet Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. in Room 308. If interested, contact Dorothy Parry (255-6049).

**Mah Jongg** will meet Mondays, Dec. 1, 8 and 15 at 6 p.m. at St. John's; then we will take a break until after the holidays.

**Hardanger** will meet on Tuesday, Dec. 9, at 11:30 a.m. in Valbracht at St. John's.

**St. John's Social Club** will meet on Sunday, Dec. 14, at 5 p.m. at the home of Judy and Phil Latessa, 4209 125th St., Urbandale, for a Christmas Party. Meat and vegetable lasagnas will be provided by the hosts; guests may bring an appetizer, salad or dessert. Envelopes will be available if you would like to contribute to the Connection Café or Empower Tanzania. Please RSVP by Monday, Dec. 8, to Judy ([jclatessa125@gmail.com](mailto:jclatessa125@gmail.com) or 249-2171).

**Lunch Bunch II** will meet Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 12:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining this group, contact Janet Figg (279-6326).

**Recreational Reading** will be meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 4:30 p.m. in the Rose Holm Room at church. The book we will read and discuss is *The Mirrored World*, by Debra Dean.

**Lunch Bunch I** meets on Thursday, Dec. 18, at 11:30 a.m. If anyone is interested in joining the group, please call Barb Hyler (262-5261). New members are most welcome!

**EAGLES** will meet Friday, Dec. 19, at 10:45 a.m. at the Jordan House, 2001 Fuller Rd., West Des Moines (between Grand and Railroad) for a tour. The group will then have lunch at Bambino's, 2025 Grand Ave., West Des Moines (fairly close to the Jordan House). Tour fee is \$5 per person. If you will join us, please contact Roma Youngquist (285-3810 or [Plaallda@aol.com](mailto:Plaallda@aol.com)).

**Scrapbooking** will not meet in December.

**Yoga** will resume after the holidays.

**Photography** will not meet in December. The Sunday, Jan. 18, meeting theme will be "Doors and Windows," so start photographing unique doors and windows. †

## Global Mission

by Mary Liechty

### Quilting Bee News

A big "thank you" to all of you who attended the November Quilting Bee! Besides having a lot of fun, we actually accomplished quite a bit. *We had people cutting material, ironing, measuring and cutting batting, and putting quilt-square packages together.* We had one lovely lady who arrived with a suitcase full of squares ready to be packaged and another who dropped off 13 completed quilt tops!

We also need to thank Two Rivers Chapter #31170 of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for providing some much needed supplemental funds (\$600) for the purchase of batting for the Lutheran World Relief Quilt Mission.

Even with the generous funds from Two Rivers Chapter, we can still use large pieces of material for backing and clean blankets that are in good shape for batting. If you have any to donate, please leave them at the church office.

Our next Quilting Bee is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 13, from 9 to noon in Weertz Hall. At that time we will continue cutting and packaging material, but we also will begin sandwiching quilt tops.

We welcome anyone who wants to help – you don't even have to know how to quilt! Join the fun. If you need more information, contact Mary Liechty (326-2737). †

## Youth Ministries

By Noah Niermann

“Here is a breathing body and a beating heart,  
strong legs, bones and teeth and two clear eyes  
to read the world.” she whispered.  
“And here,” I said, “is the lanyard I made at camp.”  
“And here,” I wish to say to her now,  
“is a smaller gift. Not the archaic truth,  
that you can never repay your mother,  
but the rueful admission that when she took the  
two-toned lanyard from my hands,  
I was as sure as a boy could be  
that this useless worthless thing I wove out of  
boredom  
would be enough to make us even.”

-From: “*The Lanyard*” by Billy Collins

One Sunday evening this past November I attended a poetry reading by the former U.S. Poet Laureate, Billy Collins. Out of the many poems he read, one in particular has stayed with me like a soft echo. It is called “The Lanyard,” and I have included a small portion of it which you see here. Sadly, copyright restrictions prevent me from including the entire poem, so I would encourage you to read it in full online. All it takes is a very quick Google search. Collins begins the poem by stumbling upon the word lanyard in the “L” section of a dictionary. Suddenly, he is transported back to a clear day at camp, sitting next to a lake, and learning from a counselor how to cross strand over strand to make a lanyard that would be a gift for his mother. He continues with a list of all that his mother has given him, “life and milk from her breasts... thousands of meals... clothing and a good education...” and the list goes on, finally coming to a conclusion with the excerpt you read above. And in this conclusion, we hear the promise that our inadequate gifts are enough. Or maybe, we hear that we are loved no matter how inadequate we may sometimes feel.

Recently, our 7th and 8th grade confirmation students read and studied Luke’s account of Jesus birth—a story that we will all soon be hearing many times now that it is December. In it we hear poetry. We hear the poetry of Mary’s Song, the Magnificat, as she sings: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant... he has cast the mighty down from their thrones and lifted up the lowly, and he has filled the hungry with good things!” And we hear the poetry of Simeon, too, as he proclaims, “Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace: your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people: a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people, Israel!” In these songs and this poetry, we hear the fulfillment of God’s promise to mend the entire universe. God enters our world and our lives in a barn, in the country, in the form of a baby. And that baby brings the

promise of hope and love, and of a time when tears will be no more (Revelation 21:4). We did nothing to deserve these promises, and there is nothing we can do to repay them. We live in the promise that making lanyards is more than enough. Thanks be to God. Merry Christmas!

### Youth Fundraising Dinner & Auction! Friday, Feb. 27

St. John’s and our Youth Ministry Team are proud to announce the date of our Winter Auction and Dinner Gala for 2015! Mark your calendars for the evening of Friday, Feb. 27. The event once again will be held at the Forte Ballroom, located just south of the Wells Fargo Arena on Second Street. Over 200 people attended last year’s event, and we were able to raise more than \$15,000.

Your support opens up otherwise unavailable opportunities for the young people in our congregation. This year your support will help send youth to the National Youth Gathering in Detroit and to the Boundary Waters in Minnesota. These trips help our young people grow and deepen their faith. They create memories and learn skills that will last them a lifetime. So please, mark your calendars and join us for a delicious dinner this winter!

P.S. Please, consider donating an item or items to be auctioned during the evening. We are a creative congregation full of painters, woodworkers, knitters, potters, stained-glass makers, writers, brewers, cooks and so much more. Would you be willing to make or share something for the auction? Or, do you work for a business, restaurant or organization that might be willing to donate a good or service? Large and small donations alike add lots of interest and excitement to the evening. Please consider helping in this way. You may contact Noah Niermann or Pastor Bob Speirs if you have something you would like to share. Thank you! †



Showing off the plush accommodations at Reggies Sleepout that a group of our youth participated in this last fall.

## The Arts at St. John's

By Beth Ann Edwards

### Friends of the Arts Update

The Arts Visioning Team (AVT) meets monthly to guide and direct four major emphases of the arts at St. John's: arts in Worship, Midweek Music Series, Artist of the Month (plus additional visual art opportunities) and the Performing Arts Series. This 150th anniversary year gives us the opportunity to dovetail our arts programming with St. John's anniversary events.

Thanks to your support, the String Scholars program will be enhanced this spring with four additional student musicians. The Weertz Gallery, during the next year, will feature exhibits highlighting our rich 150-year-old heritage at St. John's. The Midweek Music Series provides free weekly concerts to all, especially those with strong downtown ties.

The Performing Arts Series has added a new concert to our spring program. Please join us on Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2015, as we host a concert by the Iowa State Singers, conducted by Dr. James Rodde, and the Waukee High School choir, directed by Amy Hall. This concert is free and open to the public. Mark your calendars for May 16, 2015, when we host David Richards, son of St. John's former senior pastor Elton Richards. David is a Broadway producer and former marketing executive with the Des Moines Symphony Orchestra.

Stay tuned for more exciting arts events, and thank you again for your support. For more information, please contact AVT Chair Larry Hanson ([lhanson@ft.newyorklife.com](mailto:lhanson@ft.newyorklife.com)) or Beth Ann Edwards ([bethann@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:bethann@stjohnsdsm.org)).

### Joyful Noise Invited to Sing with Kisasa at 5 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship Service

The Kisasa musicians invite Joyful Noise singers (who are in Kindergarten or 1st and 2nd Grade) to join them in singing a song on Christmas Eve. Joyful Noise singers will have learned this song for the Sunday, Dec. 14, Advent Program. More information will be sent to Joyful Noise families soon. If you have questions, please contact Beth Ann Edwards ([bethann@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:bethann@stjohnsdsm.org)).

### Adult Handbell Choir Invited to Perform with Iowa Youth Chorus Dec. 6

The Iowa Youth Chorus has extended an invitation to the St. John's Adult Handbell Choir to ring at their Candy Cane Concert on Saturday, Dec. 6. The concert begins at 4 p.m. at First Christian Church in Des Moines. Our St. John's ringers will ring one or two pieces of pre-concert music, plus 15 minutes of seasonal music during the concert. Our handbells also will accompany two pieces sung by the combined youth choruses. Tickets are \$10 per person. Please join us and help support our handbell program and the Iowa Youth Chorus. More information can be found at [iowayouthchorus.org](http://iowayouthchorus.org).

### Artist of the Month: Family Christmas Album

In keeping with our 150th anniversary, you are once again the artists/photographers of the month. Featured in December in Weertz Fellowship Hall are photos and reflections of Christmas. Thank you to all who have shared pictures with us. These family portraits are mixed with Christmas photos from the St. John's archives. Please look for a Christmas scene painted by our Kisasa artists, and feel free to add to the scenery. Markers, snowflakes and more will be available for use on Wednesdays and Sundays during December.



*For the December Artist of the Month the Weertz Gallery display will include family Christmas photos, photos from the archives, and an interactive Christmas mural.*

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Minna and Jenn Horak-Hult along with members of Asphalt & Stained Glass provide music for the 2013 Midweek Music Series "Christmas at St. John's." Please join us for the 2014 event on Wednesday, December 17, at 12:05 pm for music of the season by our own St. John's talent, including Asphalt & Stained Glass, Sue Odem, and more!

### Kisasa Musicians Prepare for Advent and Christmas

The Advent and Christmas seasons present wonderful opportunities for our Kisasa musicians and artists. Please check out the mini-mural, painted by our Kisasa artists, that will hang in the Weertz Fellowship Hall gallery. Feel free to add your own seasonal touches!

Kisasa is open to all children Grades 3-6, and we invite guests to sing and ring with us at the 5 p.m. Christmas Eve worship service. Please take a look at our schedule, and if you have questions or would like to bring your child, contact Kisasa Director Beth Ann Edwards ([bethann@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:bethann@stjohnsdsm.org)).

#### *Kisasa Schedule for December*

- **Wednesday, Dec. 3:** 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. rehearsal.
- **Wednesday, Dec. 10:** 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. rehearsal.
- **Sunday, Dec. 14:** 9 a.m. Children's Advent Program.
- **Wednesday, Dec. 17:** 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. rehearsal.
- **Sunday, Dec. 21:** 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. rehearsal for Christmas Eve worship.

*After the 10 a.m. service, we'll have pizza in Neumann Hall, and then rehearse our Christmas Eve music for the 5 p.m. worship. A crew also will be decorating the Sanctuary during our rehearsal time. If parents and family members are available to help decorate, please let me know and I'll pass along your names.*

- **Wednesday, Dec. 24, Christmas Eve:** 4:15 p.m. call time for 5 p.m. worship service.

### Midweek Music Series

December brings holiday music to the Midweek Music Series! Please join us and hear songs to celebrate the Christmas season. Wednesday, Dec. 17, highlights our very own St. John's musicians.

Once again, we offer a non-Wednesday recital over the holidays! Tom Hudson, who plays the cello and is a member of our Christmas Eve orchestra, will be joined by his mother Sue Hudson and sister Carol Hudson Biel on piano on Friday, Jan. 2, 2015. (No lunch will be served on Jan. 2.)

Music begins at 12:04 a.m. in the Sanctuary and is free and open to the public. A light lunch (for \$6 per person) is served in Weertz Fellowship Hall at 12:30 p.m., following the concert. Please join us!

- **Dec. 3** - Grand View College Choir (Kathryn Pohlman Duffy, director).
- **Dec. 10** - Principal Guys (Kay Rothert, director). Men's Chorus from the Principal Financial.
- **Dec. 17** - Christmas at St. John's.
- **Fri., Jan. 2** - Sue Hudson and family (Sue Hudson, piano; Carol Hudson Biel, piano; Tom Hudson, cello)

*Remember, no lunch served Fri., Jan. 2, but please join us following the concert for a reception in Fireside Lounge. †*

## Hospitality & Outreach

by Katie Tippins

### Welcome New Members!

Below are photos and brief personal information about the people who attended our last new member class on Sunday, Oct. 19. Please make them welcome as only St. John's can!

**Alison Bahnsen and Nate Duncan:** Alison and Nate reside in Johnston and will be married here this coming April. Alison is employed by the Des Moines Public Schools as a speech-language pathologist, and Nate is a financial analyst at the Lauridsen Group. Alison likes spending time with family and friends. Both are Iowa Hawkeye fans, and Nate still has hope for the Chicago Cubs (as do I). Alison likes to travel; Nate likes outdoor activities and working in their yard. While our location was attractive to them, they are impressed with the friendly people and atmosphere.



**Tyler "Kalevi" Chen:** Kalevi lives in Des Moines and is already participating in our music ministry. He is a supervisor at Caribou Coffee as well as a freelance bassoonist and bassoon teacher. He has a wide variety of interests, including music, coffee, biking, blogging, beer/wine. He is socially active for LGBT issues, race issues and poverty. Kalevi appreciates St. John's openness toward LGBT and our emphasis on music.



**Jeanne and Steve Low:** Jean and Steve met on RAGBRAI over 23 years ago. They have four grown children, one grandson and make their home in Des Moines. Jeanne is a marketing manager focused on community and reputational marketing at Wells Fargo Home Lending. Steve is an architect with Brooks Borg Skiles. They are both interested in cycling and gardening, but while Steve also loves stained glass, Jeanne is a gardener. With Steve's interest in architecture, he had been to St. John's prior to joining to tour the building. They both like the proximity to their home and the size of the congregation. Jeanne said they enjoyed their first service so much they immediately knew they had a new church home. (It doesn't get any better than that!)



**Lauren Cushing and Tom Piper:** West Des Moines is home to Lauren and Tom. Their wedding is slated for next August at St. John's. Lauren is a jobs recruiter for a staffing firm based in Omaha; she matches people and jobs around the Midwest. Nate is a provider relations recruiter for ARAG Group. He likes doing handy work around their home. They both like music, movies, hiking and sports, while Alison enjoys running and shopping (possibly during the time Nate is working in the yard?). Nate just started volunteering with the Kiwanis Miracle League as a coach for the spring of 2015. Lauren spent six months traveling Europe with stops in Spain, Portugal, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and France. Lauren likes the welcoming nature of St. John's, and Nate likes the diversity and openness of the church. He also appreciates the beautiful building.



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**Janice and Rick Klitzke:** Janice and Rick recently moved to Des Moines from Wisconsin. Rick works for Pepsi, is a Green Bay Packers' fan and likes his dogs. Janice enjoys crocheting. They found St. John's upon their arrival in our city and like the people they have met here.



**Jill Leifermann:** A Des Moines resident, Jill is a preschool teacher at Bidwell Riverside Child Development Center. She is a Minnesota native, served in the U.S. Navy for four years and the Minnesota National Guard for 10 years. She participated in a three-month mission trip to Peru, where she taught children at a special needs school in a very poor community. Jill's interests include reading, photography (We have a Photography Group here, Jill!), cooking, travel, camping and spending time with family. She says luck brought her to St. John's; we feel the same way.



**Kenneth and Mary Strecker:** Ken and Mary moved to Des Moines in the not too distant past to be close to family. Ken is a retired ELCA pastor; Mary says she is enjoying her retirement. Ken's interests include music, physical fitness, Bible study and reading about world affairs. Mary is interested in politics but is a true bibliophile. When asked to note her interests, she put reading, reading and READING – emphasis mine, but it was noted three times! We are glad they came to town for family and that they are now part of ours.



**Kate Winslow:** Kate relocated to Des Moines from Alaska and notes her employment as being a photographer, photo-ethnographer, Alaska Ambassador and general educator. She is interested in biking, hiking, boating, kayaking, theater, philosophy, photography and writing. She first saw St. John's Lutheran Church when she was biking from Denver across country. She thought it was a beautiful building and appreciated the craftsmanship and traditional feel. She loves the artwork, the music – quality and variety, the nice people (“especially Pastor Bob”), the congregation and that we “seem to be genuine.” (Let's keep it that way, people!)



We welcome you all with open arms and hearts. We are happy to have you as part of our congregational family. As we all journey together, let us be led by the guidance of the Holy Spirit to love and serve each other from our position in the city for good.

New members and not-so-new members, please contact me with any questions you may have. I am happy to match your areas of interest to our many and variable ministry teams and areas of service. †

St. John's Lutheran Church  
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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](mailto:scottl@stjohnsdsm.org).



### **EAGLE CALL DEADLINE**

The next deadline for all Eagle Call content is **noon on Monday, December 15**. Please send articles in digital format to Scott LaBlanc, [scottl@stjohnsdsm.org](mailto:scottl@stjohnsdsm.org). If you are unable to send it by e-mail, drop it off at the church office.

Thank you!