

the Eagle Call

Volume 47, Number 02 | February 2015

Through the DECADES

ST. JOHN'S YOUTH AUCTION

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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Eagle Call Editor & Designer

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Monday - Thursday
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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stjohnsdsm.org

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Friday, Feb. 27, 6:30 to 9 p.m.

Downtown at the Forte Ballroom

This winter you are invited to celebrate with the whole St. John's community at our annual Youth Auction and Dinner! The evening's festivities are organized to support the many young people in our congregation. This year, in honor of our 150th anniversary, we are looking back through the decades and lifting up all the ways that young people have shaped this community in the last 150 years. We will hear stories from former youth and learn about the ways our young people are leading us into our next 150 years. Do you have a story you would like to tell?

The event will be hosted just a few blocks down from the church at the Forte Ballroom, located at 615 3rd St. Tickets include a delicious full-course Italian dinner catered by Baratta's. Drinks will be served by our confirmation students, and desserts will abound!

Tickets are available Sunday mornings and online at the church website (www.stjohnsdsm.org). Please come out and support our young people! We hope to see you there.

Ticket Prices:

- \$15 Adult
- \$8 Children Ages 5 to 12
- \$45 Family of 4 or More
- \$175 Reserved Table of 10

P.S. Please also consider donating an item or service for the auction. Items that have gone over well in the past are: artwork, crafts, Civic Center tickets, sports tickets, woodworking, a game of golf, a weekend getaway to a family cabin and the like. If you have any questions, please contact Director of Youth Ministry Noah Niermann, at the church office (243-7691) or by e-mail (noah@stjohnsdsm.org).

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A Word from Our Pastors

by Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman



My Friends,

In an e-mail I received around the first of the year, the sender referenced a prayer that I had shared on this page several years ago; it was from a book by one of my favorite devotional writers, Macrina Wiedekehr. The prayer had been so meaningful to her, she wrote, that she had memorized it and continues to pray it daily. Her note reminded me – again – of my call to not only pray for you and with you as your pastor, but also to help you deepen your life of prayer in the midst of your own demanding day-to-day activities.

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18; it is a 40-day season of reflection upon the ways we separate ourselves from God and from one another (which we call “sin”) as well as the immense mercy of God shown to us through the cross of Christ. It is, of course, a counter-cultural thing to keep Lent in the “if-you-try-hard-enough-you-can-do-anything-you-set-your-mind-to” world in which we live. It is a season of honesty and vulnerability, qualities often perceived as “weak” in the eyes of others. But in its counter-cultural-ness and “weakness,” the Lenten season is a beautiful gift of freedom, allowing us to set aside the façade we think we must present to the world in order to meet the One who loves us as we are and raises us to new life in Christ.

What follows are some prayers for the weeks of Lent. They are reprinted with permission from a series, titled *Feasting on the Word*. Add them to your current devotional practice, or use them to begin such a practice this Lenten season. Take a few deep breaths before you pray, linger over the words as the Spirit directs you, and breathe deeply again before returning to the tasks at hand...

Week 1 (Beginning on Ash Wednesday)

“God of our salvation, we long to be reconciled to you. Help us to clear away any obstacle that prevents us from accepting the grace of Christ. No matter what we face in this life, increase in us knowledge and patience, kindness and holiness of spirit, genuine love and true speech, so that by the power of God at work in us we may live even as we are dying and rejoice even in our sorrows. Though it may seem that we have nothing, if we are reconciled to you, we possess everything, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Week 2

“Creator God, you have formed us as your own, so whether we are weeping or laughing, hungry or well-fed, dreaming or shouting for joy, we are always coming home to you. For all this and more, we thank you in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Week 3

“God Most High, thank you for signs of your power and grace, shown to us even in the wilderness times and places. Give us courage to stand firm in your Word in every time of trial and testing, that we may enter the land of your freedom and receive the salvation you so generously give; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Week 4

“God of Righteousness, you see the secret acts of our devotion and know the hidden motives of our hearts. Make our religion genuine, that our hearts and minds confirm the words we speak and the disciplines we practice. Confirm in us a spirit

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of humility that without regard to earthly honor we may live as your faithful children in the way of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Week 5

“Surprising God, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ you make all things new. Long ago you called your church to a love beyond all social and cultural differences and gave it the gift of your Holy Spirit to enact such love. Give us that same spirit of openness, that we too might discern your will in our day and make such love our way of life. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.”

Holy Week

“We stand near the cross, O God – disturbed, distraught, discouraged. Yet we gather here as disciples, those whom Jesus loves. In the face of such suffering, show us the face of our Savior. In the shadow of such evil, show us the light of your grace. In this week of great solemnity, let us stand as witnesses to your great love for the whole world, revealed in the outstretched arms of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

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150th Anniversary News

Knit-In on Feb. 15

Knitters and crocheters, please join us for a Knit-In party in the Fireside Lounge Sunday, Feb. 15, after the 10 a.m. service. Bring your yarn and your prayer shawl, or any knitting or crocheting project you are working on, and we can all knit together! If you have already turned in a prayer shawl for the March 150th anniversary exhibit, stop by to say hello. A light lunch will be provided, so please RSVP to Darla Stiles (darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org) or Beth Ann Edwards (bethannedwards@msn.com). (Co-sponsored by Friends of the Arts, Creating in Community and Christian Involvement.)



Prayer Shawl Exhibit: The March Artist of the Month display, as part of the 150th anniversary celebration, will feature prayer shawls made by our St. John’s community. Prayer shawls are created by individuals, blessed by the pastors and given to those who are grieving or experiencing difficulty in life. More than 18 people have volunteered to knit or crochet a prayer shawl for this project. Plenty of kits are available, and there’s still more than enough time to knit during these long winter nights and Sunday afternoon football games.

Share your prayer shawl stories: If you, a friend or a family member have a story about receiving a prayer shawl and would like to share it, please contact Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org). We are a caring community, and prayer shawl ministry is held up as one example of how we care for one another.

Companion Parish

By Chediel Daniel
Shared by Carol Fisher

A message to all St. John’s members from the Tanzanian children and teachers in the Mramba Parish Children’s Club, sent by Ched Daniel, our colleague in the village.

Good afternoon! It’s our hope that this finds you well. The attached is the kid’s picture taken today as we re-opened our club after the Christmas and New Year break. They are all fine and healthy, waving to you (i.e., in their photo) as their best wishes TO YOU FOR THE NEW YEAR!

We also measured their shoe sizes today, and they will get them together with new uniforms next week on Monday. Please extend our great thanks and regards to all.



Prepare to Worship

By Larry Christensen

Sunday, Feb. 1 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany, Lectionary 4

In Deuteronomy God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses, who will speak for God; in Psalm 111 God shows the people the power of God's works. For the church, these are ways of pointing to the unique authority people sensed in Jesus' actions and words. We encounter that authority in God's word, around which we gather, the word that trumps any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing us to follow Jesus.

The readings are Deuteronomy 18:15-20, Psalm 111, 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 and Mark 1:21-28. The hymns will be ELW 665, "Rise, Shine, You People!" ELW 519, "Open Your Ears," ELW 610, "O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come," and ELW 537, "On Our Way Rejoicing." We will use ELW Setting 3. For offering at 10 a.m., Cathedral Choir will sing "I Believe This Is Jesus," by Undine Smith Moore, and the Adult Handbell Choir will play "A Joyous Ring" for communion. Nancy Stafford will play the postlude on organ.

Sunday, Feb. 8 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, Lectionary 5

In Isaiah, it is the one God who sits above the earth and numbers the stars – it is that God who strengthens the powerless. So in Jesus' healing work we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service (diakonia). Like Simon's mother-in-law, we are lifted up to health and diakonia. Following Jesus, we strengthen the powerless; like Jesus, we seek to renew our own strength in quiet times of prayer.

The readings are Isaiah 40:21-31, Psalm 147:1-11, 20c, 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 and Mark 1:29-39. The hymns will be ELW 771, "God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens," ELW 519, "Open Your Ears," ELW 673, "God, Whose Almighty Word," and ELW 632, "O God, Our Help in Ages Past," and use Setting 3. At 10 a.m. Kisasa Handbells will ring for offering, and Cathedral Choir will sing "In the Beginning Was the Word," Michael Ryan-Wenger with Sandy Moore Wacha as flute soloist. The postlude will be by the St. John's Chamber Orchestra.

Sunday, Feb. 15 Transfiguration of Our Lord & Last Sunday after Epiphany

The Sundays after Epiphany began with Jesus' baptism and end with three disciples' vision of his transfiguration. In Mark's story of Jesus' baptism, apparently only Jesus sees the Spirit descending and hears the words from heaven. But now Jesus' three closest friends hear the same words naming him God's beloved son. As believers, Paul writes, we are enabled to see the God-light in Jesus' face, because the same God who created light in the first place has shone in our hearts to give us that vision. The light of

God's glory in Jesus has enlightened us through baptism and shines in us also for others to see.

The readings are 2 Kings 2:1-12, Psalm 50:1-6, 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 and Mark 9:2-9. The hymns will be ELW 314, "Arise, Your Light Has Come," ELW 815, "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light," verse 1 as the gospel acclamation, ELW 316, "Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair," and ELW 315, "How Good, Lord, to Be Here!" We will use ELW Setting 1 including the Kyrie. At 10 a.m. the offering music will be by the Youth Handbell Choir. For communion, Cathedral Choir will sing "Beautiful Savior," setting by Robert Hobby. Once again Sandy Moore Wacha will play the flute obbligato, and the congregation will have the opportunity to sing on some of the verses. The organ postlude will be by Nancy Stafford.

Wednesday, Feb. 18 Ash Wednesday



Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. As we hear in today's readings, now is the acceptable time to return to the Lord. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection.

The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness.

The readings are Joel 2:1-2, 12-17, Psalm 51:1-17, 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 and 6:1-6, 16-21. The hymns will be ELW 321, "Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church," and ELW 601, "Savior, When in Dust to You." Cathedral Choir will provide choral leadership for the evening worship service.

Sunday, Feb. 22 First Sunday in Lent

On Ash Wednesday the church began its journey toward baptismal immersion in the death and resurrection of Christ. This year, the Sundays in Lent lead us to focus on five covenants God makes in the Hebrew scriptures and to use them as lenses through which to view baptism. First, Peter connects the way God saved Noah's family in the flood with the way God saves us through the water of baptism. The baptismal covenant is made with us individually, but the new life we are given in baptism is for the sake of the world.

The readings will be Genesis 9:9-17, Psalm 25:1-10, 1 Peter 3:18-22 and Mark 1:9-15. Asphalt & Stained Glass will accompany the liturgy this weekend joined by the Chamber Orchestra at 10 a.m. The hymns will be ELW 446, "I'm Going on a Journey," sung call-and-response style with Kisasa Choristers doing the "calls," ELW 740, "God of the Sparrow," and ELW 325, "I Want Jesus to Walk with Me." We will use ELW Setting 5, the "plain chant" setting, during Lent. The offering music will be by Kisasa Handbells, and communion music will be "Show Me Thy Ways," by Walter L. Pelz, accompanied by the Chamber Orchestra, which also will provide the postlude at 10 a.m.

In the City (And the World) for Good!

by Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

It is true that going out on to the street implies the risk of accidents happening, as they would to any ordinary man or woman. But if the Church stays wrapped up in itself, it will age. And if I had to choose between a wounded Church that goes out on to the streets and a sick, withdrawn Church, I would definitely choose the first one. ... Pope Francis

There are so many ways that a simple act of love and justice – repeated again and again – can make a difference in someone's life. Read on to see how you can connect with others at St. John's as we "go out on to the street" of this city and this world in the name of Christ.

- I recently received a year-end report from Equal Exchange, the Boston cooperative through which we participate in the Lutheran World Relief Coffee Project. For every pound of Equal Exchange coffee you purchase at St. John's, Lutheran World Relief receives 20 cents for their Small Farmer's Fund. Grants from that fund are offered back to the small producers for the sake of improving farming practices and building schools and clinics in their communities – in short, bringing hope to individuals and families around the world. If you haven't tried the coffee or chocolate, tea, dried fruits, etc. that are always available here at St. John's, please do, knowing that your purchase makes a difference to an entire community somewhere in this world! (A helpful fact to know: Coffee is second only to oil when it comes to the most highly traded commodities in the world.) *Obviously, this is due to Lutheran consumption of the product...*
- Please continue to give financial and in-kind support to the Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) for the Emergency Food Pantry and other programs through which they offer help to those in need. And please don't forget to support the ongoing need for **diapers** (especially Size 3 and larger) at the Food Pantry. No child should have to languish in a soiled diaper for an entire day – or more!
- Please pay attention to what is going on in the Iowa Legislature in regard to our state's commitment to the needs of those who are mentally ill, searching for employment, new immigrants and others who are vulnerable. By bringing us into the world in a body like ours, God has declared the worth of every human being. Your baptism calls you to "work for justice and peace in all the world." (ELW, p. 228)
- Those of us of a certain age remember the Lenten "dime folder" offering – a sign of self-denial and support for others during the Lenten season. Pick up a World Hunger Appeal piggy bank for the same purpose during Lent. And since we're working with the numbers 1, 5 and 0, let's have a goal of \$1,500 from those cute piggy banks by Easter!



Pope Francis (above) is right. We can protect ourselves at all costs, or take a risk for the sake of the Gospel by going out into the streets of this city and world. The first option leads to a slow death, the second to hope and life. Let's choose that option!

Waukee Junior Becomes Soprano Section Leader

My name is Maddy Wieggers. I am proud to be a member of the Cathedral Choir here at St. John's. I am a junior at Waukee High School, where I am involved in just about all of the choir activities, including A Cappella concert choir, Millennium varsity show choir, Avenue varsity jazz choir, the spring musicals and others.



I became interested in music at a very early age as my parents exposed me to wonderful musical opportunities, such as symphony and other concerts. I have always found the human voice to be amazing in the ways that it can transform and create beautiful, purposeful noise.

So far, my endeavors with singing have taken me many places, and there are places I have yet to go. I was the 2014 winner of the Iowa National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) competition, and I received honorable mention for the region. Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) is another vocal competition I am currently participating in. In November, I won Iowa's MTNA. And, in January, I headed to Fargo, North Dakota, for regionals and ended up winning that, too! In March, I will complete in Las Vegas for the national MTNA vocal competition. I have never been more excited to sing!

As far as my goals, I hope to find a way to apply my talent to something that will benefit others and make a difference. I would like to see how far my voice can take me, and I know I can make anything happen. My family continues to be extremely supportive in all of the journeys it takes to make all this work. My voice teacher, Leanne Freeman-Miller, is incredible. I am blessed to have such joy in my life, to be here at St. John's, and to be meeting my goals one at a time.

Small Groups

by Darla Stiles

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

Mah Jongg: Mondays, Feb. 2, 9, 16 and 23, 6 p.m., Neumann Hall at church.

Restaurant Visitation/Christian Involvement: Tuesday, Feb. 3, 6 p.m. Location announced later.

Yoga: Thursdays, Feb. 5, 12, 19 and 26, 5:45 to 6:45 p.m., Fireside Lounge at church.

WIRED Luncheon & Program: Sunday, Feb. 8, 11:30 a.m., Weertz Fellowship Hall at church.

Hardanger: Tuesdays, Feb. 10 and 24, Valbracht Gallery at church.

EAGLES: Presentation about Islam by Randy Pauling. Watch for more details.

Creating in Community Knit-In: Sunday, Feb. 15, 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m., Fireside Lounge at church.

Lunch Bunch II: Wednesday, Feb. 18, 12:30 p.m.

Lunch Bunch I: Thursday, Feb. 19, 11:30 a.m.

WIRED Night Out: Thursday, Feb. 19, 6 p.m. Game night at Karen Andeweg's home.

Photography: Sunday, Feb. 22, following 10 a.m. service. Theme: Bridges.

Recreational Reading: Wednesday, Feb. 25, 4:30 p.m., Rose Holm Room at church.

St. John's Social Club: Friday, Feb. 27, 6 to 9 p.m. St. John's youth auction at Forte Ballroom south of Wells Fargo Arena on Second Street.

Scrapbooking: Saturday, Feb. 28, between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., Room 8 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.stjohnsdsdm.org/news

More information

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

Mah Jongg will meet Mondays, Feb. 2, 9, 16 and 23 at 6 p.m. in Neumann Hall at St. John's. If you can attend, contact Darla Stiles (darlastiles@stjohnsdsdm.org).

Yoga classes will be held Thursdays, Feb. 5, 12, 19 and 26 from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m. in the Fireside Lounge. Cost is \$10 per class. If interested in taking this class, contact yoga instructor Corinne Lambert (515-556-3679 or callingwisdom1@hotmail.com).

WIRED Luncheon & Program will be Sunday, Feb. 8, at 11:30 a.m. in Weertz Fellowship Hall at church. Anne Starr, CEO of Orchard Place, will be the speaker. The cost is \$12. Following the program, the group will finish the fleece blankets that will be donated to the children at

Orchard Place. Sign up by Sunday, Feb. 1, in the Fireside Lounge or online at our St. John's website (www.stjohnsdsdm.org).

EAGLES will meet for a presentation about Islam by Randy Pauling. Watch announcements for the exact date and more details.

Creating in Community Knit-In will be Sunday, Feb. 15, from 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. Bring yarn and needles (homespun yarn and Size 13 needles), and join us in the Fireside Lounge at church to work on prayer shawls that will be displayed in Weertz Fellowship Hall in March. Afterward, they will be given to those who are going through difficult times. Questions? Contact Darla Stiles (darlastiles@stjohnsdsdm.org) or Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsdm.org).

Lunch Bunch II will meet Wednesday, Feb. 18, at 12:30 p.m. If interested in joining this group, please contact Janet Figg (515-279-6326).

Lunch Bunch I meets on Thursday, Feb. 19, at 11:30 a.m. New members are most welcome, so if anyone is interested in joining the group, call Barb Hyler (515-401-5721).

WIRED Night Out will meet Thursday, Feb. 19, at the home of Karen Andeweg for a game night. Bring an hors d'oeuvre to share. Please RSVP to Karen (karenandeweg@gmail.com).

Photography will meet Sunday, Feb. 22, following the 10 p.m. service. Themes for the year are listed below.

- February: Bridges
- March: Faith Represented in Photos
- April: Gates
- May: Public Art (statues, architecture, etc...)
- June & July: Not meeting during the summer
- August: Travel
- September: Water
- October: Reflections
- November: Food
- December: Not meeting, enjoy the holidays!

Recreational Reading will be meeting Wednesday, Feb. 25, at 4:30 p.m. in the Rose Holm Room at church. We will discuss the book, *Cry the Beloved Country*, by Alan Paton.

St. John's Social Club will attend the youth auction on Friday, Feb. 27.

Scrapbooking will meet Saturday, Feb. 28, between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. in Room 8 at church. We will work on individual scrapbooking projects or cards. All are welcome.

Youth Ministries

by Noah Niermann



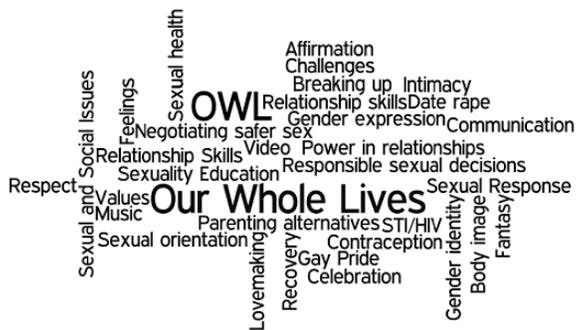
ConFest 2015: What's Your Story?

Sunday, Feb. 8, 1 to 6 p.m.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Ankeny

Confirmation students are invited to participate in this year's annual ConFest. They will join confirmation students from many churches in the Southeastern Iowa Synod for an afternoon of fellowship, games and study. This year's theme is: "What's Your Story?" During the day, we will have the opportunity to think about our own personal stories, talk about the stories we share as a community of churches, and find our place within God's story. Dinner is included. St. John's will cover the registration fee and organize transportation. We hope you can participate!

Our Whole Lives



This winter St. John's is offering a sexuality education program for our 9-12 grade students. The program, called Our Whole Lives, is based on a philosophy of comprehensive sexuality education, which helps participants make informed, responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. It equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. Grounded in a holistic view of sexuality, comprehensive sexuality education provides not only facts about anatomy and human

development, but also helps participants clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional, social, and political aspects of sexuality as well.

- 10 classes
- Sundays from 4 to 6 p.m. in the DDI room on third floor.
- Jan. 25 through April 12 with two weeks off during Spring Break.
- Co-facilitators: Noah Niermann and Deb Anderson

Children's Ministries

By Alicia Karwal

Growing Together Ministry Team

The Growing Together Ministry Team, which was formed in 2014, meets several times a year to plan events for Children's Ministries at St. John's. Our time is spent brainstorming and planning educational and service opportunities for our young children's faith and fellowship. Additionally, this team is instrumental in organizing larger events, such as the Advent program and Vacation Bible School. We would love to have others join us! If you are interested in learning more about serving our children through involvement in this ministry, please email Alicia Karwal (akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org).

Sunday School Focuses on Old Testament

Our schedule for the month follows:

Feb. 1: The Battle of Jericho – Joshua 6:1-20

Talk about these questions with your child:

- What musical instrument would you like to play?
- How does this story show our need for God?
- What are some ways in which God's directions are not what we'd expect?

Feb. 8: Naomi and Ruth – Ruth 1:1-22

Ask your child:

- How can you show God's love to your family?
- What is the longest trip you've ever taken? How did you get there?

Feb. 15: David and Goliath – 1 Samuel 17:4-11, 32-50

Discuss these questions with your child:

- How big do you think Goliath really was?
- Bullies can seem as "unbeatable" as Goliath. How can bullying behavior be defeated?
- Who are some Goliaths you have known?

Feb. 22: Elijah and the Widow – 1 Kings 17:8-16

Talk about these topics:

- What kind of food and drink do you wish you would never run out of?
- Who feeds you?
- What are some favorite family foods? How do they nurture you?

The Arts at St. John's

by Beth Ann Edwards

Artist of the Month

February's exhibit in Weertz Hall continues our 150th anniversary celebration exhibition series. Writers and photographers have collaborated on their observations of life at St. John's, including Beloved Community, our sense of family, prayer shawls, handbell choirs and more. The reflections are quite personal, yet represent who we are as a congregation and member of Christ's body. One writer shares:

I often enjoy sitting alone in the sanctuary. I am drawn to the Christ window, and it allows me to lose myself into the surroundings. There is a special peace from the solitude and quiet, and I feel a special closeness to Christ. Taking time like this inspires me to keep going, doing the things we do.

Another writer describes Wednesday evening's Beloved Community:

We say the meal is for the "beloved community" because whoever comes fits — no matter how rich, poor, pretty or otherwise. The dinner is named for Martin Luther King's call to move beyond the notion of tolerance and into reconciliation and joyful coexistence. At St. John's, the meals started as a way to make it easier for families who attend midweek confirmation classes, choir rehearsals, Bible studies and other meetings. But it's become so much more. It's a place for the churchy people who need a break as well as for the non-churchy people who simply need to eat. The best part of Beloved Community, I think, is that we kind of all blend together, instead of delineating by economic status or between who's in and who's out.

This exhibit will reassure your sense of familiarity as it awakens you to new perspectives of who we are. Please spend some time with this exhibit and extend your thanks to those participating: Mary Ann Bender, Delaine Marker, Terri Mork Speirs, Margaret Townsend, David Giese, Scott LaBlanc and Kirsten LaBlanc.

Friends of the Arts Performing Art Series

Choral Concert - 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 17

Please join us Tuesday, Feb. 17, in the St. John's Sanctuary as we host two outstanding vocal choirs in their "send-off" concert. Both featured choirs have been invited to perform at the national American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) convention in Salt Lake City, Utah, just one week after they perform here.

The Waukee High School A Capella Choir, conducted by Amy Hall, is an auditioned ensemble open to all students enrolled in Grades 10-12. A Cappella has earned a reputation for excellence. They frequently perform at various festivals and events and have worked with such notables as the King's

Singers and international opera star Simon Estes. Waukee High School has earned Division I ratings at the Iowa High School Music Association large group music festival for the past 21 years.



Waukee High School A Capella Choir



Iowa State Singers

The Iowa State Singers, directed by Dr. James Rodde, is a 69-member mixed choral ensemble comprised of students who come from numerous areas of study at Iowa State. They have toured internationally, most recently in Korea and China, and have been honored with performances at the national conferences of the ACDA (2005, 2009) and National Collegiate Choral Organization (2008, 2011). (In addition to performing local concerts, the Singers tour annually and present an authentic Madrigal Dinner every January. Every spring they perform a masterwork with all ISU choirs; this year they will perform Brahms' *Requiem* in April.)

A reception will take place after the Feb. 17th concert. This event, sponsored by the Friends of the Arts, is free and open to the public.

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



*Continued from Page 8***Midweek Music Series:****North High Gospel Choir & Award-Winning High School Pianists***North High Gospel Choir performing at MidWeek Music last year.*

Two Midweek Music Series concerts will be held in February.

On Wednesday, Feb. 4, the North High Gospel Choir, under the direction of Vanessa Brady, will return to St. John's. After last year's performance, they were invited to perform at the 150th Anniversary Gospel Brunch in November, and they will help us enjoy this anniversary again by performing for us at our closing event.

Wednesday, Feb. 11 brings another focus on youth. The Iowa Music Teachers Association piano audition winners will perform. These high school students are serious about piano music, and their performances are outstanding.

Both of these concerts begin at 12:05 p.m., and are free and open to the public. A light lunch (priced at \$6 per person) is served at 12:30 p.m., following the concerts.

The Midweek Music Series will be on hiatus during Lent, which begins Wednesday, Feb. 18. Concerts start up again Wednesday, April 8, with Amadeus Trio.

Mark your calendars for a special Friday edition of the Midweek Music Series. On Friday, May 1, local high school singers will attend a clinic with Mack Wilberg, composer and conductor of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. The clinic will conclude with a 12:05 concert in the Sanctuary. Please stay tuned for more details.

17 Attend Quilting Bee, More Bees to Come*by Darla Stiles*

We had quite a crew at the January Quilting Bee – a mighty 17. Again we accomplished quite a bit. We began the morning with 20 quilts waiting to be tied, and all 20 were tied by the time we ended! When we meet in February another batch of quilts will be ready to tie.



More than 80 quilt packages are ready to go and distribution has begun. The packages are available for pickup in Fireside Lounge before and after Saturday and Sunday services.

Thank you to those who've already picked up a package (or 2 or 3) to sew at home. When the quilt tops are complete, you may return them on Saturday nights or Sundays; leave them at the quilting table in Fireside. Or bring them to the church office during business hours.

Our next scheduled quilting bee is Saturday, Feb. 7, from 9 to noon in Weertz Fellowship Hall. Other dates for quilting bees are Saturday, March 14, and Saturday, April 11. Again, these events will be held in Weertz Fellowship Hall from 9 a.m. to noon. If you need more information on the quilting bees or quilt packages, contact Mary Liechty (326-2737).

*Photos from previous quilting bees.*

Hospitality & Outreach

By Katie Tippins

This Little Light of Mine

You may have noticed a trend in my monthly column. I rarely, if ever, have anything original to impart, but I love sharing other peoples' thoughts and insights. For the first time, however, I want to actually direct you to an article on a website:

www.kidsgen.com/events/christmas/stories/the-holy-night.htm

Yes, it is a Christmas story and, yes, the liturgical year is moving on. But this is a story I'd never heard before and thought I knew them all; well, at least most. It really struck a chord with me and I wanted to share.

There is no way I can adequately condense the story – it would be diminished, so I do hope you'll be able to access it. If you can't, just let me know, and I'll mail a copy to you.

After you read it, please read my thoughts below. I hope they make some sense – there's always a first time! Ha!

I am stretching the main gist of the story (as much as I love it and the original intent), but my thoughts were turned further to our overall reliance on light – sunlight, natural light and our internal light. These last few weeks have been incredibly difficult for many as we struggle through shorter hours of daylight, cold weather and less contact with others.

Over the world of weather, we have no control, but we do have options available for our own physical Light. We all carry light within us; some more than others. Think about friends, family, neighbors, colleagues and acquaintances. We all know people who carry optimism with them and find the positive in most situations. These are people to whom we gravitate because they offer hope and brightness within them. Simply put, they make us feel better.

I do believe some people are born this way; others, not so much.

We are also aware of those who are the antithesis of upbeat. They appear wrapped in a dark cloak and have a thundercloud that hovers over their heads. Nothing is right nor will it improve. If something good happens to someone else then, conversely, something not so good will happen to them. It's as if there is a finite amount of goodness or luck available and if someone else gets it, their chances are diminished.

I also believe that we are capable of changing our natural proclivity. Who wouldn't benefit from seeking more light and, in turn, radiating that light to others.

And, aren't we called to do just that?

- *Live as children of light – for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.* Ephesians 5:8b-9
- *... giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.* Colossians 9:12
- *For so the Lord so has commanded us, saying, 'I have set you to be a light...* Acts 13:47a

Some people come by this gift naturally lucky them. Not having it come easily, however, doesn't let us off the hook. We can make the effort to search for light, receive it and radiate it to others. For me, the only way

it comes to fruition is through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the grace of God.

Light is spread in so many easy ways – a smile, a listening ear, offering comfort, and simply the act of being there. The ministry of presence goes a long way.

For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst. (Matthew 18:20)

That says it all. We needn't generate our own light; God will do it for us. We are merely God's reflection. We simply need to offer ourselves as the vessel, and God will do the rest. Let's be open to that and see how bright our world can be.

Blessings.

Women of the ELCA

Submitted by members of WELCA

The Women of the ELCA – The women of Sarah and Lois Groups will have a combined meeting on February 5th at 10 AM in Neumann. The speaker will be Kathryn Winslow. Kathryn grew up in Iowa, has lived in Alaska, does photography, is an avid bicyclist and is our newly hired security person.



The Mitten Tree - Thank You!

by Margaret Townsend

St. John's members donated 197 items for the Mitten Tree during the Christmas season. Thank you to all who contributed. The items were delivered on Jan. 5 to the following: Des Moines Public Schools Health Services, Primary Care and the Central Iowa Shelter and Services. The cold-weather gear will help the patrons of these facilities through the long winter months.



National Parent Leadership Month

Article provided by Lutheran Services in Iowa

February is National Parent Leadership Month. Through your support, LSI is able to partner with thousands of parents each year who want to be parent leaders and make positive changes in their families. Some parents come to us through our early childhood services and want a little extra support in raising an infant or toddler. Other parents come seeking help for an older child who is in trouble and turn to our therapy services, behavioral health intervention services or our many community programs for help. And some parents become part of our programs through involvement with the Department of Human Services, and we work to help them resolve issues in their home and to ensure the home is a safe place for a child. Your support of LSI as your social ministry helps prevent child abuse and neglect and helps strengthen families all across the state. Thank you for making this work possible!



LSI is proud to be an affiliated social ministry organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

"I want to give my daughter the opportunities I never had."

Emma is only two years old, but she already knows something as important as the ABCs: learning can be fun!

Amanda and Mike, Emma's parents, are giving their little girl the tools for lifelong success, and they're partnering with LSI to do it. The Waterloo couple found out about LSI while Amanda was pregnant.

"It was my first child, and I was nervous," Amanda said. "We had planned for it, but it was still nerve-wracking. I wanted to make sure I was doing everything right."

The family joined LSI's HOPES (Healthy Opportunities for Parents to Experience Success), a voluntary program for parents of young children. Andrea, an LSI family support worker, visits the family at home, bringing along a wealth of information, tips and resources for Emma's healthy growth and development.

"Andrea brought me a lot of information on what to expect and what I could prepare for before Emma was born," Amanda said. "Emma loves Andrea."

Amanda's parents are great at finding learning opportunities for Emma in everyday life, from counting stairs to identifying colors.

"Amanda and Mike are so goal-oriented," said Andrea. "Every goal they have made they have achieved. It's become second nature to them to make every opportunity a learning opportunity. They are very supportive of each other and really want the best for their child."

For Amanda, it's also about giving Emma the childhood she herself didn't have.

"I had a rough childhood," she said. "I want to give Emma the encouragement I never had and the opportunities I never had."

Amanda recommends LSI to other parents who want their children to get a great start in life, too.

"It's a great program if you are a first-time parent," she said. "It's very informative."

Stewardship 2015

With Grateful Hearts
and Joyful Expectation.
Stewardship 2015

Members of the Congregational Council have started sharing their thoughts on the the stewardship theme for this year, "With Grateful Hearts and Joyful Expectation". These reflections will appear in our weekly bulletins over the next couple of months. The two below were shared during January.

Everything that we have is from God. Salvation, health, family, friends, home as well as everything that we possess, has been given to us by God. For this our hearts are grateful. When I give to my church or to other places that help people in need, I feel that I am thanking God for the love that He has shown to me. That is my way of showing my gratitude.

Deuteronomy 26:2 teaches us how we are to respond to our gifts from the Lord... "you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you." I believe if we do this, we can expect to see the church fulfill its mission in our community as well as in our world. That is our expectation.

Each morning I awake and spend a few moments anticipating the coming day and all its happenings. This is the time of Joyful Expectations for me as I know God will be next to me and support me throughout the day. At the end of that day, I reflect on the day's passing and with a Grateful Heart, thank God for his presence. While this connectedness to God is possible due to personal faith, it is further supported by the community of St. John's and Christ's teachings. Look around you at a Sunday service (or Saturday) and your heart is grateful for the music, the message and the faith of your fellow parishioners. I support this community with my gifts of money and time, and I expect the joy to continue to grow and spread. Yes, Grateful Hearts -- Joyful Expectation for St. John's!

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Serving at Central Iowa Shelter & Services

On the 18th and 19th of each month St. John's prepares and serves meals at the shelter.

If you would like to help prepare, serve or donate to this wonderful ministry located in the heart of downtown Des Moines, please call 243.7691 or e-mail scottl@stjohnsdsm.org.



EAGLE CALL DEADLINE

The next deadline for all Eagle Call content is **noon on Monday, February 16**. Please send articles in digital format to Scott LaBlanc, scottl@stjohnsdsm.org. If you are unable to send it by e-mail, drop it off at the church office.

Thank you!