

St. John Lutheran Church
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Thank You!

St. John Council

- 2016-2018 Dean Froslic President
- 2016-2018 Shawn Vasichak Vice President
- 2016-2018 Larry Papenfuss Secretary
- 2016-2018 Rachel Rude Worship and Music
- 2016-2018 Amanda Holt Education
- 2017-2019 Eric Christeson Property
- 2017-2019 David McMahon Social Concerns/Missions
- 2017-2019 Sally Sterk Good Samaritans
- 2017-2019 Damon Janssen Youth and Family



Join us!
Wednesday, May 3 6:30 - 8:00pm.
We will be working on the grounds, trimming trees, raking some leaves and sprucing up the mulch to get our church yard ready for the summer!

Contact Us
St. John Lutheran Church
1710 5th St. S., Fargo, ND 58103
701-232-8521 e-mail: office@stjohnfargo.com;
www.stjohnfargo.com

The Ministry Team of St. John: All the People of God, along with
Rev. Brian Hansen, Pastor
Dawn Papenfuss, Director of Music/Organist
Jackie Jabens, Finance/Office Manager
Carly Cox, Secretary Randy Shone, Custodian
Jeremy Maahs, Youth Programming Director
Jana Bruhschwein, Preschool Director
Kellie Knodel, Cheryl Dietz, Katie Olson, Preschool Teachers
Peggy Hammerling, Records Jessica Westgard Larson, Handbells

Editor: Carly Cox, Articles accepted before
1 pm May 22ndfor the June ‘17 Herald.



St. John Lutheran Church
Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

THE HERALD

Volume 117, Issue 5 Community in Christ: Christ in Community May 2017



Summer Worship Times Changing
Memorial Weekend!

9:30 Worship begins May 28th! -

Sundays, May 7,14,21: 8:30am and 10:45am Worship
Sunday May 28: Summer Schedule begins-1 service at 9:30am

ROOF REPLACEMENT UPDATE



This congregation voted unanimously at a special meeting on March 12 to authorize borrowing the necessary funding (no more than \$150,000) for the replacement of the education wing and parlor roofs as a part of the upcoming mortgage refinancing.



During the subsequent meeting of the church council, a motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously to accept the bid recommended by the property committee for the project. The vendor, Pierce Lee Roofing, had a window of time available to complete the work this spring...which turned out to be the first two weeks of April! The project is now finished, with the exception of some finishing work in progress on soffits and fascia. We were fortunate that **the estimate was lower than anticipated**, and the weather was dry and mild during the stretch of days that the old roofing was removed, necessary changes to the rooftop HVAC components were made, and new materials were installed. Jack Anderson has kept a close eye on – and a knowledgeable hand in – the project from start to finish, relaying updates to staff and council frequently. Please watch for additional photos to be displayed in the church showing the finished roofs, along with a summary of the work done. Also, please be sure to thank Jack and the entire property committee. Jack has spent countless hours managing the project and completing many related (and unglamorous) tasks.

ASLESON SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Any St. John member who is accepted at an ELCA college or seminary may apply to the St. John Foundation and receive this scholarship. The foundation board manages the fund and will make disbursements. Application forms are available in the church office (232-8521 or office@stjohnfargo.com) and *must be submitted to the church office by Monday, June 5, 2017. NOTE: Students need to apply every year for this scholarship!*

CHANGING LIVES-
ONE KIT AT A TIME

Mission kits are shipping the week of May 7th. This Spring shipment includes: *9 Baby care kits; 25 Personal care kits; 32 Quilts; 55 School kits.*
Thank you to Midwest Motors for their gift of shipping at no charge. If you would like to contribute to the expense of these kits please contact the church office.

A Note From the Pastor,

I would like to begin this article by expressing a deep and sincere word of thanks to everyone who has helped over the past many months to organize, plan and participate in our "ACTIVE IN LOVE" campaign. This campaign was truly a community effort with many people and small groups doing many important and vital things. Therefore, if you came in to affix address labels to mailings thank you! If you were a part of a ministry team that helped to guide and shape our wider narrative, thank you! If you were one of the many members who either lead or participated in a small group, thank you! If you showed up to help inform our communal discussion and the ministry we share here together, thank you! Thank you for helping to drive forward the Ministries of Christ that we are all a part of here at St. John. Through your gifts of time, talents and finances we can continue to follow Christ's leading into the places we are being called as the Body of Christ.

One of the most exciting parts of this campaign for me has been watching the small groups' ministry take shape. The fellowship that occurred as a part of the many small groups that met during our Lenten season was fun to hear about and see. Many of our small groups posted pictures on the St. John Lutheran Friends face book site. Some of the small groups have chosen to continue meeting once a month even though our formal study time together has come to an end.

What has for me perhaps been the most exciting part of our small groups' fellowship and study has been seeing how each of the small groups has chosen to serve. Some of our small groups have decided to provide notes of Thanks and appreciation. Many small groups signed up to provide meals to families within our church community and beyond.

We have small groups that have decided to engage in an active way in our current ministries by volunteering to help lead worship and serve meals at Churches United and the Salvation Army. I'm aware that another small group is seeking to find ways to raise awareness about social inequality and racism. Yet another small group is hoping to partner with VBS to raise awareness for homeless youth in our area and pull together donations to support Matthew's Project (a program that seeks to care for the needs of homeless youth). Other small groups have served in wonderful and significant ways (of which I'm unable to recall at the moment).

What is so exciting to me is that in all of these endeavors our small groups have been asking the question, "Where does God call us to live out our faith Active in Love?" What I sense is happening in and through this small group engagement is that lives are being touched and the Spirit is leading us to something significant. I cannot quite yet see what God is up to but it seems clear to me that God is at work stirring things up through the power of the Spirit.

So thank you all for your partnership in this Ministry of Christ that we all share! Thank you for the privilege of serving here as your pastor! Thank you for responding to God's call and for doing the work of ministry that Christ invites us into together!

In Christ,

Pastor Brian

MORTGAGE REFINANCING COMPLETED

With the impending rise of interest rates, the church council decided in February to refinance the mortgage ahead of the maturity date of July 2018. The refinancing was completed in April with Gate City Bank.

The payoff balance of the previous loan was \$692,000 (3.625% on a 5-year balloon with 138-month amortization remaining – monthly principal and interest payments of \$8,040)

The new loan balance is \$792,000 (4.000% on a 5-year balloon with 138-month amortization – monthly principal and interest payments of \$7,191)

The new loan balance includes \$100,000 for the roof replacement project. Any of this amount in excess of the final cost of the project will be paid back on the principal balance.

Thanks to the commitment of this congregation to reducing its outstanding debt, the mortgage balance has been reduced by a full 40% over the last three years, and the annual cost by \$10,200!

Committee Spotlight - Mission/Social Concerns

Members: Char Grant, David McMahon (Council Representative), Allan Peterson (Chair), Elwood Rieke

Meets: First Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm

The focus of the Mission/Social Concerns Committee is to support and facilitate the following ministries of our congregation and community.

ELCA World Hunger Appeal will be held April 23rd to May 7th. St John has continually been a strong supporter of the effort to feed the hungry. Your continued support makes a tremendous impact in the lives of countless people struggling to feed themselves.

Sheltering the Homeless for this past winter season concluded on April 9th. 144 families were housed and have transitioned to permanent housing. Construction has begun on the Bright Sky Complex which will offer shelter to the homeless families in our community. It is projected to be available to house families by February of 2018.

Mission Kits continue to be assembled by members of St John. A collection is scheduled for May 8th - 12th. Kits for Personal Care, Baby Care, School and Quilts will be offered to assist those in need. A haul of a semitrailer has been donated to transport the kits to be distributed.

The Mission / Social Concerns Committee works in cooperation with the ELCA, Churches United, The Salvation Army, FM Emergency Food Pantry, NDSU Lutheran Center and others.

The Reconciliation in Christ Committee is a sub-committee of the Mission / Social Concerns Committee.

We welcome anyone interested in being involved in any of these opportunities or with ideas for new ways to contribute to our congregation and community to join us.

HELP US REACH OUR ELCA WORLD HUNGER GOAL

Our annual World Hunger emphasis will conclude on Sunday, May 7, when we will invite you to bring your financial contributions for this important ministry. World hunger offering envelopes will be available in the pew racks. Please make checks payable to St. John Lutheran and on the memo line write "ELCA World Hunger." A few families in our congregation have put up a collective challenge gift of \$6,500. Might the remainder of the congregation be willing to contribute an equal amount to meet this challenge. Thank you to everyone willing to help with this.

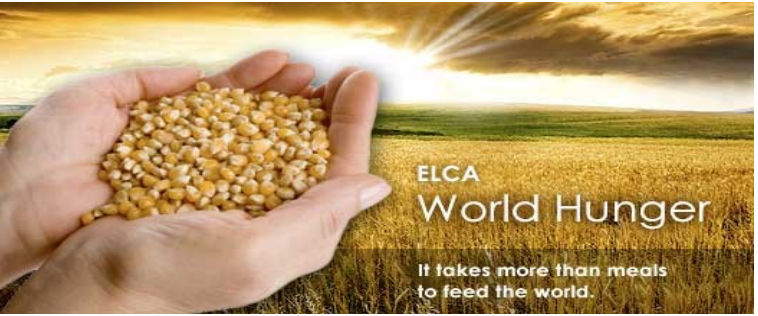
EMERGANCY SHELTERING OF THE HOMELESS CONCLUDES IT'S 2016-2017 SEASON

Some 25 congregations in the F-M community, including St. John Lutheran, have been a part of a ministry to provide emergency sheltering of the homeless over the past six winter seasons. The five or six homeless shelters in our area do their best to provide a safe and warm environment for anyone not having a home, but the needs have exceeded the space available. This led to churches stepping forward and willing to shelter up to 30 men and women for a week at a time. Beginning in November and concluding in April this ministry has provided an invaluable service to people who need our help.

Ready to start a new phase! It is time to put our efforts into affordable housing so that people will have a more permanent place to live. Already in the past year Churches United for the Homeless has found housing for 144 families and the YWCA has found housing for 11 families. This is so encouraging!

We thank all those who have helped us to provide shelter over the past six years: volunteers who covered shifts, people who brought in food, those who prayed for us, and those who gave financial donations. It has been a privilege to be involved in this project.

Elwood Rieke and Jim Alger, coordinators



A WORD FROM THE CHURCH COUNCIL:

The council adopted a welcoming statement in 2015 on behalf of the congregation, and the Reconciled in Christ (RIC) committee recently conducted a survey to assess member support for becoming an RIC-affiliated church.

As St. John explores how we can be a safe place of welcome to the LGBTQ community we invite you to Join us for two gatherings in May.

On May 7, we're hosting a special congregational gathering at 11:45 (immediately following the 10:45 service). It's an opportunity to review the survey results, share your perspectives and ask questions. Lunch will be provided.

On May 21, we'll hold a special congregational meeting at 11:45 (immediately following the 10:45 service) to consider a motion and vote to become an RIC-affiliated church. According to RIC guidelines, the motion must be supported by 85% of the members who are present.

We need your voice! These are congregational decisions, and all perspectives are welcomed and needed. See you on May 7 and May 21.

- St. John Church Council

Youth and Family

Calling All Elementary Students: Come to Red Willow Bible Camp with me this summer!

I would like to personally invite those of you currently in Kindergarten through 5th grade to come to Bible camp with me this summer. I will be going to camp June 25th-30th. Camp is an excellent opportunity to grow your faith and challenge yourself through trying new things—including canoeing, camp-outs, and lots of other fun activities! Through camp, kids can experience God outside of the church walls in the great outdoors. I'll be there for the whole week and I'd love for you to join me! Grab a brochure off the youth bulletin board for registration details, and if you have any questions about camp I would love to talk with you. See you there!

What have we been up to?

Family Bowling Night

In March we enjoyed a fun afternoon bowling with the families of St John. We rented out all of All-Star Bowl for a couple of hours and had over 30 people bowling and sharing a potluck supper. We had a great time and are excited to do it again next year!

Talent Show & Auction

In April we had annual Youth Talent Show and Auction. The event featured a dozen acts including singing, dancing, and jokes, and was hosted by the hilarious Steve Edwardson. Thank you to all who donated baking and silent auction items, to our talented performers, and to all who supported us at the auction. We raised over \$2,000 to support our youth.

Thinking About Next Year

Since starting around Christmas, I've enjoyed building relationships with the youth at St John through leading confirmation and helping with Cross+Walk. Looking forward, the youth committee and I are excited about next year and are already putting together a calendar of events. Here's a sneak peek at what we are planning for youth and families: Rally Sunday Bonfire, Corn Maze, Concerts, High School Lock-In, Middle School Lock-In, Ski Trip, Youth Gathering in Texas. Stay tuned for future updates!

2018 National Youth Gathering Informational Meeting!

*May 7th @10:15am and
May 10th @6:45pm*



Preschool News

The preschool has been a real ZOO! We patiently observed an incubator full of chicken eggs for 21 days and watched as chicks miraculously hatched. What excitement to see, feel and hear baby chicks. We have also been observing the metamorphosis of a tadpole into an aquatic frog named Bubbles, and five fuzzy caterpillars spin chrysalises and emerge as butterflies. We also have Bob the Betta fish, Tillie the Russian tortoise, and Geckomole the gecko. We love exploring God's amazing creatures in preschool.

Vacation Bible School! June 11-June 14

Let's Fetch Some Faith-Filled Fun!

Kids are crazy for critters with whiskers, tails, feathers, or scales! That's why kids will think this VBS is the cat's meow. During the four short days at Pets Unleashed VBS, we will introduce kids to Jesus, God's Son who lovingly cares for us all. At Pets Unleashed vacation Bible school, kids experience God's Word in surprising and unforgettable ways! Each day, leaders reinforce one simple Bible truth—which makes it easy for kids to remember and apply to real life! Sign up now at Cross+Walk or in the church office.

Dear St. John Families,

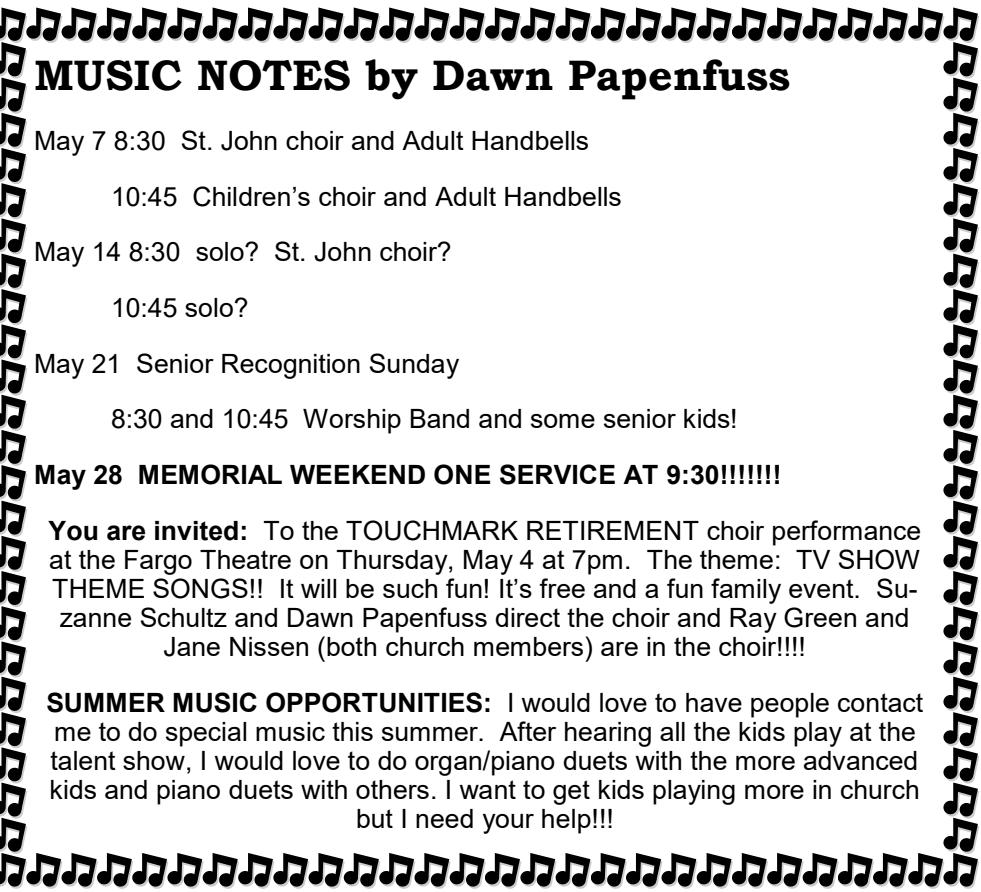
All of you are invited to participate in a “Because We Care” Bake Sale at St. John’s on **Sunday, May 7**. This Bake Sale will take place between the first and second worship services. It is a way for our youth and families to be actively involved in raising awareness and showing care and love to our brothers and sisters around the world who are hungry and facing the terrible reality of famine in their lives.

The goals of this “Because We Care” Bake Sale include: 1) Creating fun family memories baking together; 2) Educating our church community about World Hunger issues, specifically, famine facing 20 million of our neighbors in Christ in South Sudan, Yemen, Somalia and Nigeria; and 3) raise money to support Lutheran World Relief, which is working with partners in these countries to feed God’s children in desperate need.

How will it work? Families bake any kind of treat that they choose (cookies, bars, cake pops, pies, brownies and etc). Invite grandparents, cousins and friends to join you! Families bring the baked goods to church Sunday, May 7 by 9am or leave them in the parlor marked “Bake Sale” before Sunday. Please bring your baked goods ready to sell. If you make cookies, put a certain number on a paper plate, label what they are and cover well. Same thing for all the items, you decide how many to sell together and how to label them. Be creative! No need to price what you bake, this is a free will donation Bake Sale. All of the money collected will be given to Lutheran World Relief to aid their work in these countries facing starvation and famine.

Anyone who wants to help with the Bake Sale on **Sunday morning, May 7**, come anytime between 9-11. Tables will be set up on the main floor (exact location to be decided) with posters and pictures that help all of us learn more about the famine happening in South Sudan, Yemen, Somalia and Nigeria, and what we can do to show our care and love for all God’s children there.

If you as a young person or as a family want to learn more about the issues of hunger, starvation and famine facing people in these countries, here is one link: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/mar/11/world-faces-worst-humanitarian-crisis-since-1945-says-un-official> . There are also many stories on NPR.org or MPR.org and other websites. If you feel called to make a poster to display during the Bake Sale or a handout to help others learn about the hunger issues in our world, please do so!



MUSIC NOTES by Dawn Papenfuss

- May 7 8:30 St. John choir and Adult Handbells
- 10:45 Children’s choir and Adult Handbells
- May 14 8:30 solo? St. John choir?
- 10:45 solo?
- May 21 Senior Recognition Sunday
- 8:30 and 10:45 Worship Band and some senior kids!

May 28 MEMORIAL WEEKEND ONE SERVICE AT 9:30!!!!!!

You are invited: To the TOUCHMARK RETIREMENT choir performance at the Fargo Theatre on Thursday, May 4 at 7pm. The theme: TV SHOW THEME SONGS!! It will be such fun! It’s free and a fun family event. Suzanne Schultz and Dawn Papenfuss direct the choir and Ray Green and Jane Nissen (both church members) are in the choir!!!!

SUMMER MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES: I would love to have people contact me to do special music this summer. After hearing all the kids play at the talent show, I would love to do organ/piano duets with the more advanced kids and piano duets with others. I want to get kids playing more in church but I need your help!!!

Memorial Fund:
In Memory of Arne Brandvig: Donald & June Marks, Doris Brogren & Valerie Alland, Kathy Kelly, Dorothy Tabatt, Patricia McCabe, Dave Owings & Karen Stoderl-Owings, L. R. Carlson, Craig & LaRae Colman, Ardis Brandvig, The Estate of Arne Brandvig
In Memory of Laurie Gibb: Lyle & Rosalie Fritz
In Memory of David Haugo: Pete & Monica Graber
In Memory of Dick Hentges: Pete & Monica Graber
Special Music Fund:
In Memory of Norma Miller: Pete & Monica Graber

You are Invited:
Ugandan Children’s Choir
performs at St. John Lutheran
at 7:00pm Wed. July 5th.
Please mark your calendars.
This is a fantastic group of
talented children ages 8-12
drumming, singing, and
dancing.

For the "Young At Heart"
"It's not the years in your life that count, But the life in your years"- Abe Lincoln
Please join us for our last gathering before summer. We will enjoy Christian fellowship as we have our Pot Luck lunch Thurs. May 11 at 11:30AM in the Fellowship Hall. If you can't cook, come anyway, plenty of food for all Dawn Papenfuss will treat us to her music with Golden tunes we all enjoy. Questions: call Mavis Lura 238-4147, Dona Enstad 701-840-0348, or Cathy Chatelain 261-2707.

"Happy Feet" St. John Foot Care Clinic
We have volunteers to pamper your feet and trained personnel to trim your nails. All while you enjoy coffee and visit with friends. Up-coming dates are Tues. May 16 and Tues. June 20 in the Parlor. Schedule an appointment by calling Cathy Chatelain 701 -261-2707 Cost is \$16 paid to Sanford Home Health.

Reconciling In Christ-Point of View

I want to start by saying that while I am a part of the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) committee, this letter does not express the views of the RIC committee, but instead, my own, as a gay member of this congregation. With the impending vote on whether or not we will become an RIC congregation, I felt it important to share my views on this matter as a gay member of our congregation.

To recap, our church council has already approved a welcoming statement that we have posted on our website, showing our inclusiveness of all people, but with a focus on LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) people, as that is who we are as a congregation. My concern is: how do we send that message outside of the walls of our church?

While I would like to imagine that everyone in our community knows we are accepting, I have no doubt that many do not. Becoming an RIC church is an extension of who we already are. It is stating, explicitly, that we are welcoming of LGBTQ people, by placing our name on the website of Reconciling Works. We would remain an ELCA church, however we would also be an RIC affiliated congregation. This would allow those who would like to find an accepting church, whether they are LGBTQ themselves, or simply have an LGBTQ family member, to find a church home in our congregation.

I know that one of the main criticisms of this has been that we should be inclusive of all people, and I would point to our welcoming statement—we are working to be inclusive towards everyone. However, in my opinion, due to the historic exclusion of LGBTQ from Christianity, the focus of RIC on welcoming LGBTQ people is not unwarranted. To show this on a personal level, in one of my religion classes, we were tasked with writing our own 6-word memoir. One of my good friends wrote: “Queer religion major, scared of church.” It can be extremely hard as an LGBTQ person to even believe that God could love us, not to mention for us to love God, due to how God is often used against us. There is no nationally recognized group besides RIC that would list us on a website allowing people both near and far to find us. If there was, I would be all for that.

Finally, if we would vote no, where does that leave me, would I feel compelled to leave St. John? To be honest, I am not sure. To me, if our congregation would vote no on becoming an RIC congregation, I would interpret it in the following ways:

-By voting no, is St. John in some way saying that LGBTQ people are not welcome? Is it saying that I, as a gay member, am not welcome, or that my LGBTQ friends are not welcome?

-By voting no, is St. John saying that we are already “inclusive enough”, even with the LGBTQ members of the congregation stating otherwise?

-By voting no, would St. John somehow be saying that the discrimination and suffering caused by Christianity to LGBTQ people isn’t worthy of being recognized, and isn’t worth attempting to repair?

I also know that we don’t want people to leave due to us becoming an RIC congregation. We have already lost members. I also know members that could very well leave if we do not become an RIC congregation, myself included. We simply need to decide what we think best fits our congregation and our mission, because people come and go from churches all the time. What matters is what we feel is at the heart of St. John and the ministry that we as a church provide to our congregation, our community, and our world. I hope that through this process we can better learn who we are as a congregation, one way or another, and continue to do the amazing work that we do as a church, and as a congregation of the ELCA. If this prompted any questions, etc., please feel free to reach out to me. I would be happy to discuss anything related to us becoming an RIC congregation, LGBTQ people, etc. My contact info is below.

Luke Papenfuss

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