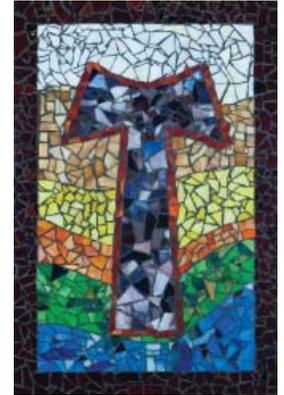
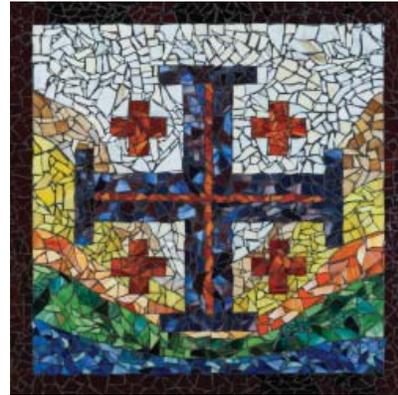




the Eagle Call

Volume 47, Number 04 | April 2015



Mosaics designed by Beth Ann Edwards and made by members of St. John's community.

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

The center of gravity of Christian worship is Holy Week, The Three Days, and the Resurrection of Our Lord, Easter Sunday. Here the central mysteries and teachings of Jesus the Christ are the things that gather us together and send us into the world in mission and ministry in Jesus' name.

The Schedule for the Triduum – the Three days - is the same as it has been in recent years.

Maundy Thursday, April 2, at 12:05 and 7:30 p.m.

The noontime service on Thursday is a simple service of Word and Holy Communion.

The evening service on Thursday includes the rite of foot washing and special music.

Good Friday, April 3, at 12:05 and 7:30 p.m.

On Friday, the noontime service is one of prayer and reading of the Passion narrative from the Gospel of John.

The evening service will be preceded by ten minutes of solemn music for solo viola, string quartet, and string orchestra, Elegy by Herbert Howells, and a full reading of the St. John's Passion narrative with congregational hymns and chants. The service ends with the adoration of the cross on the steps of the chancel with the congregation leaving in silence.

Holy Saturday, April 4, at 7:30 p.m.

Holy Saturday is crowned with the Vigil of Easter, the first service of the Resurrection of Our Lord. The Vigil begins in the courtyard at 7:30 where the new fire is struck, the new Paschal Candle is lit, and a procession leads around the church and into the chapel. Children and youth help to bring the stories of the Biblical salvation history to life, and the "Alleluia" is sung again to welcome the risen Christ and the season of Eastertide.

Easter Sunday, Resurrection of Our Lord, services at 8 and 10 a.m.

The Easter morning liturgies are nearly identical. The hymns and sung liturgy are led by full orchestra as well as organ, and the Adult Handbell Choir will provide music for the offering. Kiasa musicians will play at the 8am service. During communion Cathedral Choir and the Festival Orchestra will present W.A. Mozart's Te Deum in C Major. Praise, proclamation, prayer, and the sacrament of the Eucharist unite us as the Body of Christ on this most holy and sacred festival of the church year.

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A Word from Our Pastors

By Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

Be not afraid, sing out for joy! Christ is risen, alleluia! (Repeat)

This verse (ELW #388) serves as the greeting to the Gospel proclamation at our Easter Vigil. We usually sing it two or three times because, well, it's the Easter Vigil – and the alleluia, missing from worship during the weeks of Lent, just “tastes” so sweet! For good measure, we sing it after the Gospel reading as well, and the tune is so catchy that I can almost guarantee you will be humming it all the way home!

The Vigil, which is the first of our three Easter services, begins at 7 p.m. on Saturday, April 4, around a bonfire in the courtyard. In procession, we follow the new paschal candle around the building and then through darkened hallways to the chapel where the stories begin. Again this year, our confirmation students will assist in telling the stories of creation, Noah's flood, the Exodus, the dry bones and others. There will be songs and hymns around the readings, at least one baptism and, of course, the Meal.

Why am I telling you all of this? Because I want you to keep The Three Days with me – the days that are the very heart of the Christian Faith. One of my most helpful worship books puts it this way: *Because there ought to be no immersion into suffering without the gift of the resurrection, and there ought to be no Easter without Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, the three-part service known as the Three Days hold them all together in the mystery of Christ.* So, I look forward to seeing you for this three-day worship service during Holy Week, beginning on Maundy Thursday, April 2, continuing on Good Friday and culminating with the drama and joy of the Vigil on Easter Eve.

This 150th Easter season at St. John's will keep us singing our “alleluias” for seven full weeks as we celebrate some special 150th events:

- Former St. John's organist, Naomi Rowley, will give a concert following the 10 a.m. service on Sunday, April 12.
- Those who sang in Hi Choir/Nexus will gather for a reunion the weekend of April 18-19.
- Former Associate Pastor Ron Darge will bring greetings as well on Sunday, April 19.

And for the first time in close to 20 years, we will celebrate the ordination of one of our members into The Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA)! Gemechisa Mosa, who joined St. John's eight years ago, has completed all requirements and received all endorsements for ordination in the ELCA, and we will celebrate with Bishop Michael Burk of the Southeast Iowa Synod on **Sunday, April 19, at 2 p.m. at St. John's**. A reception will follow in Weertz Fellowship Hall. Gemechisa and his family want ALL of you to rejoice with them on this special occasion, so please mark your calendars! And, consider this: A boy born in Ethiopia followed a path in life that eventually led him, as a man, to Des Moines, IA, to St. John's Lutheran Church, where we have had the privilege of supporting his seminary career and welcoming his wife and two little boys into the family of faith. And now, “with grateful hearts and joyful expectation” our 150-year-old congregation looks to the future, giving the church one of our own to proclaim the Gospel! What an amazing privilege to celebrate this ordination in our 150th year! It truly brings tears of joy to my eyes...

Friends, I look forward to our 150th Easter season as a community of faith. What a joy it is to serve this community! You are in my daily prayers as I pray with a grateful heart and joyful expectation!

Our Quilting Bees

by Mary Liechty



The quilting bee for March was well attended even though it was PI day: 3.1415926... which comes around once every 100 years. As of now, there are approximately 106 mission quilts in some stage of completion. Twenty-six are entirely completed; there are 37 completed tops ready to be “sandwiched,” and another 42 in various stages. A thank-you goes out to all of you who have sewn tops together and to others who’ve attended the quilting bees for the finishing touches.

At present we really are in need of some people to sew the bindings on the quilts. For the bindings we’ve been just folding the edges of the backing over to the front and sewing around the outside. It’s not a difficult job, but we need volunteers to take home some of the quilts (that already have been sandwiched and tied) to sew the bindings.

Several people have asked if we’re going to have more quilt-top packages. For the moment, we’re focused on completing the quilts we have in process. Once that’s been accomplished, we’ll get back to cutting and packaging material to distribute again.

The next scheduled quilting bee is Saturday, April 11, from 9 a.m. to noon in Weertz Fellowship Hall. Hope to see you there!

Will You Serve?

by Carol Dittmer

Members of St. John’s:

Are you willing to help serve food and clean up after an occasional funeral at St. John’s? You do not need to fix any food; all is catered in. We need a list of willing people whom we may call upon to help when notified of a funeral or memorial service. We lay tablecloths, put out food and clean up.

This is a traditional service of St. John’s that means so very much to families in their time of need. You needn’t feel obligated to say “yes” every time you’re called. We really need more helpers,

so different people know what to do and can help in this important ministry. Anyone can help; you are needed! If you are willing, please contact Carol Dittmer (dittmercl@msn.com or 515-287-7860). Your help would be most appreciated! Thank you.

In the City (and World) for Good!

by Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

We bless thee for Christ who shows us the way and is the way and who will be, we pray, at the end of all our days. Grant that even on stumbling feet we may follow him into the terrible needs of the human heart. Remember us. For thy mercy’s sake. Amen. Frederick Buechner, *The Hungering Dark*, p. 69.

The “needs of the human heart” – for acceptance, justice, peace – are all around us, in the neighbor we know and the neighbor we have never met. We are not helpless to address those needs as a community in Christ. May the Spirit move us to respond in Christ-like love.

In the hope that this newsletter reaches you before Palm Sunday, you are encouraged to “process for peace” through downtown Des Moines on Palm Sunday afternoon. Gather at the Capitol West Mall at 2:30 p.m., process downtown at 3:00, and gather for worship at St. John’s at 3:45. We “process” to urge political leaders to seek peaceful resolutions to world conflicts. The Rev. Minna Quint, pastor of Capitol Hill Lutheran Church, will speak at the worship service.

This is “moving month” for the Connection Café, our free noon meal ministry in cooperation with the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Paul, St. Ambrose Cathedral and First United Methodist Church. The Café’s home at Seventh and Grand will be demolished this spring or summer, so the Café is moving to the street level of St. Paul’s on High Street. The moving date is Thursday, April 30, and we will be “open for business” on Monday, May 4. **AN OPEN HOUSE TO ORIENT YOU TO THE NEW SPACE WILL BE OFFERED ON THURSDAY, APRIL 16, FROM 4 to 6 p.m.** Please plan to stop at St. Paul’s that afternoon so that you feel at home there the next time you serve. If the initial experience of having the Café at St. Paul’s goes well, that will likely become its permanent home. However, St. John’s is the back-up location should the St. Paul location not work.

Tony Timm, executive director of Central Iowa Shelter and Services (CISS), spoke at the Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) Annual Meeting last week and mentioned that the meals provided by the faith community every evening at the shelter saves CISS approximately \$500,000 per year. Thank you for your faithfulness to this ministry! Tony also said that CISS does not have a maintenance person on staff so would welcome some 6 to 8 person teams willing to do repair and maintenance chores at the shelter as needed. Could you gather a group of willing and slightly “handy” workers? I’d be glad to put you in touch with the right person at CISS!

Please continue to remember both the DMARC Food Pantry and the World Hunger Appeal of the ELCA in your financial giving. Food pantries in our area continue to be accessed by high numbers of people. And the ELCA continues to support communities recovering from disasters as well as sustainable-agriculture and small-business projects around the globe.

Thank you for tending to the needs of the human heart with the love of Christ.

Prepare to Worship

By Larry Christensen

The Triduum (The Three Days) of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday fall at the beginning of April this year. You will find a description of them and of Easter Sunday on the cover of this Eagle Call.

Sunday, April 12 - Second Sunday of Easter

The Easter season is a week of weeks, seven Sundays when we play in the mystery of Christ's presence, mostly through the glorious Gospel of John. On this Sunday, we gather with the disciples on the first Easter, and Jesus breathes the Spirit on us. With Thomas we ask for a sign, and Jesus offers us his wounded self in the broken bread. From frightened individuals we are transformed into a community of open doors, peace, forgiveness and material sharing, such that no one among us is in need.

The readings will be Acts 4:32-35, Psalm 133, 1 John 1:1-2:2 and John 20:19-31. The hymns will vary some from service to service, but at the Saturday 5 p.m. service, they will be ELW 631, "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling," ELW 377, "Alleluia! Jesus is Risen," and ELW 635, "We Walk by Faith." The reason for the variations is that the Ballyhoo Foxtrot Combo, lead by John Benoit, will be part of our 10 a.m. service. They will present an extended prelude, lead the first two hymns and provide the offering and communion music.

Then, as if that were not enough of a musical feast, our former organist, Dr. Naomi Rowley, will present a mini-concert following the service. Dr. Rowley's presence is part of the 150th anniversary yearlong celebration. Please stay for the music and to greet Naomi on her return to St. John's.

Sunday, April 19 - Third Sunday of Easter

The gospel for the third Sunday of Easter is always one in which the risen Christ shares food with the disciples, meals that are the Easter template for the meal we share each Lord's day. In today's gospel, Jesus both shares the disciples' food and shows them the meaning of his suffering, death and resurrection through the scriptures – the two main elements of our Sunday worship.

The readings are Acts 3:12-19, Psalm 4, 1 John 3:1-7 and Luke 24:36b-48. The hymns will be ELW 384, "That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright," and ELW 549, "Send Me Jesus." The long-awaited Nexus Reunion Choir will take part in the 10 a.m. service. Long-time St. John's members know that this choir, which existed between 1980 and 2005, must sing "He Is Alive!" by Buryl Red as part of an Easter-season service, and they will sing "Go Ye Into All the World," by Eugene Butler, as the postlude. In addition, a special 150th anniversary donation commissioned two, brand-new pieces for this occasion – an African American gospel song and a spiritual, both arranged by the notable composer Stacy Gibbs.

Sunday, April 26 - Fourth Sunday of Easter

The image of the Good Shepherd shows us how the risen Christ brings us to life. It is the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep, one of mutual knowledge and love, that gives the shepherd authority. The shepherd's willingness to lay down his life for the sheep shows his love. First John illustrates what it means to lay down our lives for one another by the example of sharing our wealth with any sister or brother in need.

The readings are Acts 4:5-12, Psalm 23, 1 John 3:16-24, John 10:11-18. The hymns will be ELW 385, "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing!" ELW 764, "Have No Fear, Little Flock," and ELW 798, "Will You Come and Follow Me." At 10 a.m. Kisasa will sing a setting of Psalm 23 by Robert Buckley Farley. For offering Cathedral Choir will sing "Loving Shepherd, Of Thy Sheep," by John Rutter with Maddy Wiegers as soprano soloist. During communion Elizabeth Reed and Nico Mulhern will sing "Laudamus te," by Antonio Vivaldi.

*By the grace of God and
the call of the church.*

Gemechisa Moroda Mosa

will be ordained

to the ministry of Word and Sacrament
in Christ's one, holy, and apostolic Church

Sunday, April 19th, 2015, 2:00 p.m.

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

Reverend Michael Burk

Bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
presiding.

Your prayers and presence are requested.

All clergy are invited to vest and process.

The liturgical color of the day is red.k

Reception to Follow

Please RSVP

KatieTippins@stjohnsdsm.org

or 515-243-7691

WIRED Update

Wonder if You Make a Difference? You DO!

In last month's *Eagle Call*, you may have noticed a mention of the WIRED (Women Interested in Renewal, Education and Discovery) luncheon and program held Feb. 8. The speaker was the CEO of Orchard Place, a nonprofit organization that provides outpatient, inpatient and community-based mental health services for children. The WIRED group often does a service project in connection with the luncheon, and this time they made fleece blankets for the children – 27 were completed and provided in time for Valentine's Day.

Soon after, St. John's received a special-delivery package containing thank-you notes from the children. The director of volunteers for Orchard Place included a note: "Many, many thanks to you for thinking of our kids, and making their Valentine's Day brighter! Holidays are so difficult for them but I saw nothing but smiling faces when we passed out your gifts! I'm so glad to know that there are people like you out there doing wonderful things for our community!"

Here are excerpts from just a few of their notes:

- Thank you guys so much for the goody bags and the blankets. We all are so happy that we got things from you guys! My blanket is baseball themed and baseball is my favorite sport!! FYI, everyone loves everything you got us. ... I will always be grateful and happy because of you guys.
- I really enjoy everything that you all gathered together for me on this wonderful day. Thank you for thinking of us! I'm very happy that you guys care to make us

feel appreciated on special days like this. I can't wait to color and work on my wonderful coloring books, word searches, and the Sudoku. I LOVE my blanket! It is very warm and I'm planning to cuddle with it all night! Thank you very much!

- Thank you for caring enough to give us all these wonderful gifts and blankets. It means so much to me. I just wanted to say thanks so very much – I will never, never forget how kind this was. It means a lot. I will enjoy doing the crossword puzzles and every time I do it will remind me of you and how caring you guys were.
- I love, love, love the fuzzy socks! I hope your Valentine's Day was as fun as mine was because of your gifts.
- I wish you guys were here so I can tell you how much I appreciate the gifts you have given us. One of my favorite items was the blanket. It's so cozy and warm.
- Thanks so much for making my stay here better
- I'm having a happy day thanks to you. Thanks for my blanket. I love it. I will hold it dearly.
- Thanks a lot for the blanket and bag of goodies. And you can't go wrong with candy!
- Thank you especially for spending time out of your day to make and give us things even though you didn't have to.

The cards are in the kiosk in the Fireside Lounge, on the WIRED side, if you would like to see how beautifully the children decorated them.

Ruth Stafford Peale said, "*Find a need and fill it.*" WIRED did just that!

THURSDAY | APRIL 9 | 2015 | 7:30 PM

SHELOW AUDITORIUM | DRAKE UNIVERSITY | 2507 UNIVERSITY | DES MOINES | IOWA

benefit concerto

free and open to the public | all donations will benefit the St. John's String Scholar Program



St. John's String Scholars: Geneva Gaukel; Larry Christensen, String Scholars Director; Sue Odem, oboe soloist; Heidi Pridemore; Sarah Plum, Drake String Professor; Nina Liu; Lander Gadelmann; Sam Gray; Maggie Williams; Sam Meyer

The unique partnership between **St. John's Lutheran Church** and **Drake University string students** provides applied performance opportunities for students preparing for careers as string musicians. Please support them at their concert of five best-loved concertos:

- Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*
- Bach's *Double Concerto for Violin and Oboe*
- Howells' *Elegy for Viola, String Quartet, and String Orchestra*
- Barber's *Adagio for Strings*
with Drake String Ensemble, Akira Mori, director
- Mozart's *Te Deum in C Major*, K. 141
with St. John's Cathedral Choir, Larry Christensen, director

For more information, please contact Larry Christensen (larryc@stjohnsdsdm.org)
stjohnsdsdm.org | drake.edu/music/drakeorchestras/stringensemble/

Small Groups

by Darla Stiles

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

Yoga: Thursdays, April 2-May 14 (with exception of April 16), 5:45 to 6:45 p.m., Fireside Lounge at church.

Mah Jongg: Mondays, April 6-27, 6 p.m. at church.

Photography: Sunday, April 12, 11:15 a.m., Neumann Hall. (Theme: Gates)

Hardanger: Second and fourth Tuesdays, April 14 and 28, 11:30 a.m., Valbracht Gallery at church.

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

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

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

EAGLES: Saturday, April 25. At 9 a.m., meet in church parking lot, lunch at 11:30, and Frank Sinatra Tribute at 2 p.m. RSVP to Roma Youngquist (515-285-3810 or plaallda@aol.com).

St. John's Social Club: Sunday, April 26, 2 p.m. "The Diary of Anne Frank," Kum and Go Theater, south end of Des Moines Social Club. RSVP to Karen Ritchie (kritchie1@me.com). Scrapbooking: Cancelled for April.

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

More information

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

Yoga will be held for six weeks on Thursdays from April 2 to May 14 (except for April 16) from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m. in the Fireside Lounge. Cost: \$10 per class or \$50 for the entire six-week session. If you are interested, contact the yoga instructor, Corinne Lambert (515-556-367 or callingwisdom1@hotmail.com).

Mah Jongg will meet Mondays, April 6-27, at 6 p.m. in Neumann Hall at St. John's. If you can attend, contact Darla Stiles (darlstiles@stjohnsdsm.org).

Photography will meet on Sunday, April 12, following the 10 a.m. service in Neumann Hall at church. (Note that the date is earlier than the usual third Sunday.) Bring a couple of photos of gates (our theme) to share.

Lunch Bunch II will meet on Wednesday, April 15, 12:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining this group, contact Janet Figg (515-279-6326).

Lunch Bunch I meets on Thursday, April 16, 11:30 a.m. New members are most welcome! If you are interested in joining the group, please call Barb Hyler (515-401-5721).

Recreational Reading will be meeting on Wednesday, April 22, at 4 p.m. at Eatery A on Ingersoll Ave. The book to read and discuss is *The Art Forger*, by B.A. Shapiro.

EAGLES will attend a Frank Sinatra Tribute at the Old Creamery Theater in the Amanas on Saturday, April 25. The group will meet at 9 a.m. in the church parking lot, carpool to the Amanas, and enjoy lunch at the Ox Yoke Inn around 11:30. There will be a little time to shop before attending the production at the Old Creamery Theater at 2 p.m. If there are 15 of us, a special price of \$25 per person is offered for the Frank Sinatra Tribute. If we have fewer people, the price is \$28.50 each. (Lunch will be an extra cost, depending on what you order.) Please RSVP to Roma Youngquist (285-3810 or plaallda@aol.com) as soon as possible, so we will know the price. Checks need to be to Roma, 5030 S.W. 16th Place, Des Moines, IA 50315, before Friday, April 10, as she needs to send them two weeks prior to the event.

St. John's Social Club will enjoy "The Diary of Anne Frank" at the Kum & Go Theater at the south end of The Des Moines Social Club on Sunday, April 26, 2 p.m. Tickets are \$19 per person. Please mail a check to Karen Ritchie, 181 38th Place, Des Moines, IA 50312, before Tuesday, March 17. The group will meet for dinner at Malo (part of The Des Moines Social Club) following the performance. If you plan on attending, please e-mail Karen Ritchie (kritchie1@me.com).



WIRED Overnight Retreat at Prairiewoods near Cedar Rapids will be held on Saturday and Sunday, April 25-26. There are a limited number of rooms, so it will be on a first-come, first-served basis. "Spring Awakening – A Spiritual Retreat" will consist of free time to explore the wonderful wooded retreat area and rejuvenate. Plus, you will be able to choose from several options: A Mandala workshop: A Pathway to One's Center, yoga, outdoor labyrinth, healing touch, drumming circle, reflection/writing, devotion/reflection. Cost for the retreat is \$100 (single room) or \$87.50 if you would like to share a room (indicate who you will be sharing with). You may sign up in the Fireside Lounge, e-mail Darla Stiles (darlstiles@stjohnsdsm.org) or go online to sign up at www.stjohnsdsm.org (contribute online, scroll to "other giving," WIRED Retreat).

150th Anniversary

St. John's welcomes returning pastors

By Ellen Fisher

As part of our 150th anniversary celebration, St. John's is excited to welcome back pastors who served the congregation through the years! Pastor Ron Darge will join us on Sunday, April 19, and Pastor Dan Witkowski will be with us the weekend of May 2-3. After-church receptions will be held so you can greet the pastors and share memories.

Watch the Eagle Call for announcements of other pastors who may be joining us as we give thanks for 150 years of being "In the City for Good."

April 19: Pastor Ron Darge

Rev. Ronald R. Darge is an ordained pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and also is recognized as a professional photographer. He holds master's degrees from Drake University and Central Lutheran Theological Seminary in Chicago (now known as the Lutheran School of Theology).

He served parishes in Detroit and Des Moines as well as serving as an adjunct instructor in photography and religion at Grand View University for 20 years. He first became acquainted with St. John's during a 15-month seminary internship. After returning to seminary, he graduated, was ordained, and received his first call back to St. John's as assistant pastor.

Early in life Pastor Darge developed a strong interest in the arts, which he also expressed in his ministry. Examples of his many photography events and assignments include "A Theology of the Cross" (LCA Global Mission Event, Milwaukee, WI), "No More Walls Again" (photography poster at the United Nations building, New York), "Peace Education Initiative" (Stanley Foundation, Muscatine, IA/Washington, DC), "Angles in the Show" and five posters for the Iowa Synod Peace Task Force (ELCA Drama Commission). He also prepared traveling photography shows for "National Preservation Pictures, Old Main" (Grand View University) and Pulitzer Prize winners Don Altang and David Peterson.

Each photograph has engaged him in a cycle of viewing and reflection by "the one who strengthens us every day in the gifts of worship, service, love of the neighbor and answer to prayer."

May 2-3: Pastor Witkowski

Pastor Dan Witkowski served St. John's from 2002 through 2006 as an associate pastor. Since leaving St. John's, he has been serving First Lutheran Church in downtown Moline, Illinois. First Lutheran is an historic congregation founded in 1850 and was known as the "mother city church" of the former Augustana Synod of the Lutheran Church. To this day, it is deeply rooted in the heart of the city offering classical Lutheran worship, liberal arts learning, creative social ministry and is a strong supporter of the larger Church.



He graduated with a B.A. in Religion and English from Augustana College in Rock Island (1994), Master of Divinity from Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque (2002), Certification in Spiritual Direction and Directed Retreats from Creighton University in Omaha (2004) and

a Master of Christian Spirituality (Ignatian) from Creighton University in Omaha (2005).

In addition to his work at First Lutheran, he directs Ignatian retreats for small groups, offers spiritual direction to private individuals and volunteers in Chicago's Ignatian Spirituality Program, which offers spiritual direction and directed retreats for Chicago's people who have potential to get out of homelessness. In his spare time, he enjoys socializing, vacuuming, doing laundry and daydreaming!

150th Anniversary

From Des Moines to Broadway

David Richards, son of former Pastor Elton Richards and his wife Anne, will speak at a Sunday, May 16, event from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. as part of his parents' return for St. John's 150th anniversary celebration. David began his career with the Des Moines Symphony and then moved to New York, where he is currently a founding partner of a general management firm. David's credits include both Broadway and national tours of productions such as *Cinderella*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *August: Osage County* and many more. He'll share his experiences working with these productions, including interactions with celebrity actors. The limited number of \$10 tickets (cost includes hors d'oeuvres and beverages) go on sale after services on Saturday and Sunday, April 11-12.

Women of the ELCA

by Members of WELCA



Group Meetings

- Sarah Group meets Thursday, April 2, at 11:15 a.m. on the Des Moines Area Community College campus in Ankeny, Building 7: Culinary Department.
- Lois Group will meet at noon (note the earlier time) to attend the Maundy Thursday service together and hold a short business meeting following.

Children's Ministries

By Alicia Karwal

First Holy Communion Class

A class for individuals wishing to begin receiving Holy Communion will be held Saturday, April 25, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in Room 8. You are invited to consider whether or not your child is ready to receive their First Holy Communion. At St. John's there is no specific age designated for children to experience this holy sacrament. If you feel that your child is ready to begin receiving the Eucharist, you may register your child for this class by contacting Alicia Karwal (akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org) or by calling the church office at 243-7691. If you have any questions regarding your child's participation in this class, please feel free to contact Alicia or Pastor Bob at your convenience.

Youth Lectors

Several individuals from Children's Ministries have served as youth lectors and many are looking forward to this opportunity following a recent training led by Larry Christensen. Youth lectors serve the second Sunday of each month. This call is shared between individuals in Children's and Youth Ministries. Thank you to those who have helped to share the word of God in this way in the past:

- Abbie Evans
- Thomas Hansen
- Leif Horak-Hult
- Gabe King
- Mary Kitundu
- Sophia Macro
- Jackie Royston

Sunday School Service Project

April and May mark the final months of our service project as we continue collecting coins to fill the milk jars in each Sunday School classroom. The money collected will be donated to Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) to be used to purchase healthy breakfast cereal for children and families in need. The breakfast cereal is intended to be an addition to the weekly donation of milk from Anderson Erikson Dairy, allowing children to enjoy a healthy breakfast and healthy start to their morning.

Vacation Bible School Registration Reminder

Registration for Vacation Bible School (VBS) will begin Sunday, April 19! A Lutheran Lakeside VBS Day Camp will be held at St. John's Monday, June 29, through Friday, July 2, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. All children in Preschool (ages 4-5) through Sixth Grade are invited to participate. Volunteers from St. John's are needed as well! If you can commit to helping on any of these days, please contact Alicia Karwal at your earliest convenience.

Youth Ministries

By Noah Niermann

Thank You!

Have you heard the news? With your help, we raised more than \$14,500 at our annual youth fundraising auction! I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of you who gave so generously – from donated items to joyful bidders, to everyone else who came ready to celebrate and enjoy good food and good company. Thank you for supporting our young people. Also, a very special round of thanks goes to all the kids for their hard work helping the night to run smoothly, to Barrata's and Forté for delicious food and a wonderful location, and to all the parents and youth mentors for their terrific event-planning skills and hours of volunteer help! Photos from the event can be found on the next page.

St. John's Plant Sale

Did you order plants last month? Don't forget that Saturday, May 9, is the day to pick them up! Did you miss your chance to order? Don't worry! We always order extra plants so that you can come and shop on delivery day. We will be set up in the church parking lot from 9 to 11 a.m. We'll have coffee and crepes, too, so you won't even have to worry about breakfast.

Volunteering with the St. John's Youth Programs

Have you ever thought about helping with the confirmation and youth programs but weren't sure how to get involved? Below is a list of all the ways that church members support and sustain Youth Ministry at St. John's. Just let Noah or Pastor Bob know if you're interested in anything listed here. We would love to have your help!

- **Confirmation Mentor:** Confirmation students in Grades 7-9 meet most Wednesdays of the school year from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Mentors are an integral part of this program! Long after the third article of the Apostles Creed has disappeared from memory, our young people will still carry with them the meaningful relationships they formed with their mentors.
- **High School Mentor:** Christ shows up again and again in community and in relationships. After confirmation, mentors are still an incredibly important part of our youth program. Join us as we have fun together as a group, ask difficult questions about faith and explore our place in the world.
- **Youth Ministry Advisory Council (YMAC):** Do you like long-term vision planning, program assessment and behind-the-scenes volunteering? YMAC meets once a month to discuss Youth Ministry at St. John's. YMAC members are encouraged to occasionally volunteer in other areas as needed.

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- **Fundraising:** Many of our summer trips and camp opportunities would be impossible without fundraising. Each year we try to raise close to \$20,000 to offset costs. Does this challenge sound exciting to you? We would love to have your help!
- **Trip Leader:** Every summer we take at least two trips with our confirmation and high school youth. We often have a spot or two available for adult leaders. Do you have experience with camps, mission trips and outdoor ministry? We invite you to think about joining us!
- **Volunteer On-Call:** Sometimes a car breaks down or someone gets sick, and we're short an adult leader. It's important to have someone whom we can call. If you have a flexible schedule and enjoy a little surprise every now and then, this could be the role for you!



Hospitality & Outreach

by Katie Tippins

“Surrounded by Darkness, Yet Enfolded in Light”

In last month's column, I fixated on light; this month I'm exploring the lack of it – and the resulting grace.

Someone very close to me is going through a medical crisis – actually several crises. By all standards, his life – personal and professional – would be described as stellar. He is very accomplished in his field, has three grown sons, all successful and starting their own families, and he and his wife recently celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. For decades he paid it forward to those not so fortunate. He's worked exceptionally hard, made tough and right choices and walked the path God directed. He is a man of faith and spirituality. Yet, through all the years, there has never been a hint of superiority or overconfidence. From my perspective, he is one who has always, simply, “done it right.”

Though not cognizant of all aspects of his life, I've never known him to be depressed or downright angry. Obstacles were met directly with prayerful thought, deliberation and positive action.

But now . . . now, there is the smallest hesitation, an unvoiced question, a touch of uncertainty.

My title above is a quote attributed to Alan Brennert, an American author. I found it on the internet while searching for references on finding light in the darkness.

For years I've heard references to “the dark night of the soul.” St. John of the Cross is credited as the creator of that phrase used generically to describe mental, emotional, or spiritual anguish. It is a feeling so deep that one wonders if it is possible to find a way out. Will there be ever be light again?

After surviving my own dark night, I can undeniably say Yes! – but only through the grace of God.

The journey is not easy, nor is it quick and painless, but the night and darkness brings you to the unequivocal Truth and the ultimate Healer – God. It is when *Footprints in the Sand* becomes reality. God carries us when we no longer have the strength or will to move forward.

While searching for more insights I also came across an unattributed passage, “We are all broken, that's how the light gets in,” plus a quote from Sir Francis Bacon, “In order for the light to shine so brightly, the darkness must be present.”

I personally do not know how people without faith survive. No one makes it through life unscathed and without God's strength and compassion – what else is there?

Our faith is a blessing beyond measure. It is a total Gift and the only thing that sets us apart from those who have not yet accepted it. We are not “more” worthy. We've done nothing to deserve it. We merely accept it, believe it, and give thanks.

My dear friend knows this; but, knowing it intellectually and knowing it in your soul are two different things – especially when one is at the center of a storm. But he will get there – his faith will sustain him and God will not let him go.

There is no need for me to expand on this theme. St. John's of the Cross says it so well:

- “Faith is a dark night for (us), but in this very way it gives (us) light.”
- “In tribulation immediately draw near to God with confidence and you will receive strength, enlightenment and instruction. “

The Light shines in the darkness. God will be revealed, faith will grow larger still, his hope re-ignited and he will realize God is now carrying him.

Give thanks to the Lord in all things.

The Arts at St. John's

By Beth Ann Edwards

Midweek Music Series Resumes Wednesday, April 8

Please join us as the Midweek Music Series continues on Wednesday, April 8, with Amadeus Trio (Sue Odem, oboe; Joyce Wheeler, clarinet; and Janean Schaefer Denhart, bassoon). Concerts begin at 12:05 p.m. in the Sanctuary and are free and open to the public. A light lunch, priced at \$6 per person, is served at 12:30 p.m. in Weertz Fellowship Hall following the concert.

- **April 8** - Amadeus Trio (Sue Odem, oboe; Joyce Wheeler, clarinet; Janean Schaefer Denhart, bassoon)
- **April 15** - Ballyhoo Foxtrot Combo with John Benoit
- **April 22** - The Two Davids Piano Duo: David Liljedahl and David Piersel
- **April 29** - City Voices, directed by Mary Anne Sims, a tuition-free music program for vocal instruction to urban students. Many City Voices also sing in the North High Gospel Choir.
- **May 1** (Friday) - Mack Wilberg, clinician, conducts high school singers
- **May 6** - Kathleen Hurley and Dancers

Special Midweek Music Series Event with Mack Wilberg on Friday, May 1

Mack Wilberg, music director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in Salt Lake City, Utah, will be featured in a special Friday “Midweek Music Series” event on May 1. As part of a weekend-long event with the Des Moines Choral Society, select area high school students will attend a Friday morning workshop at St. John's with Dr. Wilberg as clinician. At 12:05

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pm, the students will present in the Sanctuary a concert directed by Dr. Wilberg. This concert is free and open to the public, and will be followed by a reception in the Fireside Lounge. (No lunch will be served on Friday, May 1.)

More About Mack Wilberg

Mack Wilberg was appointed music director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir on March 28, 2008, having served as associate music director of the choir since May 1999. Dr. Wilberg is responsible for all musical and creative aspects of the Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square in rehearsals, concerts, tours and recordings as well as the weekly broadcast of Music and the Spoken Word.

He is a former professor of music at Brigham Young University and is active as a composer, arranger, guest conductor and clinician throughout the United States and abroad. His compositions and arrangements, currently published exclusively by Oxford University Press, are performed and recorded by choral organizations throughout the world. Dr. Wilberg received his bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University and his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Southern California. He and his wife, Rebecca, are the parents of four children and have one granddaughter.

mormontabernaclechoir.org/about/mack-wilberg?lang=eng

Kisasa Day Camp Dates Set

Please mark your calendars! The third annual Kisasa Day Camp will take place on Thursday and Friday, Aug. 6-7, and worship on Sunday, Aug. 9. All students entering Grades 3-6 are welcome to join us for two full days of music, visual arts, Bible study, cooking and more! Junior high- and high school-aged students as well as adults are welcome to sign up as volunteer assistants. For more information, please contact Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org).



Artist of the Month: Larry Christensen's 40 Years of Music Ministry

Our very own Larry Christensen, Director of Worship and Music, is retiring after 40 years of service at St. John's. He came here as Youth Director/Asst. Dir. of Music in 1975, and his job responsibilities

at that time included directing Confirmation and Hi Choirs. In 1978 he resigned to attend Westminster Choir College and received a Master of Church Music degree. He was hired again by St. John's in 1980 as Parish Musician and, under five Senior Pastors, has had a variety of titles and job descriptions. The Weertz Fellowship Hall Gallery will display photos from his tenure here at St. John's, including Nexus Choirs and their summer tours. Please take some time with the exhibit. You might find a familiar face or two!



Former St. John's Organist Naomi Rowley Returns for Anniversary Celebration

As part of our 150th anniversary celebration, former St. John's organist Naomi Rowley will join us for worship on Sunday, April 12, and present a concert following the 10 a.m. service. Naomi was principal organist from 1995 to 2000.

Naomi Rowley sends her greetings

Congratulations to St. John's during this year of celebration marking the 150th anniversary of the congregation. It was my privilege and pleasure to be part of this journey from 1995 to 2000 when I served as Principal Organist. The rich tradition of worship at St. John's and the inspired leadership of Larry Christiansen, director of music ministries, are among the memories I treasure from this experience. In addition, a highlight of these five years was playing the magnificent new pipe organ that was installed in the rear gallery.

Following my years at St. John's, I continued to pursue an active career in teaching, professional service and performing. I maintain a private studio of organ students and for a number of years was organ instructor at the Lawrence Academy of Music, a division of the Lawrence Conservatory of Music in Appleton, Wisconsin.

As a member of the American Guild of Organists, I have continued to serve the organization in a number of capacities. From 2001-2007, I was chairperson of the Guild's National Committee on the New Organist. Its portfolio included the supervision of the weeklong Pipe Organ Encounters held across the country each summer. In addition, I continue to be an active member of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada as well as the Organ Historical Society.

Church music continues to be a keen interest. Since moving to Wisconsin I have served as lead organist at First United Methodist Church in Appleton, principal organist at Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church in Ellison Bay and a regular substitute in Episcopal and Moravian churches.

Ballyhoo Foxtrot Combo AND Organ Recital!

The Sunday, April 12, 10 a.m. worship service has music for everyone: The Ballyhoo Foxtrot Combo, led by John Benoit, will provide music during the service, an extended prelude will begin in the Sanctuary at 9:30 a.m., and their music will be featured during hymns, offering and Communion.

After worship the 150th anniversary celebration continues with a concert by organist Naomi Rowley, who was principal organist at St. John's from 2000 to 2005. She will present works by Aaron David Miller, Giuseppe Torelli, Denis Bédard, Johann Caspar Simon and Ch. H. Rinck. A reception in the Fireside Lounge, honoring Naomi, will follow the concert.

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.



EAGLE CALL DEADLINE

The next deadline for all Eagle Call content is **noon on Monday, April 20**. 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!