

THE JOURNAL

Saint John Evangelical Lutheran Church

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January 2012

Worship and Christian Education Opportunities



Saturdays @ 6:00 PM*

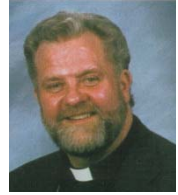
Contemporary Holy Communion

Sundays @ 8:15 and 11:00 AM*

Holy Communion

Sundays @ 9:45 AM*

Sunday School with Classes for ALL Ages!



Time To Reflect

And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified. — Acts 20:32

She asked if we offered a New Year's Eve service, and when I said we didn't, she wondered about a New Year's Day one. No, we don't offer that either. She told me about how she liked going to a service on the morning of January 1st, for it was a good time to sit, with only a few folks around, and reflect on what had happened the last year and on what might happen in the coming one. Then she paused, and wondered,

"Can you reflect forward?"

Most of the shows on TV and the radio in the first days in the new year are about what has happened over the last 12 months: cultural phenomena, political comings and goings, those we lost to our old friend, death. One could watch clips and hum along on songs, laugh at old jokes and mourn the loss of folks who had touched us in some way or another. Retrospectives, remembrances, looking back, all those things we do at this moment on the calendar.

But, can we reflect forward? Do we dare?

Do we take some time tomorrow, or the next day, or the next to sit in silence and just listen to the yearnings of our hearts, to those longings of our souls which have been pushed aside by the hustle and bustle, the worry and hurry of the last month or so? Can we calm our fears, our doubts, our nightmares long enough to once more dream about a life that could be whole and holy; about a relationship that might be reconciled and knit back together;

about a journey we have long thought about taking but just can't bring ourselves to pick up our foot and take that first step; about a wish that a friend has that we suddenly realize we can help make come true?

If history is any indication, at this point most of us probably have that list of resolutions for the coming 12 months—a list that looks an awful lot like the one we made back in December 2010, and looks as if we just folded it up and put in our jeans pocket, letting it run through the wash a few dozen times: tattered, faded, ink-run-together-till-we-can't-read-it. Those same resolutions we will break as easily as we have done in all the other past years.

What might happen if tonight, or tomorrow morning, or in the evening before going to bed, we were to sit down and make a list of reflections for 2012? That list we laminate and stick on the refrigerator; that list we scotchtape to the mirror in the bathroom; that list about living more peacefully, being more open to the surprising grace of God, of gifting others with joy when we want to slap them silly with sarcasm. That list of hopes we have jotted down on napkins, on the bottom of bulletins, on the backs of voided checks, and shoved way down into our purses 'to do later.'

Can you reflect forward?

Blessings,

Pastor Bruce

New Member Workshop

Our next New Member Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, January 14th at 10:00 AM. We will have an opportunity to discuss all kinds of interesting things about the Lutheran faith and the ministry of St. John. Members of our Church Council and Evangelism committee will join us for lunch.

Those attending the workshop will be eligible to be received into membership on Sunday, January 22nd at the 11:00 AM service.

If you are interested in becoming part of the St. John Family, or even if you just want more information about St. John or the Lutheran Faith, this Workshop is for you.

Contact Pastor Bruce or the church office to register or for more information.

Thank You!

I need to express my gratitude to the people of St. John for your wonderful outpouring of affection and generosity during this Christmas season.

Your gifts, cards, words of thanks and encouragement, and most of all, your appreciation of our ministry together means so much to me.

I look forward to the opportunity of serving with you this new year, as together we walk through the great mysteries of life and faith, and as together we seek to minister in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We love you all.

Blessings,

Pastor Bruce & Barb

ON STEWARDSHIP

Pastor Blair Morgan, Director for Evangelical Mission

As we experience the many positive aspects of being a part of the mission and ministries of our local Lutheran congregations, we often take a lot for granted.

We lose track of all of the time, talent and treasure that went into the particular opportunity for that ministry to take place—be it in the context of worship, or the nurturing of our faith, or the outreach of our faith into the needs of our neighbors. Our local congregations exist because of this wonderful expression of what we call stewardship—our faithful daily use of all that God’s grace has poured out in our lives.

It doesn’t even come down to all that the people you know in your congregation have done.

Little thought is given to:

- The education the pastor received at his/her Lutheran seminary
- The consultations provided by synod staff in the period the congregation searched for a pastor
- For some, the consultant provided through the ELCA as the congregation went through a building expansion or the erection of the first church building
- The hymnal used each week provided through the worship planning of the ELCA or previous church bodies
- The educational materials being used in their Sunday school classes and women’s circles researched by ELCA staff and/or published by Augsburg Fortress

- The planning that enabled their effective mission trip to help with disaster relief
- The church camp their youth attend that enhances and inspires their children's faith
- The Youth Gatherings that their youth attended that provided them with a much larger sense of how the Holy Spirit is at work in the lives of other youth and adults across the country and the world
- The Lutheran Senior Home that a number of their seniors now live in and receive caring and faithful ministry and nursing support
- The stewardship resources provided by the ELCA and/or the synod to their stewardship committee just through a simple phone call or e-mail request
- The resources and direction for the Sunday school mission project to provide fresh water to a village on another continent through the connections the ELCA has with Lutheran World Relief one of the most trusted relief agencies across the world

Stewardship of time, talent and treasure is at the essence of this entire ministry list. Ministry does not just happen. It takes place through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and is powerfully at work through the faithful and daily giving of each disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ. And, of course, this means that a significant portion of this entire list could not take place without that offering that goes into that offering plate to your local congregation, and through your local congregation in Mission Support to the synod and the churchwide organization. Solid stewardship is an amazing and wonderful thing!

Worship Highlights to Begin the New Year

The church celebrated our “new year” way back on November 27th – the First Sunday in Advent. The secular world celebrated its new year on January 1st. That means we have had *two* chances to make “New Years Resolutions”! Number one on your list of resolutions for 2012 should be for more frequent (hopefully weekly) attendance at worship and Sunday School. Here’s what’s happening worship-wise as we begin our “second” new year!

Wednesday, January 4th – Holden Evening Prayer for Epiphany Week:

Join us at 7:30 PM as we continue our celebration on this 11th Night of Christmas with this beautiful candlelight service. Since Epiphany is close at hand, the three Kings will arrive as we conclude our Children’s Pageant, which began at the early service on Christmas Eve. The service will also include prayers for healing.

January 7/8 – The Festival of the Baptism of Our Lord: Our first full weekend of 2012 is a celebration of Jesus’ baptism by John in the River Jordan. Join us for our Contemporary Service of Holy Communion on Saturday at 6:30 PM, or at one of our two traditional services of Holy Communion on Sunday, at 8:15 and 11:00 AM. Remember your own baptism this day. And also remember that Sunday School resumes at 9:45 AM, with classes for all ages!

January 14/15 – The Second Sunday After Epiphany

January 21/22 – The Third Sunday After Epiphany

January 28/29 – The Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

February 4/5 – The Fifth Sunday After Epiphany

The first of two “green” seasons in the church year is the time of *Sundays After Epiphany*. Join us for our Contemporary Services of Holy Communion on Saturdays at 6:30 PM, or at our 8:15 AM or 11:00 AM Traditional Services of Holy Communion on Sundays. Remember that Sunday School has classes for all ages each week at 9:45 AM!

Wednesday, February 1st – Taizé Prayers with Healing: Join us at 7:30 PM in the candlelit beauty of our Nave for what some have referred to as a 45-minute week-long retreat!

We want to see you in church – and don't forget to invite a friend or neighbor to join you!

Musical Notes

Some miscellaneous items

- ❖ Thanks to our wonderful singers and instrumentalists, our celebration of Advent and Christmas were beautiful. My thanks to each and every one of them for the outstanding job they did in making the holiday season so wonderful and meaningful!
- ❖ Our holiday mood was tempered a bit this year due to the death of Polly Gastgeb in late November. Polly was a much-loved member of Saint John, and especially of our choir. Any time someone dies near Christmas or Easter, I can't help but think back to the words of our former pastor, Russ Scheel. He would always include in his sermon a statement that went something like this: "For us this will be a sad holiday season, but for Polly this will be the most joyous Christmas ever, as she will be spending it with the One whose birthday we celebrate!" May God continue to provide peace and comfort to Polly's family and friends.
- ❖ Howard Schade was another long-time member of the choir at Saint John, who passed away in 2005. His family had designated memorial money that was given in his name be used for something for the music ministry at the church. And so we have ordered an additional five hand bells in his memory. Plans are to have them dedicated on Transfiguration Sunday, February 19th, at one of the morning worship services. We thank the Schade family for this very generous gift!

- ❖ Don't look now, but Lent and Easter are fast approaching...and we could use some help in the choir! We would love to have you join us, at least for the busy holiday season! We rehearse on Sunday mornings between the two services, and sing for both services, leaving after the Gospel at the 11:00 AM service. We have lots of fun, and sing lots of great music. And you never have to worry about what to wear to church, thanks to the nifty choir robes we wear each week! Please stop by the organ after church and talk to me, or visit with one of our choir members. You'll be welcomed with open arms!
- ❖ Finally, a personal note. You members of Saint John are some of the most special people anywhere. I cannot thank you enough for the many greetings me and my family received this Christmas season. May God continue to bless each and every one of you!

Jeff Gray

Notice of Annual Meeting

The Congregation Council has called for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation to be held on Sunday, January 29, 2012 immediately following the 11:00 AM worship service. The purpose of this meeting is to approve the Annual Reports to the Congregation, review and approve the 2012 Church Operating Budget, approve changes to the Church Constitution, and for any other business that should come before the congregation.

This year, the Annual Meeting will be held in Dittmer Hall, and will include a pot-luck lunch. You are asked to bring your place setting and a dish to share. The church will provide beverages and dessert. As part of the events of the day, we will re-dedicate the newly renovated Dittmer Hall. Come and share some great food and see the new look of the dining room!

Proposed Changes to the Church Constitution

The Congregation Council has proposed two changes to the Constitution of Saint John Evangelical Lutheran Church. As required by the Constitution, the first reading of these proposed changes was at the Congregational Meeting held on November 20, 2011. They will be read again at the Annual Meeting on January 29, 2012 and then voted on for adoption.

The two changes are as follows, with the changes indicated by *italics*:

Chapter 11

OFFICERS

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer (*except the treasurer*) shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive full terms in any office.

Chapter 12

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot (unless dispensed by majority) to serve for two (2) years or until their successors are elected. Such members (*except the cemetery representative*) shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin on the date specified in the bylaws.

Parish Education

The Education Committee would first like to wish everyone a Happy New Year!

We had a great first semester with a wonderful group of children, teachers and staff. We would like to thank all of the Sunday School teachers for their time and effort into making it a successful program. We would especially like to thank Beverly Altman for all of her dedication to our youth and making St John a wonderful place to be on Sunday mornings for our children. We can't forget to thank all of the parents who bring their children to Sunday school. We are looking forward to another wonderful semester and hope to see all the children of St John Sunday mornings from 9:45am to 10:45am, September through May.

Another part of our Parish Education is the youth groups. Over the years, we have lost a lot of our youth group members to other activities. Enclosed in this month's Journal is a survey for these groups. In order to help us organize and prepare for meetings and events, we are asking everyone to please take the time to fill out the survey for all those interested in it. These groups will include some outside events as well as events inside the Church. If we can get enough weekly participants, we have many great games, crafts and projects in store. Please return the enclosed survey for all those in your household that would like to attend. Feel free to make copies and hand them to others. The sooner we get them all back, the sooner we can start making the schedule. Hope to get a lot of responses ☺

We also would like to thank Pastor Bruce for all his help with our youth. He is so great with the kids and makes learning the Word of God fun, for both the children and the adults. Adult Bible Study is another part of our education and is held in the Scheel Friendship room Sunday mornings from 9:45 to 10:45, during the Sunday school hour. He also holds a class on Wednesday evenings (except during Holden and Taize prayers) at 7pm in the Scheel Friendship room.

One last note is regarding this year's Vacation Bible School. We are in need of a director and would like to start asking for help now. If you are at all interested, please contact me at (412) 276-1810.

Looking forward to a great 2012 with our St John Family!

*Blessings,
Vicki Rathbun,
Parish Education*

Greetings To The Women of St. John

Our **Winter Gathering** will be held on Sunday, January 15th at 9:45 in Dittmer Hall. Our speaker will present information on our 2012 outreach program, **Gwen's Girls**. It is located in Pittsburgh and helps young girls and women.

Bible Study will take place on Monday, January 9th at 7 p.m. and Wednesday, January 11th at 1 pm in the Scheel Friendship room. Please see Bessie if you need a copy of the study found in the **Gathering**. Start the new year taking time in the word with your friends at St. John.

Board Meeting on Monday, Jan. 16th at 7 p.m.

St. John Women have been blessed this past year with the following contributions: **Harvest Festival:** \$1273.00, our operating budget, **Thankoffering:** \$1050.00 to Women's Synodical Org. and \$300.00 to Western PA Women's Org., **Christmas Card:** \$229.00 split between St. John Care Center and the Good Samaritan Fund. *We continue to pray that God uses us and helps us to be good stewards of our time, talents, and offerings.*

*A **Big Thank You** to those who delivered Christmas gifts to our members who are homebound and in nursing homes.*

May the peace, love and joy of Christ be with you always!

Women's Board

We are always looking for people to help lead our congregation in worship, and to serve as Greeters and Ushers – our *Ministers of Hospitality*. If you are willing to serve the Lord at Saint John in any of these capacities, please contact the following people:

Worship Assistants: (*Readers, Assisting Ministers, Communion Assistants*)

Early Service - Jan Schade - 412-921-3437

Late Service - Joanne Henigman - 412-257-1822

Greeters: Charlotte Lange – 412-279-3397

Ushers: Bobby Danziger – 412-279-3214

*Serving
the
Assembly*

Serving in January

8:15 AM

TBD

Lectors/Assisting

11:00AM

Joanne Henigman

TBD

*Communion Assistants**

TBD

**The "Communion Assistant" is the second wine pourer when communion is distributed in procession*

Ushers

8:15 AM: TBD

11:00 AM: Bill Henigman, Rob Windhorst, Tom Elia, Wil Henigman

USHERS NEEDED

Anyone wishing to help at either the early or late service, please contact Bobbie Danziger. Ushering is necessary during our church service, and right now we have a shortage of those committed to the job! We are praying that you who are able, will respond to the call!

Thank you and Blessings!

Bobbie Danziger

412-279-3214

Note: The deadline for February is January 23rd.

AROUND THE PARISH



Congregational Email Addresses

The church office is in the process of updating the email addresses of all congregational members. This will improve our communication with St. John members, and in the near future, our church newsletter, *The Journal*, **will only be mailed to those members and friends who request it.** This will save the church money, and our secretary a lot of time!

So please, if you have an email address, please email the church at sjelc@saintjohncarnegie.com and use in the subject, MY EMAIL ADDRESS.

Thank you!

The following members of Saint John are known to have been sick or hospitalized since the last issue of *The Journal*. Please continue to keep them in your prayers:

Howard Keenan
Lois Ireton
Sue O'Brien

The Church Staff

The Rev. Bruce P. Nordeen
Jeffrey H. Gray
Bessie M. Kwasniewski
Donna Petrell
Bill Reed

Pastor
Director of Music and Liturgy
Parish Secretary
Financial Secretary
Financial Administrator

Officers of the Congregation

Mark Martin
Debbie Grimes
Nancy McBurney
Karen Galehan

President
Vice President
Recording Secretary
Treasurer

Members of the Congregation Council

Representing the SJWELCA

Joanne Henigman, *SJELW President*

Class of 2012

Sam Balistreri (*Cemetery*)
Jerry Beatty (*Stewardship*)
Lanie Hiles (*Hospitality*)
Mikey Palmer (*Membership*)

Class of 2012

Liz Beach (*Worship*)
Cindy Black (*Evangelism*)
Cami Himme (*At-large*)
Richard Moehring (*Property*)
Vicki Rathbun (*Christian Ed*)

Statement of Our Mission

*Confident in the Good News of Jesus Christ, Son of God,
We of Saint John Evangelical Lutheran Church:*

Proclaim this Gospel boldly in Word and Sacrament according to the confessions of the Lutheran Church and its traditions of Theology and Liturgy;

Model a Community of love and stability in which the Holy Spirit gives life to this gospel today, and within coming generations;

Invite and welcome our neighbors to join with us in worship, learning, witness and service as we joyously proclaim our Risen Savior;

Accept the challenge to be transformed into a new people of God as we minister in the diverse and changing population in our community.