

February 2017

The Caller

Saint John Lutheran Church



*Followers of
Christ
who seek to
HEAR
the Word,
LIVE
the Word
and
SHARE*

Dear Christian Friends,

I pray you are off to a great start for 2017 and each of you will have a healthy, happy and prosperous new year. This communication with you is intended to inform and clarify information about a new initiative at Saint John Lutheran. After considerable analysis and discussion the church council members, the Pastors and I have made the decision to conduct our next Capital Campaign. This may initiate some groans and questions for some. Although this should not be new news to you as we have discussed it in previous annual meetings and from time to time in some of our written communications. In concert with our mission to “hear the word, live the word, and share the word” we are attempting to be responsible about repaying our debt because it’s the right thing to do.

Even though we are doing very well financially and staying on budget for our operating expenses it is not possible to set aside enough money to more rapidly pay down our remodeling loan which now stands around 1.59 million. Thanks to the generosity of many during our last campaign we have paid a million dollars of

the loan back within just the last three years. That loan was incurred when we did all of the renovations to what is now a beautiful and very useful building. Many of you remember the long narrow hallway where we filed directly to the parking lot after each church service. If you wanted to find someone to speak to after a service it was literally impossible because everyone left immediately there was no place to gather. We had to go down a flight of steps (not a good set of circumstances for people with limited mobility) to have our coffee hour. Many didn’t bother with this because it was just not welcoming.

Our overall goal is to pay down as much as possible on this loan so that in the not so distant future we can continue our renovation/building projects to incorporate more meeting room space, a place for our choir to practice and classroom space. Making our building better arranged to allow all to **“hear the word and live the word.”** We need to look to the future so that our children, our grandchildren and other beloved family and friends can have a place they are drawn to worship and learn about our God and our faith but first we need to reduce our debt.

Currently we have a very modern, fully equipped kitchen and a dining area that is open with easy access and comfortable chairs and tables. We often enjoy delicious meals that are served in this area and even more the great fellowship we share at various church gatherings. Our coffee bar and gathering area are so welcoming and make it easy to have a few minutes of conversation and camaraderie. This area is utilized not only by our congregation but numerous organizations in the community which gives energy and opportunity to our mission to **“share the word.”**

I am asking every member of our congregation to prayerfully consider and to seek guidance from our heavenly Father regarding how you will respond to this campaign. I’m asking all ages to please contribute whatever you can from your piggy banks, your bank accounts and if you are so fortunate and can from your investments. Every little bit helps. We want to have 100% participation.

Sincerely with faith in Christ our Lord,
Becky Henkel, your Council President

Saint John High School Youth

Prime Rib Dinner

Saturday, February 11th.

Light hors d'oeuvres at 6:30, dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Tickets are \$20/ticket or 2 for \$30.

Tickets will be on sale in the Welcome Center Jan. 15-Feb. 5.

Deadline to buy a ticket is Wed, Feb. 8th.

We apologize but tickets will not be available at the door.

All proceeds will go to support the youth attending the Omaha Urban Plunge mission trip.



Confirmation, 6th-8th Grades

IMPORTANT CONFIRMATION DATES FOR FEBRUARY

- Feb. 1 - Mentor Night
(Service project : blankets & scarves)
(5:30 meal-6:30 class))
- Feb. 8- No class or Bible
- Feb. 15 - Large Group (Spiritual Practices)
(5:30 meal, 6:30 class)
- Feb. 22 - Small Group (Bible) (Parent meeting)
(5:30 meal, 6:30 class)

Carol Joy Holling Camp

Early Bird Savings – If you register your child for camp before January 31 you will get a \$50 discount for a full-week session. Look for the Carol Joy Holling flyer on the table by the office.

Stewardship

Valentine’s Day is more than a day to send roses or candies to our sweethearts. It’s a day to remember St. Valentine, someone who many years ago gave up his life for the love of God... and His love for us. There was a story in *Guideposts* a while back that really brought this message home. Laura Cartwright writes: “An Ann Landers column I had read recently was requesting valentines for patients in VA hospitals. Later when I mentioned it to a friend who is a teacher, she asked me if I’d head up a card drive with her 3rd grade class. I agreed.

The students made valentines out of construction paper that they decorated with candy hearts. The class and I talked about what it meant to be a veteran. I told them many of the veterans that would receive their cards were away from their families.

“Can I have my card back?’ one boy asked. I handed it to him and he wrote across the bottom, ‘P.S. I love you.’ It was a heart to heart message I was glad to deliver!”

God sent us a valentine card, too... it was on a cross and it had “P.S. I love you” on the top of it. And He’d like us to share that valentine in all we say and do. That’s giving of the highest order!

Pastor John Plowman, retired
Saint John Stewardship Committee



Scrip Cards

Valentine/s Day is just around the corner. Remember that special sweetheart with a Scrip card. We have an assortment of cards to choose from—stop by our table and we will assist you in your choices!

Bethany News

Bethany Heights Senior Living Community has several apartments available for seniors. Do you know someone or perhaps even you, who would enjoy the benefits of living in a senior community? Maybe someone interested in living independently or having the benefits of an assisted living community? Bethany Heights offers both independent and assisted living services in apartments ranging in sizes from a Studio to Two Bedroom/Two bathroom. As an individual's needs increase, services are delivered directly to your apartment. Something unique to the area. Small pets are welcome. Some Long Term Care Insurance Policies are eligible for use at Bethany Heights. Bethany Heights is currently offering 25% off the first month's rent. This special offer expires March 1st. For more information or to set up a visit please contact Paula Fandry at Bethany Heights 712-328-8228.

Good Time Group

Our activity for this month is to attend the prime rib dinner on February 11 sponsored by the high school youth group. The money raised will go toward funding their local mission rip this year so let's spend our usual restaurant dollars at home. Buy your tickets at church on Sundays or in the office by Feb.8. We can sit together that night or with other good friends. See you there!

Men's Club


The Men's Club will meet next on February 16 at 11:30 am at Sugar's, 2725 E. Kanesville Blvd. Men of all ages are welcome to join us for a good lunch and great conversation. Call the church office (323-7173) or sign up on the bulletin insert during worship if you plan to attend.

Saint John T-Shirts

There are a few gray 125 Anniversary T-Shirts available for sale \$6.50 each. Contact church office or see Patricia between services on Sunday.

Food Pantry

Here are a few items suggested for Our Savior's Food Pantry: boxed dinners, canned soup, canned tuna or chicken, cat food. Please place your food donations in the grocery cart in the Welcome Center. Thank you.



Love your neighbor as yourself

Valentine's Day is the perfect opportunity to live out God's love. How does Jesus say we should treat other people?

Directions: Find a hidden word in each sentence. For example, "the" is hidden here: (12) "It's Harry's hat he stole." The (12) means the hidden word starts on the 12th letter (ignore punctuation). Use the answers to complete Matthew 19:19, NIV.

(1) You really like ice cream! _____

(16) Carly has a really fat hermit crab. _____

(21) My favorite animals are moth, ermine and eels. _____

(4) "Hello, Vera!" called Joseph. _____

(11) When horses neigh, boredom reigns. _____

(17) Their daughter, Kara, sat patiently. _____

(6) "That's yours, elf!" the fairy yelled. _____

♥ "Honor _____ and _____, and _____ your _____."

Matthew 19:19, NIV



Dear Funeral Luncheon Committee,

Thank you for providing the wonderful luncheon following Floyd Fischer's memorial service on December 16. We are very appreciative of your work in preparing for and serving the food, and for the delicious homemade desserts.

It was so nice to gather with people who attended the service and share a meal together—thank you!

Sincerely,

Curt & Denise Fischer and The Fischer Family

I just want to thank your congregation for partnering with New Visions/MOHM's Place and our community wide Christmas Celebration. With your church's support we were able to bring hope to over 2,000 individuals in need from our community. Not only did you provide gifts but so many from Saint John volunteered and loved on those in need. Our community is a better place with your church in it.

Blessings, Brandy Waller

Answer: "Honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 19:19, NIV

Sewing Group

“I still get wildly enthusiastic about little things... I play with leaves. I skip down the street and run against the wind.” ~ Leo Buscaglia



With a comforting embrace, a quilt can be that one little thing that shelters us from the world! Quilts help to lift up those who may be hurting. Wherever they travel, quilts provide a tangible message of love and hope for a brighter future. The quilts we create with our hands help to meet God's call in a large way. And quilt-making itself is certainly doing good; gathering together in fellowship, creating a tangible message of love and caring to strangers in a far off land, and delivering warmth and comfort to those who need it most. The *Saint John Sewing Group* is always looking for a new pair of hands to help tie quilts for Lutheran World Relief! We'll try to make you feel right at home, whether you come just once or wish to become part of this ministry. Please come and share in fellowship, devotions, and snacks. Next meeting will be February 15th, between 9:00 a.m. and Noon. See you then! For more information, please call Sue Pagan at 325-0257.

Prayer Shawl

The Prayer Shawl group meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. The next meeting will be on February 14.

Stephen Ministries

Do you, a family member, or someone you know have a need or a care? If so, contact Pastor Benson (323-7173), Mary Lou Hansen (322-7248, Debbie Plugge (256-5310) or Alan Meilike (328-1671) and a Stephen Minister will be assigned to you. Please note that all communications are always CONFIDENTIAL.

Altar Guild Schedule

Jan 28—Feb. 3

Marlys Lien
Mary Jensen
Shelly Menard
Andreia Nebel

Feb. 11-17

Norma Gahm
Linda Hansen
Patricia Minchin
Elaine VonGillern

Feb. 23-Mar. 3

Marlys Lien
Mary Jensen
Shelly Menard
Andreia Nebel

Feb. 4—10

Jan Girton
Cookie Johnson
Becky Taylor
Kim Pace

Feb. 18-24

Mary Lou Burke
Mary Lou Hansen
Alan Meilike

Women of the Church Schedule

Ruth Group: Mon., Feb. 6 1:30 p.m. at church
Esther Group: Tues., Feb 14 at 9:30 a.m.
Mary Group: Thurs., Feb., 9 at 9:00 a.m. at church
Women's Board Meeting: Tuesday, Feb. 28 at 9:30 a.m.

Thankoffering

Thanks for your generous response to our Thankoffering in November. The total of \$1,024.50 was well over our usual amount collected. These funds are used to support our missionaries in Jerusalem.

Beat Those Winter Germs

The Service/Witness Committee is having a "Cold & Flu Season" drive for Bloomer. The teachers need Kleenex, hand sanitizer & disinfectant wipes for their classrooms. Look for the collection box in the hall by the office.

Tabitha Cluster

Is it already a new year? Have the trimmings for the celebration of our Savior's birth been put away for another year? Did we make new year resolutions that now seem a little difficult? I just reread Bishop Eaton's new year's message about making resolutions and how we don't have to. God's grace has saved us through Jesus birth – we are free. Resolutions are not necessary. WOW! We don't have to spend time worrying about breaking resolutions, we only have to say, Lord, Thank You! My Christmas decorations have been put away but I have intentionally kept up some reminders – the Christmas Cards received from family and friends. My husband and I were especially blessed this year with more cards that we can ever remember receiving. Every time I walk by these cards displayed on a bookcase in our living room, I say Thank you, Lord! One of these days when I can spend some time going over each card, its message with the notes written inside, and can say a prayer for each sender, the cards will be taken down. The messages and blessings transmitted will not be forgotten.

As women of the church, I encourage us to pray that this new year strengthens each one of us and makes us more committed to the glory of God through our ministries. Tabitha Cluster will be meeting in October, 2017, at Our Savior's Lutheran in Council Bluffs. I am looking forward to hearing all about your ministries!

Carol Jeppesen, Tabitha Cluster Coordinator, caroldenny@cox.net, 712-323-1530

Sympathy to the Families of ...

Michael Oehme, who died at the Fort Lauderdale airport this month.

Mercedes Hart, who passed away on January 13.

Jason Jensen, son of Michelle & Dave Johnson, who passed away on January 12.

Dorothy Smith, who passed away on January 19.

Altar Flowers

If you would like to provide altar flowers in memory of, or in honor of someone, please call the church office, 323-7173.

Most weekends in February are still open.

Cost for altar flowers (set of 2) is \$25.68 and cost for chancel flowers (1) is \$21.40.

Giving Credit Where Due?

Running late for a meeting, a man circled the block, looking for place to park. Desperately, he raised his eyes toward heaven and prayed, "Lord, if you'll find me a parking spot, I promise I'll start going to church again." Just then, a car pulled out of a space right in front of the man. "

Never mind, he said to God. "I found one!"

February Milestones

80th Birthday

John Zwicky (Feb. 2)
1018 Arbor Ridge Circle
Co. Bluffs, IA 51503

85^h Birthday

Helen Larson (Feb. 20)
Northcrest Care & Rehab
34 Northcrest Dr. #110
Co. Bluffs, IA 51503

90th Birthday

Jean Tracy (Feb. 18)
7547 Somerset Bay Apt. B
Indianapolis, IN 46240

91st Birthday

John Grimm (Feb. 28)
Primrose Retirement Community
1801 E. Kaneshville Blvd.
Co. Bluffs, IA 51503

98th Birthday

Madeline Fauble (Feb. 10)
3021 Ave. C
Co. Bluffs, IA 51501

65th Wedding Anniversary

Jim & Bea Bixler (Feb. 24)
308 Wendy Hts. Road
Co. Bluffs, IA 51503

Contact Us

Senior Pastor: Rev. E. Jon Benson (JonBenson@SaintJohnELCA.org)

Interim Children, Youth & Family Pastor: Rev. Ben McIntire (ben.mcintire.rev@wisynod.org)

High School Youth Leader: Allie VanRoekel

Parish Ministry Coordinator: Patricia S. Minchin

Chancel / Bell Choir Director: Eric Wyler (wyler.eric@gmail.com)

Pianist/Organist: Joan Ebersold

Choir On Fire Director: Tracy Frush

Nursery Attendant: Amy Pedersen

Children's Hour Director: Judith Devereaux

Missionaries: Revs. Colin and Jeni Grangaard

Stephen Minister Leaders: Mary Lou Hansen (322-7248), Alan Meilike (328-1671) Debbie Plugge (256-5310)

Pastor Jon Benson (323-7173)

Office Manager and *The Caller* Editor: Terri Damgaard (TerriD@SaintJohnELCA.org)

Custodian: Debbie Baird

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Saint John Lutheran Church

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Non Profit Organization
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