



# 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 AUGUST 2016

Issue 113

Vol. 08

Dear Friends in Christ:

As I write, I am at Stony Lake Lutheran Camp with our three, Brandy Blohm, Maddy Agnew, and Kylee Hildebrant, as well as four Confirmation children from Resurrection Lutheran Church.

Each day I plan and lead an hour and 15 minutes of Bible Study for our group, as well as attend their other sessions, including morning worship, evening campfire, singing, and various activities that they participate in. This morning (Monday) they had group-building and trust exercises. One day we will go to an area lighthouse, and another day to do service projects in nearby Shelby, Michigan. Ask the girls at church what they did at Confirmation Camp and what they liked best. Friendships they make can last a lifetime. My years going to Confirmation Camp date back into the late 1970s. It is always a faith-growing experience; one the young people never forget. I am thankful that the St. John Trust Fund makes this ministry possible!

Our Summer Day Camp is a ministry of St. John that we should be very proud of. This year the staff has been excellent, without exception. Two days of staff training made all the difference in their cohesiveness. Each one goes out of their way to be helpful to the others. Russ Hale was a great choice for the Directorship. While I know he has a Master's Degree in youth and family ministry, his skills have really shown this summer. Other members of our St. John family on the staff are Kalifah Sharper, the aide in the Bible Study class, and Mikayla Aven, who is paid to sub when someone has to be off and who volunteers most other days.

On Thursday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, will be the Summer Day Camp's final Talent Show of the summer at 1:00 p.m. Please come and experience the joy! I was personally please and relieved that we received all our community grant requests toward the Summer Day Camp!

Pr. Brian Campbell, the last person to be ordained at St. John, will be back with us on August 14<sup>th</sup> in worship and coffee hour. During coffee hour he will show a PowerPoint presentation and share with us about his work in Wisconsin. Please plan to be with us to welcome him home.

Picnics abound! The annual St. John Pig Roast at the Quackenbush Farm is a fun time with our church family and others. Betty and Carl's hospitality in inviting us to the farm, doing all the setup, and even roasting the pig makes for a great afternoon. It is on Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 1:00 p.m., and dinner at 3:00 p.m.

Then on August 21<sup>st</sup> we are all invited to share in Our Saviour/SMM Picnic, from 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at Roethke Park. As we move toward implementing the Geographic Parish, let's get to know each other better. And what better way than over food? Check out the details elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Looking to the fall . . . Pr. Kathleen has offered to help me teach Confirmation Class. This year the program will include: Our Saviour, Resurrection, and St. John. Lay people from Our Saviour and Resurrection will serve as classroom aides. I have met with Pr. Ann, the Episcopalian Interim at Our Saviour, and she is willing to share the leading of the Adult Bible Study this fall. Watch for details regarding the start date in the Bulletin.

I hope this summer has been a time of reflection and appreciation for God's blessings in your life. One of the blessings that I hold dear is living in the United States of America. While we and every nation are imperfect, we can strive to make it better for all people. That is why I enjoy watching our political process and find presidential election years especially fascinating.

My trip to enter the body of a long-time friend in Arlington National Cemetery on August 3<sup>rd</sup> is in an odd way, a dream come true. As far back as my first trip to Arlington with my parents as a young teenager, I have imagined what it would be like. While there I hope to see two monuments that I have missed, the Korean War and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt ones.

Back to preparing tomorrow's Bible Study for the Confirmation Campers!

In Christ's Love,

*Pr. Connie Sassanella*



**ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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*

**CHURCH'S TELEPHONE**

Office: 989-754-0489 Fax: 989-754-4029

**E-MAIL**

Office: sjc915@sbcglobal.net

Pastor: csassanella@yahoo.com

**WEBSITE**

StJohnLutheranELCASaginaw.weebly.com

**FACEBOOK**

St John Lutheran ELCA Saginaw

**NEWSLETTER**

**Deadline: 20<sup>th</sup> day of the previous month**

**Church Updates**



**Donations:**

Roger & Pauline Winterstein (Summer Day Camp)

Charles & Ginger Reed (Thrivent Choice Dollars)

Joshua Pike (Thrivent Choice Dollars)

**Summer Day Camp Grants:**

Alice E. Turner Memorial Trust

Harvey Randall Wickes Foundation

Wickes-Link Memorial Foundation

Allen E. & Marie A. Nickless Memorial Foundation

**Memorials:** In loving memory of **Norma "Suzanne" Deisig:**

Charles & Mabel McDougall (General Fund)

DP Technologies Group (General Fund)

Charles & Ginger Reed (Altar Guild Fund)

Ronald & Susan Haas (General Fund)

James & Judith Dohrmann (General Fund)

Jean Kenel (General Fund)

Andrews Hooper Pavlik, PLC (General Fund)

**Our Dearly Departed:** Our Christian love, thoughts, and prayers are with the family and friends of **Norma "Suzanne" Deisig**, who died on July 6<sup>th</sup>. She was the sister of Warren Martin.

**Please Remember Care Facility Members:**

**Please Remember At Home Members:**

**They would love a card or visit from you!**

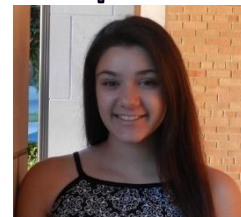


**Confirmation Class 2016 – 2017**



Confirmation Class (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders) Orientation will be held on Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Saginaw, which is where the sessions will be held. The Orientation is for all Confirmation students, parents, and other interested folks. Resurrection, Our Saviour, and St. John will share in this year's Confirmation Program.

**Graduation Party for Mikayla Aven  
Sunday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1-6 p.m.  
at Camp Lu-Wix-E**



Mikayla Aven's Graduation Party will be held at Camp Lu-Wix-E on Sunday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. St. John church members are invited to join with the Aven family and friends for this celebration. Call Aven's at 989-799-0033 or email at: [kurtaven@yahoo.com](mailto:kurtaven@yahoo.com) if you plan to attend and if you would like to carpool.

## St. John Lutheran Numbers

Date	Attend.	Deposit
7/3/16	37	\$2,811.00
7/10/16	52	\$10,686.00
7/17/16	35	\$6,347.00
7/24/16	48	\$9,518.50

### Memorials/Gifts Received

January 1 – July 24, 2016

Altar Flowers	\$ 298.00
Altar Guild	\$ 60.00
Breakfast for the Hungry	\$ 3,481.00
Camp Lu-Wix-E Gifts	\$ 50.00
Congregational Life	\$ 0
Evangelism	\$ 50.00
General Fund	\$ 3,856.30
Heating Fund	\$ 0
Music & Worship	\$ 45.00
Stamps	\$ 0
Summer Day Camp Gifts	\$ 175.00
Summer Day Camp Grants	\$ <u>22,500.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 30,515.30</b>

## Annual St. John Pig Roast

at the Quackenbush Farm  
10830 Sheridan Road, Burt, MI

**Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.**  
**(Dinner at 3:00 p.m.)**

Call 989-770-4129 for more information.  
Come join us for a fun day at the farm!



Church Picnic



## Let's Have a Picnic Sunday, August 21, 2016 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Roethke Park, Pavillion #2, Thomas Township, Saginaw

Everyone is invited to a picnic on Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, from 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at Roethke Park on Ledy Road in Saginaw (near Crooked Creek Bowling Center of Gratiot Road). This is a joint picnic with St. John, Our Saviour, Resurrection, Ascension, Faith, Zion (Saginaw), St. Matthew (Bridgeport), and Zion (Freeland). Brats and hot dogs will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass, plates, and utensils. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board across from the church office. This is a great way for our local church members to get to know each other better.



## August Birthdays

- August 2 Brent Keaner
- August 6 Emilee Bennett-Geyer, Laura LaFlair
- August 7 Madeline Blohm
- August 9 Karolyn Chicky, Jennifer Hoffman, Thomas McInerney
- August 10 George Hopper, Jr.
- August 12 Matthew Jahn
- August 15 Robert Henley
- August 17 Jaelynn Marcet
- August 18 Sandra Lentner
- August 19 Arthur Meyer, Suzanne Schultz
- August 21 Harvey Jacques
- August 23 Lorene Ware
- August 24 Michael Hoffman
- August 25 Karen Beers, James Young
- August 28 Michael Basner
- August 30 Anthony Bell



## August Anniversaries

- August 18 Robert & Alice Morgan
- August 20 Jeffrey & Kimberly Hoppe
- August 23 Thomas & Linda McInerney



## Friday Night Live & St. John Lutheran

Every Friday, beginning at 5:30 p.m., through August 19<sup>th</sup>, St. John Lutheran Church will be having its Second Annual Booth at Friday Night Live, at Morley Plaza in downtown Saginaw. Each week there is a different type of live music played. We would like to have at least four volunteers to enjoy and play games with the children and adults for each Friday. Friday Night Live will again donate a basketball game, which everyone enjoys. Treats will be provided. There is a sign-up sheet located on the bulletin board across from the church office. Admission is free and children are welcome with an adult. Refreshments are available for purchase.

## Free Community Dinners



Our **Free Community Dinners** are on the second Thursday of each month, with dinner served from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Our next dinner is on **August 11<sup>th</sup>**. 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 dewburke@hotmail.com or at 989-971-4316.

## “What It Means to Be a Lutheran”

by Bishop Elizabeth Eaton



Lutherans don't often garner much media attention. In this country we don't make up a big segment of the population. When groups of Lutherans began arriving on these shores in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, they tended to stay in their nationality and language groups and didn't assimilate completely into the surrounding culture. We kept to ourselves and so went relatively unnoticed. Lutherans, with some exceptions, weren't part of the political or economic elite. There are both benefits and problems because of this. More later.

Our state of relative obscurity is about to change. In 16 months we'll mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation. For a brief time a spotlight will be turned on Lutherans in this country and around the world. Documentaries will be produced and aired, seminars will be held and, particularly if October 31, 2017, is a slow news day, the media is going to seek us out and ask us to explain ourselves. When the local newspaper, radio, or TV station comes knocking on our door, what are we going to say?

In our church wide conversation about priorities for the ELCA (<http://elca.org/future>), we have been asking what it means to be Lutheran. We aren't as good as we could be about giving a clear answer to that question. We speak about grace, about our work in advocacy, about the relief and development work we do, about our inclusiveness and diversity – though I believe these last two are more aspirational than actual – about our ecumenical and inter-religious dialogues and relationships. These are true and beautiful and important. They are not exclusively Lutheran.

Many religious and secular organizations are deeply committed to serving the vulnerable and working for justice and peace. The ELCA couldn't engage in ecumenical and interreligious partnerships if there were no ecumenical and interreligious partners. What is distinctive about us then?

When trying to define Lutheran identity we sometimes default to cultural types – northern and central European heritage, a certain kind of hymnody, even standard entrees at church dinners. I'm not dismissing the faithful witness of the millions of Lutheran immigrants who left Europe to start a new life on this continent. They built churches and hospitals and universities. They cared for the poor, the widow, and the orphan.

*(continued)*

They also lived in close-knit ethnic communities that, at first, helped maintain the Lutheran confessional movement. That is the benefit I noted above. The problem is that the Lutheran movement in this country has become over identified with a particular cultural expression.

If we manage to not describe ourselves by a particular culture, we have the tendency of describing Lutheranism as a set of behaviors – we are inclusive, we work for justice, we stand with the vulnerable, we are an inviting church. Please, God, let it be so.

But the danger is we can slip into what scholasticism called “fides formata.” Today we might say faith formation: not in the sense of a living faith that has first been given as a gift, but that correct action leads to faith. Either of these expressions – cultural or behavioral – can result in what Martha Stortz, a professor at Augsburg College, Minneapolis, calls the “presumptive we” that leads to the “othering you.” Those in the majority assume their experience is universal and those outside of that experience aren't fully part of the tradition.

Neither culture nor behavior define what is distinctive about the Lutheran movement. It's our understanding of the Gospel. The Gospel word creates faith. The Gospel word is judgment and promise. Faith created by this Gospel word sets people free to serve their neighbor. The church's proper work is to proclaim the Gospel word. You know, in the end, it's all about God's fierce and tender love that drives us to the Cross, and there, at the very point of death, gives us life. The world deserves to hear the Gospel – when the spotlight is on us, and when it is not.

A monthly message from the presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address is: [bishop@elca.org](mailto:bishop@elca.org).

We are a church that values and encourages diverse voices and lively dialogue in our faith and life. Living Lutheran is an opportunity for church members to express individual perspectives, and does not necessarily reflect official positions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Read more about:

From the Presiding Bishop: [livinglutheran.org/from-the-presiding-bishop](http://livinglutheran.org/from-the-presiding-bishop)

Eaton: [livinglutheran.org/tag/eaton](http://livinglutheran.org/tag/eaton)

Faith: [livinglutheran.org/tag/faith](http://livinglutheran.org/tag/faith)

Gospel: [livinglutheran.org/tag/gospel](http://livinglutheran.org/tag/gospel)

Lutheran: [livinglutheran.org/tag/Lutheran](http://livinglutheran.org/tag/Lutheran)

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton: [livinglutheran.org/tag/presiding-bishop-elizabeth-eaton](http://livinglutheran.org/tag/presiding-bishop-elizabeth-eaton)

Reformation: [livinglutheran.org/tag/reformation](http://livinglutheran.org/tag/reformation)

## When Words Fail . . .

by The Rev. Craig Satterlee, Ph.D., Bishop



I write to figure out what I think. In a week of shootings and death, when I have a newsletter article due and have run out of words to say, have run out of even words to pray, I went back to my book, When God Speaks Through Worship, a book that I've been giving congregations when I visit, to figure out what I think about this having no words to pray. So here they are adopted for today.

We have all offered the prayers that Paul talks about. Paul writes, "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." (Romans 8: 26-27). In those moments we come to our God with empty hands and broken hearts. Laden with doubts and questions, outrage and anguish, we futilely fumble as we form our words. In truth we fail at finding the words to say, at finding the words to pray. We are so numb, or so empty, or so confused that we simply cannot find the words. We just don't know what to say. We do not know how to pray as we ought.

In worship Jesus teaches us to pray through hymns sung and scriptures proclaimed, through the peace shared, and the sacrament received. I saw it just a few Sundays ago in Big Rapids. The Spirit using what we do in worship to intercede for us, to help us to pray, to pray for and with us. And God does more than teach and help us to pray. When we do something as simple as dare to sing a song when every fiber of our being wants to remain silent, God hears our prayer and God responds. God tangibly assures us we are not alone, the pain will not overcome us, we can dare to hope, and that there will be life.

When you're feeling empty, go to worship. Leave all your expectations at the door, save one – that Jesus will fill you up and you will have at least one word – **thank you.**

## Thank You Pr. Connie & Carl Quackenbush



"Thank you Pr. Sassanella for taking the time to give me a tour of the great work St. John is doing to keep children off the street with the 'Summer Camp' program. To see over 100 children in one place and to know they're safe, is such an inspiration that brings hope back into our community.

But to add, the beauty, the sense of peace in the building, and to see the appreciation of furnishings, and how well they have been preserved, was awesome. I was so appreciative.

Thank you for your and St. John's support through the years and, most recently, for the gift of Bibles for the work here in the County Jail. These Bibles came at an especially helpful time as we needed Biblical support as to administer healing through Jesus Christ's teachings.

To Mr. Quackenbush, thank you for availing yourself to gathering the Bibles and helping me load them into my vehicle; you are such a blessing.

On behalf of Saginaw County Forgotten Man Ministries staff – God's blessings to you."

Sincerely, Frances Irvin, Chaplain

"Thank you Pr. Connie for your love, support, and prayers."

The Deisig Family



## Back to School Supplies Needed

The Evangelism Committee is again planning a "Back to School Event" on Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup> at the Breakfast for the Hungry. We would like to thank Art & Sandy Meyer for their Action Team Grant from Thrivent Financial. We would also like to thank Meijer, Inc. for their help to purchase school supplies. If anyone would like to donate school supplies, we are looking for spiral notebooks, wide and college-rule paper, mechanical pencils, #2 pencils, erasers, 24-count Crayola crayons, colored pencils, highlighters, folders, post-it notes, glue sticks, and ink pens. Money may also be donated to help purchase the school supplies, with cash or checks made out to St. John Lutheran Church. Thank you for your support. If you have any questions about the donations, please contact Marcy Andersen or Ginger Reed at the church.

## Summer Day Camp Update



The 19<sup>th</sup> year of St. John Summer Day Camp has been absolutely amazing! We have completed Session One already. Campers and staff are having a great time!

Summer Day Camp is open from 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, until August 12<sup>th</sup>. I invite you to see what the buzz is all about. We are truly living out our Mission Statement: "God's work; our hands." Please know how appreciative we are to the congregation of St. John!

Russ Hale, Director