



ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

"All God's Children Joyfully Celebrating God's Transforming Grace"

Established 1852

915 Federal Av. Saginaw, MI 48607

989.754.0489

SPIRIT NEWSLETTER

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Dear Friends in Christ:

I am writing on this Tuesday morning in Holy Week. Like many of you, I awoke to another terrorist attack, this time in the subway and airport in Brussels, Belgium, a few days after the master mind of the Paris attack had been arrested there. I became aware of the attack in a rather unexpected way. I receive prayers and devotions from the ELCA and other sources and the first thing I noticed in a prayer was for the people of Brussels. I wondered if I had missed something in the last few days. Then I turned on the TV and discovered it had happened just a few hours before.

Mass shootings in the United States, as close as Kalamazoo, an escalating drug death epidemic in Michigan, worldwide terrorism, and a malicious presidential race remind me that more than anything we need to live as **Easter people!**

Easter people are people of hope . . . both for this world and the world beyond. Because our eternal future is secure, we need not fear the present or perpetuate fear in how we think, speak, and act.

Easter people face life with optimism. If God can raise Jesus from the dead, with God nothing is impossible! And like St. Paul, Easter people believe, "We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us."

When God's people of old would question their reality (e.g. their post exodus wilderness experience and later), the leaders and prophets would share a message from God. That message would remind them of God's faithfulness in the past and the certainty of God's promise for the present and future.

As God had seen them out of slavery, through the Red Sea, through the Passover into freedom . . . God would most certainly see them through whatever they were facing. All the more so, for we children of the Resurrection!

The Empty Tomb and our Crucified and Risen Savior is the big what God has done out of love for each of us!

How does that motivate your life in the here and now? Think about it in terms of action.

"Because He Lives . . . I will . . . (How would you finish this sentence from your own life experience?)

"Because He Lives . . . We can . . . (How would you finish this sentence as part of St. John Lutheran Church?)

Easter people live their Easter faith daily. Who would you describe as Easter people in your life? In our congregation? And beyond?

I am grateful for those Easter people who serve on our Future Committee, Summer Day Camp Committee, Geographic Parish Design Team . . . all looking ahead, as well as the Church Council who deals primarily with the day-to-day of the congregation's life.

I am also grateful for those Easter people who put their hands and hearts into our outreach efforts, the Breakfast for the Hungry, the Free Community Dinner, and the SMM Food Pantry.

I anticipate invigorating Bible Study sessions with Easter people on Wednesdays in April, with others from Resurrection and Our Saviour (1:30 p.m. at St. John and 7:00 p.m. at Our Saviour). The class members always make me think and grow in faith. I always pray that it is the same for them!

Finally in closing, when I think I have seen and experienced everything in the ministry, something new enriches my soul or causes me to ponder deeply. Both have been happening a lot lately.

Taking Communion to the sick and shut-ins is a given in what I do. Folks are normally very appreciative. But the word has to be "elated" to describe the enormous heartfelt gratitude expressed by one, hospitalized for a long time, truly missing his church family and never having received Communion away from the sanctuary. I left there thinking, "Wow, that's a first!" Praying that you long for the House of God and Christ's Body and Blood as much as that man expressed to me.

May we live as Easter people in hope, optimism, joy, and peace!

In Christ's Love,

Pr. Connie Sassanella



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915 Federal Avenue, Saginaw, MI 48607
Pr. Connie Sassanella
SUNDAY WORSHIP 9:30 a.m.
PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS
Monday – Thursday, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
PASTOR'S TELEPHONE
Preferred (c) 330-692-6194 (h) 989-401-2283
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
Monday-Friday: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Secretary: Barb Socia
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Office: 989-754-0489
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Pastor: csassanella@yahoo.com
WEBSITE
StJohnLutheranELCASaginaw.weebly.com
FACEBOOK
St John Lutheran ELCA Saginaw
NEWSLETTER
Deadline: 20th day of the previous month

Please Remember Care Facility Members:

Please Remember At Home Members:

They would love a card or visit from you!



Church Updates

Donations: Roger & Pauline Winterstein (Summer Day Camp), Robert Brown (Thrivent Choice Dollars), Luella Markel (Thrivent Choice Dollars).

Hospitalized Since Last Month: John Balderas, George Pike.

Memorials: In memory of **Paul A. Buchholz** from Laurel Buchholz (General Fund).

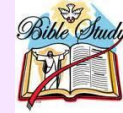


"April Wednesdays in God's Word"

Bible Study with the Pr. Connie

April 6th, 13th, 20th, & 27th

Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m.



Please join us for a joint Bible Study session led by Pr. Connie, along with Resurrection and Our Saviour, called "April Wednesdays in God's Word" from April 6th – April 27th. The two sessions offered on these Wednesdays are: 1:30 p.m. at St. John and 7:00 p.m. at Our Saviour (2525 Hemmeter Road, Saginaw). Please sign up by April 3rd on the bulletin board outside the church office at St. John or call the office at 989-754-0489 to let us know if you will be attending. Hope to see you at these Bible Study sessions!

Church Directory Update Forms

Back in December 2015, you were mailed a Church Directory Update Form for your current address, telephone numbers, and email address. We have received 46% of our church members' forms back. **If you haven't returned your form to the church yet, please send it to us as soon as possible!** We would like to have a new Church Directory soon. This information is strictly for church use and will allow the church to better communicate with you in the future. Thanks for your cooperation!



Free Community Dinners

Our **Free Community Dinners** are on the second Thursday of each month, with dinner served from 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Our next dinner is on April 14th. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board outside the church office for workers to setup, cook, and cleanup. Contributions to fund the Free Community Dinners here at St. John can be made with checks payable to: Messiah Lutheran Church, "St. John Evening Dinners" and we can forward your check to them. If you have any questions about the dinners, please contact Dewey Burke at 989-971-4316 or at dewburke@hotmail.com. Thank you for your help in providing for those less fortunate and your generous donations!

St. John Lutheran Numbers

Date	Attend.	Deposit
2/28/16	40	\$1,780.50
3/6/16	47	\$3,487.50
3/13/16	45	\$2,906.50
3/20/16	44	\$2,217.00

Memorials/Gifts Received

January 1 – March 20, 2016

General Fund	\$	1,625.00
Altar Flowers	\$	128.00
Music & Organ	\$	0
Breakfast for the Hungry	\$	276.00
Summer Day Camp Gifts	\$	75.00
Summer Day Camp Grants	\$	0
Camp Lu-Wix-E Gifts	\$	0
Congregational Life	\$	0
Luther League	\$	0
Heating Fund	\$	0
Stamps	\$	0
TOTAL	\$	2,104.00

April Birthdays

- April 1 Brian Meyer
- April 2 Nancie Glave
- April 3 Matthew Acha
- April 4 Barbara Kramer
- April 5 Helen Boitel, Martin Wiegand
- April 7 Audrey Edmond, Helen Henley
- April 8 Mattie Brown, Denise Kumaus, Raul Venegas III
- April 9 Lindsey Alverson, Mark Oswald
- April 11 Kalifah Sharper
- April 13 David Brimmer, Coda Henze
- April 14 Victor Leichner
- April 15 Gage Hopper
- April 17 Kathleen Basner
- April 20 Jacklyn Marcet, Sandra Wendland
- April 24 Bernetes Hillebrand, Kristine McInerney
- April 25 Melvin Gay
- April 27 Debra Alverson
- April 29 Jacob Hoppe
- April 30 Warren Martin



April Anniversaries

- April 14 Michael & Kathleen Basner
- April 28 Donald & Lorna Keaner



Summer Day Camp Committee

Our Summer Day Camp Committee is seeking new folks to serve. Hiring staff, along with various duties, is involved. Please speak to Pam Aven or Pr. Connie if interested.

March Against Hunger Funds Match



Saginaw Metro Ministries (SMM) kicked off their yearly Fund Drive on March 1st for the SMM Food Pantry. All funds collected between March 1st – April 30th will be matched by 10% at the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan. Please fill out the deposit slip enclosed in the Sunday Bulletin, along with your check, and send to: Food Bank of Eastern Michigan. Thanks for your generous contributions to feed the hungry!

Items for Breakfast Give-Aways

We at St. John have worked hard to provide help for those who are in need. The Evangelism Board has, with your help, been able to provide more than just meals for our Breakfast for the Hungry that we serve each month. We have given away many needed items, especially winter clothing and blankets, which is our biggest and probably most needed give-away.

It started with the congregation providing hats and gloves to those who needed them. As we continued this each year, the miracles just kept happening. People from other churches that help at the Breakfast started bringing things to give away, yarn got donated, and someone called who wanted to knit and crochet hats and gloves for us. Pr. Connie's former church started making things and sent care boxes. It is wonderfully inspiring!

This winter we have noticed a great need for socks, as well as hats and gloves. We had some used blankets donated and realized a great need for those as well. It made us think when one of our church board members related the story of a gentleman who took the last blanket and said, "Thank you so much, now I won't have to sleep with all my clothes on." We were sad to think that perhaps he had little or no heat to keep him warm at night.

In the three months of this past winter, we gave away more than ever. The need grows bigger each time food stamps get cut, other helping agencies get overwhelmed, there is less full-time work, and so many other factors that are creating a larger percentage of poverty-level people.

We have decided to ask a favor of you and your family as you do your spring cleaning and get ready for summer. Please keep our neighbors who are in need in mind. Any clean and gently used hats, gloves, socks, sweaters, coats, and blankets will be gladly appreciated from now until next winter. We have a place to store them that is safe and dry.

Another suggestion – most of us love to go to garage sales, so if you see a deal on any of these items, it could be a really good way to value shop and help someone else at the same time. Thank you so much for your generosity!

Yours in Christ,

Marcy Andersen, Evangelism Board

