Pentecost 2016!

Worship

Saturday
5:00 pm

Sunday
8:00 am
10:00 am

Radio Broadcast
Praise 940 AM
Sunday Mornings
8:00 am

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Monday – Thursday
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
(Friday - 4:00 p.m.)

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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.

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Dear Friends,

We had four funerals in one week in mid-May here at St. John’s – a record number in such a short time span in all my years here. Some of the deaths followed long illnesses, and one was the result of an accident. But all of them have left families in grief, that strange land of both gratitude and sadness – gratitude for having known and loved and sadness at the loss of beloved relationships.

Though we may want to think that summer brings a “lightness” to our busy lives, it just is not always the case. We have some folks in our household of faith who are grappling with serious illness and other life-altering circumstances this summer. Therefore, I’ve been thinking about ways we can encourage one another when illness, grief or other unsettling experiences thrust a “new normal” upon us.

• Pray for one another, not because God may not pay attention to someone’s suffering if we don’t remind God of it but because prayer deepens the life of faith. To pray is to allow ourselves to be reoriented, to remember who we truly are – children of a loving, trust-worthy, faithful God. And if it is possible to let someone know that you are naming them in your prayers, do it. When someone told me not long ago that they pray for me every day, I was so humbled and grateful that I could barely express my thanks.

• When someone is diagnosed with a serious illness or has experienced a death of someone dear, don’t distance yourself from them because you don’t know what to say. It’s not about you. You do not need to solve their problem or answer their questions. But you do need to tell them you care, ask what you can do to help, and pay attention to the “cues” they give on how they want to handle relationships given their situation. People cope differently, and it is not ours to judge someone’s coping methods. Ours is to love and support in a Christ-like way – for the long haul.

• If you have not done so, discuss and then fill out an advance directive or similar document that lets your loved ones know how you wish to be cared for in the event of a life-threatening illness or accident – and make copies for all concerned. I have seen what peace of mind such a document can give to a family when they are asked to make decisions about life-support measures, just as I’ve seen what chaos results when there hasn’t been that conversation and there isn’t such a document. (I once knew a man who took this responsibility so seriously that, because he lived alone, he framed a copy of his advance directive and hung it in his kitchen – just in case he could not communicate when emergency medical personnel arrived!)

• And, finally, give thanks for each day. Pay attention to the rich mystery of life. Take time to talk AND to listen. Get over the petty stuff and remember what a gift it is to be part of a community of faith where Christ forgives, feeds and raises us to life (together) again and again.

So, this is what I’ve been thinking about lately...

I am more grateful than I can say for our life together. May we be gracious, mercy-full and kind to one another and to our neighbor in need.
In the City (and the World) for Good

by Pastor Rachel Thorson Mithelman

Every true disciple of Jesus is going to be surrounded by devastating need. Sometimes it is a need for bread; sometimes it is a need for clothing; sometimes it is a need for emotional support. What amazes me is that some of us seem so surprised by the needs. The surprise surprises me…But isn’t this the hallmark of the Church, that it will always be surrounded by people in need? If it is not surrounded by agonizing, heartbreaking need, then we have been unfaithful to the One who is the Lord of the Church.

N. Gordon Cosby, "Seized by the Power of a Great Affection"

Let’s talk about children, youth and the need for latrines! When Thomas Mayes and I visited our friends in Mramba Lutheran Parish in January (our Companion Parish in Tanzania), we became aware of the desperate need at one of the three primary schools in the parish – Giriama Primary – for student latrines. The school serves over 250 students and has only two latrines, both falling apart and sliding down the mountain. They provide no privacy – not to mention safety – for the children. We were not asked for a contribution for new latrines by our friends in Mramba, but it was such an obvious need we couldn’t forget about it...

Now I am pleased to say that the youth of St. John’s have given a portion of their Youth Auction profits to help pay for the construction materials needed for the Giriama latrines! Their generous gift, along with support from the Companion Parish fund, will help our partners as they raise the balance needed and start construction. Our youth have been taught to be generous by your generosity. Thank you!

The After School Arts Program completed a very successful school year and now looks forward to offering summer programming through the Starfish Academy and the ASAP Summer Arts Camp at Evelyn K. Davis Park. If you are interested in assisting with these summer programs, please contact Michelle Bolton King, michelle@asap-dsm.org Although ASAP is part of Arts for the City, Inc., a non-profit organization, it began as an outreach ministry of St. John’s in 2007. Your generous support – financial and in-kind – is crucial and greatly appreciated by all. You have made a positive impact on the lives of literally thousands of children and youth in Des Moines through ASAP. After serving the maximum amount of time allowed on the Board of Directors, I will exit the board in June with gratitude for having a role in this amazing work.

Drumroll, please… the Donation of the Month for the DMARC Emergency Food Pantry is: CANNED SEAFOOD!! Watch for sales on tuna, salmon, and other nutritious seafood when you are doing your grocery shopping. And remember that you can always make a financial gift to DMARC through St. John’s, allowing for even more purchasing power per $1 than you have at the store.

And, once again, thank you for your devotion to serving the evening meal at Central Iowa Shelter & Services on the 18th & 19th of every month. In June these dates fall on a weekend, so we will need “all hands on deck” given the fact that summer travel, camps, etc., will likely take some usual contributors out of town.

But isn’t this the hallmark of the Church, that it will always be surrounded by people in need? Yes.

St. John’s Foundation to Hold Annual Meeting

By Jack Hilmes, Foundation President

The Foundation’s annual meeting is set for Sunday, June 5. We will present our 2015 year-end financial statements prepared by Randy Adams, accounting practitioner for the church and the Foundation. There has been a substantial increase in our fund balance due to the sale of our fractional share of the Story County farm given to the Foundation by Timmy Miller.

And, more exciting news has been created by the Miller family! We learned that $300,000 of the Miller gift was specifically designated to remodel the church kitchen and bathrooms. Planning for these improvements is underway. Please extend thanks to Bob and Mary Miller for the generosity of their family.

Importantly, the Foundation continued its support of St. John’s in 2015 with a total of $224,000 in grants for roof repairs, tuck-pointing, data-processing infrastructure, building maintenance and our 150th anniversary celebration. This was an exceptionally large annual grant total due to available unspent earnings reserved from prior years.

The Foundation is blessed to have the resources to continue to aid and assist in the mission of St. John’s Lutheran Church. Thanks to all of you for your support and generosity. We hope you believe the Foundation is worthy of your gifts and bequests and that you will continue your financial support.
Prepare for Worship
By Michael Elsbernd

June 5 – Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 10


The Time after Pentecost is a time for growth. Just as new life begins to emerge from the recently fallow earth, the appointed readings in the lectionary cycle remind us of our Creator’s ability to revive us with new and abundant life. Whereas the first part of the church year focuses on the events of Christ's life (birth, baptism, passion, resurrection, ascension), the second part tends to focus on Christ's teaching. The scripture lessons teach us about God’s great gift to us – God’s good gift of new life.

Hymns: “Awake, O Sleeper, Rise From Death” (452); “Healer of Our Every Ill” (612); “On Our Way Rejoicing” (537).

June 12 – Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 11


In preparation for the Lord's Supper, we hear the words, “...shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sin...” This is welcome news as we recognize and confess our sin. Today’s lessons assure us that we are met with the abundance of God's grace and mercy at the communion table.

Hymns: “Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven” (865); “O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts” (658); “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” (807).

June 19 – Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 12


The readings for today reveal the frightening nature of sin, particularly the demonic nature of it as described in the text from Luke. Through baptism and holy communion, we are reminded of Christ’s promised presence to us. United in faith through baptism, we proclaim the risen Christ and recognize God’s triumphant power over the stark reality of sin and death.

Hymns: “Give to Our God Immortal Praise” (848); “Rise, Shine, You People” (665); “God of Grace and God of Glory” (705).

June 26 – Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 13


We hear the recurring invitation to “follow” throughout the readings today. Answering the call to “follow” brings us into a life of freedom. This freedom invites us to new life, living in the abundant gifts of the Holy Spirit – understanding, wisdom, wonder (fear of the Lord), love, joy, peace. This invitation to freedom calls us to become what we could not be on our own, for the sake of the world which God loves.

Hymns: “Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling” (582); “Will You Come and Follow Me?” (798); “Lead On, O King Eternal!” (805).

Women of the ELCA
By Members of WELCA

General Meeting Set

The Women of the ELCA will hold their general meeting on Thursday, June 2, at noon at Scottish Rite Park. There is no cost, but we do need to have an accurate count. There will be important business to conduct that day, and we hope to see you there. Members need to make reservations, so please contact Margaret Townsend (mtownsend1@mchsi.com or 274-0962).

Outreach Project: Food Bank

Our outreach recipient for June is the Food Bank of Iowa. Monetary contributions are always a good way to support the Food Bank. If you prefer to give food items, canned meats, canned soup, 100-percent fruit juice and peanut butter are needed at this time. These donations support the Backpack Buddies program. Our drop boxes are located in the reception area and outside of Neumann Hall.

Thank you for supporting the Beacon of Life in May. Everything they received from you was much appreciated.
Children’s Ministry
By Alicia Karwal

Sunday School
The Sunday School program year ended Sunday, May 15. The children celebrated with one another that day by engaging in some Minute-to-Win-It game fun! We also joined our families in Weertz Fellowship Hall to view a short video looking back on the year and the many wonderful things we shared. Thanks to all of the dedicated volunteers who served this past year! You made an incredible difference in our children’s lives. Most importantly, thank you to the families who share their children with the St. John’s family every week as we strive to keep those baptismal promises of rearing our children together in faith.

Registration for VBS is Still Open
You can still register for Vacation Bible School (VBS)! Our VBS Day Camp will be Monday, July 11, through Thursday, July 14, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please note this new time to better accommodate working families. VBS is open to all children entering kindergarten through sixth grade. This programming will be structured as a day camp with the collaboration of Children’s Ministries staff, St. John’s volunteers and counselors from Lutheran Lakeside Camp. It is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for learning, fellowship and fun! The day will include large-group activities to build community as well as sharing worship and meals together. Children will have opportunities for small-group, age-appropriate learning through creative dramatic play, Bible study, craft time and more!

We will likely need to host four or five counselors. If you would be interested in hosting a camp counselor (or two) from Lutheran Lakeside during VBS week – or if you would be willing to volunteer as a helper on one or more of the days of day camp, please contact Alicia Karwal (akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org).

Growing Together Ministry Team
The next meeting of the Growing Together Ministry Team will be Sunday, June 5, at 9 a.m. in Weertz Fellowship Hall. If you are interested in serving on this team, contact Alicia Karwal (akarwal@stjohnsdsm.org).

Youth Ministry
By Noah Niermann

Thank You!
The start of summer gives young people a lot to look forward to at St. John’s. Service-learning trips to Lutheran Lakeside Camp, Brooklyn, NY, and Wilderness Canoe Base are all on the horizon. It’s easy to get excited! But, before we start to pack our bags, I want to take this time to look at the year behind us and give thanks for all those who helped shape and sustain our youth-ministry programs.

- **Parents:** Thank you for raising your children in this community of faith! You are role models, volunteers, drivers and the most important of helpers. You are the first and last teachers of faith.
- **Youth Ministry Advisory Committee:** Thank you for your caring leadership and guidance. Thank you for giving up the first Monday evening of every month to gather, pray and plan. Your behind-the-scenes work ensures that all of our programs run smoothly.
- **Confirmation Mentors and Adult Leaders:** Thank you for giving your Wednesday evenings, Sunday evenings, and more odd times than I can count to gather alongside our young people as we learn, play and worship together. You have had to answer some tough questions about the small catechism, the Bible, and your own personal faith. Thank you!
- **Fundraising Volunteers:** Many thanks to everyone who helped organize, dream up, and coordinate all our fundraisers from the youth auction to the plant sale. Your hard work makes all our service-learning trips financially possible.
- **Trip Leaders:** Thank you to those adult leaders who are joining our young people on a service-learning trip this summer! Thank you for your adventurous spirit.
- **YOU!** Yes, thank YOU for all the small and big ways you support our young people. We experience faith most fully in community. You are this community of faith!

Our thankfulness overflows, and we carry this joy with us as we set out this summer on adventures and journeys of which we cannot see the end. Thank you for your support and prayers. God bless.

Find more Youth Ministry photos on page 7
Fine Arts Showcase
Youth Ministry a Year in Photos
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Small Groups
by Darla Stiles

Quilting: Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m., Room 308 at St. John’s.

Mah Jongg: Mondays, June 6, 13, 20, 27, 6 p.m., Neumann Hall at St. John’s.

Christian Involvement: Tuesday, June 7, 6 p.m., Saints Pub.

WIRED Book Discussion: Thursday, June 9, 6 p.m., Mary Miller’s house.

Next Adventure: Friday, June 10, 5 p.m., Neal Smith Refuge, “Concert on the Prairie.”

Gardening: Saturday, June 11, Lauritzen Gardens, Omaha. Meet at 8:30 a.m.

St John’s Social Club: Sunday, June 12, 2 p.m., Des Moines Playhouse, “You Can’t Take It with You.”

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

EAGLES: Wednesday through Friday, June 22-24, trip to Springfield, IL.

WIRED Cooking: Thursday, June 23, Carol Lunde’s house.

Photography: Will not meet until August.

Recreational Reading: Will not meet until August.

Scrapbooking: Is taking a summer break.

Yoga: Is taking a summer break.

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

St. John’s Gardening Group will meet Saturday, June 11, at 8:30 a.m. at St. John’s to carpool to Lauritzen Gardens, Omaha (where we will tour more than 100 acres of flower and plant displays). Registration was to be done in May, but if you are interested in seeing whether someone cancelled or if there is a possibility of adding a late registration, talk to Darla Stiles (243-7691).

St. John’s Social Club’s next event is Sunday, June 12, at 2 p.m. at the Des Moines Playhouse. The play is “You Can’t Take It with You.” Cost is $28 per person. The deadline has passed for reserving tickets, but if you would like to attend Darla Stiles will see if tickets can still be purchased. Contact Darla (darlastiles@stjohnsdsm.org or 243-7691).

Lunch Bunch II will meet Wednesday, June 15, at 12:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining the group for lunch on the third Wednesday of each month, contact Barbara John (279-5089).

Lunch Bunch I will meet Thursday, June 16, at 11:30 a.m. If anyone is interested in joining the group, contact Barb Hyler (401-5721).

EAGLES are planning a trip Wednesday through Friday, June 22 to 24, to Springfield, IL. The group will visit Lincoln’s grave, the Lincoln Museum and the Lincoln Home and Museum as well as possibly the Illinois State Capitol and the Old Capitol. Watch for more information. If you are interested in joining the group on this trip, contact Margaret Townsend (mttownsend1@mchsi.com or 274-0962).

WIRED Cooking will meet Thursday, June 23, at the home of Carol Lunde. Rory from All-Spice will give a demonstration. To learn the time of this event and/or whether there is room for any more participants, contact Carol Lunde (carollunde@q.com).

All-Congregational I-Cubs Game & Picnic will be held Sunday, July 17. We will tailgate in the parking lot and then watch the I-Cubs play. Cost is $15 per person for a ticket and lunch. Registrations will be taken beginning Sunday, June 19, or you may sign up on-line at www.stjohnsdsm.org.
Happy Father’s Day!

Many of the boys and young men that Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) serves in our residential programs have never had a positive male role model in their lives.

Recently, at a gathering of mentors and mentees, a few of these children introduced their mentors to each other. When a boy from Beloit spoke, you could hear the quiet pride in his voice.

“This is Josh,” he said simply. “And he’s the mentor I’ve always wanted.”

As you celebrate Father’s Day with your family or by remembering someone who served as a father figure or mentor for you, remember what you have to give to others around you: a word of encouragement, a listening ear or the gift of your time and presence. You may be surprised how much it means.

You provide all these things and more through your support of LSI. Thank you for responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service!

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.

Building Confidence from Legos

Once a week Beloit becomes an imagination station of Legos, robotics and computer programming. That’s what happens when the passions of LSI mentors and LSI clients align.

Tom first learned about LSI’s Beloit Residential Treatment Center through a mission event at his church. Together, he and LSI’s volunteer staff began exploring the idea of creating a robotics group at Beloit.

“You’re playing, but you’re also learning,” said Tom. “I enjoy helping them experiment and learn what is or isn’t interesting to them. It’s a great opportunity to match up their interests and passions.”

As a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) activity, the group also helps youth practice problem-solving skills they can use in the classroom. Many schools now offer robotics as an extracurricular activity. LSI hopes this activity helps youth at Beloit feel a sense of belonging with their peers when they are introduced to STEM subjects in the future.

“Our kids love going to this program,” said Angie, an LSI caseworker. “They like it because it is out of the ordinary, and they get to use their imagination, too. It’s something they are able to create and see the end result.”

On this day, Daniel, age 14, has just learned how to make his “robot” move.

“I built that,” he says with a huge grin.

And thanks to LSI donors and volunteers, he’s building a bright future, too.
Hospitality and Outreach

By Katie Tippins

Do You Need A Hug?

Look no further than God.

In my years of Catholic upbringing, reading, studying and searching, I never thought God could give me a hug. I ask God for guidance, strength, protection and discernment, among other things, on a daily basis. You name it, I’m not afraid to ask for it. But a hug? Not even on my radar.

Recently, a friend told me she read a quote from St. Hildegard of Bingen: “You are encircled by the arms of the mystery of God.” Hildegard was a 12th century German Benedictine abbess, writer, composer, philosopher, Christian mystic, visionary and polymath. I confess I had to look up the meaning of the word “polymath” and found it denotes a great thinker and one with knowledge of many things. Apparently, she epitomizes the term.

My initial thought for this month’s article was to introduce the concept of God’s embrace and support it with quotes from scripture. However, the more I read about Hildegard and found statements attributed to her, I found myself heading in a new direction. I presume that the concept of God’s hug is enough of an image, and you can take it from there.

Relating to my article, a person’s mind does not stay fresh unless you change it once in a while so I’m taking a different path.

I certainly cannot be alone in my distress at the condition of our world and abject fear of our future. To be honest, I don’t worry much about myself, but I have my children and trio of granddaughters to consider. Continually, I tell myself that all things work for good for those who love God and are called according to God’s purpose. Conversely, I ask myself if things could ever have been this bad in human history. And, yes, I am aware of genocides and horrors that we people have always inflicted on other people, but it does seem we have developed more creative and destructive ways to harm one another and our natural world.

So when researching Hildegard, I was amazed to find the quotes below:

- Even in a world that’s being shipwrecked, remain brave and strong.
- A human being is a vessel that God has built and filled with inspiration so that God’s works are perfected in it.
- The earth which sustains humanity must not be injured. It must not be destroyed!
- God has arranged everything in the universe in consideration of everything else.
- Glance at the sun. See the moon and the stars. Gaze at the beauty of earth’s greenings.
- What delight God gives to humankind with all these things. All nature is at the disposal of humankind. We are to work with it. For without we cannot survive.

I admit my utter surprise that a woman who lived more than 800 years ago would be articulating thoughts such as we might share in our own day and age, even to the point of conserving nature. Who’d have thought! In my wonder, I also find comfort. What we are living through is really nothing new. We humans always have been difficult (for lack of a better term).

A few years back, I found myself in conversation with several ladies in a retirement setting and a Catholic priest. One woman very earnestly asked him if he thought we were in the end times. He responded that he didn’t think so, that through the years many people preceding us wondered the same thing. He said he believes that God keeps giving us chances to get it right.

Through it all, God continues to love us, give us chance after chance and, if you will, a hug. Now that gives me comfort.

As Coordinator of Hospitality and Outreach, I am available to discuss joining St. John’s, volunteer opportunities, and connecting you with like-minded people who have shared interests – whether that be service, social and/or spiritual. Contact me at: katiet@stjohnsdsm.org or 243-7691.

The Arts at St. John’s

By Beth Ann Edwards

June 13: Handbell Concert features St. John’s Youth Ringers & Touring Choir

The Celebration Ringers, a high-school handbell choir from First Lutheran Church in Colorado Springs, CO, will present a free and open-to-the-public concert on Monday, June 13, at St. John’s at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The choir is touring through Nebraska, Iowa and Wisconsin, and we are excited to welcome them to Des Moines. On
two pieces, the St. John’s Youth Handbell Choir will perform with the 14-member Celebration Ringers. St. John’s has been asked to house the ringers and feed them dinner on the night of the concert. If you are willing to host two or more musicians, contact Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org).

STACK (Summer Time Arts Camp for Kids)

**Will be Aug. 4-5 and Aug. 7**

STACK (formerly known as Kisasa Day Camp) is set for Thursday and Friday, Aug. 4-5, from 8:30 to 5 p.m. and additionally Sunday, Aug. 7, from 9:15 to 11:15 a.m. Registration forms for STACK are now available on the St. John’s website and in the church office. STACK includes an arts-intensive curriculum in music, visual arts, drama and more. Service projects, including cooking for the homeless shelter, are scheduled for Thursday afternoon, and we will continue the tradition of working in the Faith Garden and swimming at the home of Pastor Bob and Terri Speirs on Friday afternoon.

Faculty members are:
- Beth Ann Edwards, director, handbell and vocal Choir
- Elizabeth Reed, assistant director and volunteer coordinator
- Nicole James, visual art
- DeAnna Axness, drama and Faith Garden coordinator
- Noah Niermann, Bible study and reflection
- Jacque Warming, lunch and cooking activities

All students entering Grades 3-6 in the fall of 2016 are eligible to attend STACK. The price, which includes lunch, is $35 per camper, with a $50 maximum per family. Scholarships are available. Volunteers entering Grade 7 through adult are welcome and encouraged to join us. For more information or to volunteer for one or more days, please contact Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org).

**Kisasa Closes Successful Program Year**

Kisasa musicians had a strong year of handbells, choir and community-building during this past program year, with average attendance at rehearsals and on Sunday mornings around 20 members. In addition to weekly Wednesday night rehearsals, Kisasa sang and/or rang handbells in Sunday worship at least once a month and participated in worship on Christmas Eve and Maundy Thursday. Each Wednesday during Lent they provided music leadership at the 7:15 p.m. worship service. Special thanks and appreciation go to Mackenzie Lyons, assistant handbell director; Erik Horak-Hult, accompanist, and Kris Joy, volunteer assistant, for giving their time and attention to providing a nurturing and musical Kisasa year. Congratulations to our sixth-graders who are moving into Confirmation Class next year. We eagerly anticipate welcoming incoming third-graders in the fall!

**Artists of the Month: Mary Lou Johnston**

*Exhibit Extended through June*

In the late 1940s, at the conclusion of World War II, our own Mary Lou Johnston worked as an artist and illustrator for The New Utica, a clothing and department store in downtown Des Moines. Her line drawings of fashions for men, women and children were then included on the pages of the Des Moines Register and promotional catalogs. The May exhibit in Weertz Fellowship Hall includes a variety of original line drawings and pages from the newspaper, plus a brief history of fashions from that era.

The upcoming 2016-17 schedule for Artist of the Month is filling up, and a few months are still available. If you would like to exhibit or can recommend an artist to exhibit in Weertz Fellowship Hall, please contact Beth Ann Edwards (bethann@stjohnsdsm.org).
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, June 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!