



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 DECEMBER 2015

Issue 112

Vol. 12

Dear Friends in Christ:

Recently I heard again a duet by Bing Crosby and David Bowie putting together the familiar "The Little Drummer Boy" and the less known "Peace on Earth." It was recorded in 1977 and reissued in 2010. The message gripped me in its meaning for this Advent in the world in which we live. The words to "Peace on Earth" are:

***Peace on Earth, can it be?
Years from now, perhaps we'll see?
See the day of glory
See the day, when men of good will
Live in peace, live in peace again.***



***Peace on Earth, can it be?
Every child must be made aware
Every child must be made to care
Care enough for his fellow man
To give all the love that he can.***

***I pray my wish will come true
For my child and your child too
He'll see the day of glory
See the day when men of good will
Live in peace, live in peace again.***

***Peace on Earth, can it be?
Can it be?***

As we prepare to usher in the Prince of Peace during Advent, may you be open to The Peace that only God can give! The Peace which we hear described as "the peace that passes all human understanding." For me the deep message of the season comes alive through music, worship, study, and service. I try to take advantage of these in the church and beyond. And invite you to do the same.

Midweek we will worship in Advent services hosted by Resurrection Lutheran Church on Brockway Street in Saginaw each Wednesday from December 2nd – December 16th at 7:00 p.m. I lead the worship service on December 16th and I pray I

have some St. John familiar faces with me.

Other musical opportunities of the season are listed on the bulletin board across from the church office. I see decorating the church for Christmas is on Saturday, December 5th at 9:00 a.m.

We will be having our Free Community Dinner on Thursday, December 10th at 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Also, our Free Community Breakfast is on Saturday, December 26th at 9:00 a.m. Come join the fun and see the work as Christmas continues in how we help others!

May this season be one of great peace in your hearts and homes, family, community, and the world!

A Blessed Christmas to you and yours!

Pr. Connie Sassanella



**Decorate the Church for Christmas
Saturday, December 5th at 9:00 a.m.**



**Christmas Eve Worship
Thursday, December 24th
at 7:00 p.m.**



Please join us in singing those familiar hymns we all love as we await the coming of baby Jesus.

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: 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), Art Meyer (Thrivent Choice Dollars).

Memorials: In memory of **William Schuetter** for General Fund: Ruth Galonska, Charles & Ginger Reed, Melvin & Joan Dunn, Dorothea Jahn, Darlene Hudson, Barbara Benson, William Klich, Joanne Mertz, Max Foster, Linda LaFlair, Don & Sherry Protasrewicz, Jamie & Dana Bateson, Lee & Linda Albrecht, Kathy Santino, Carl & Marcia Szafranski, William & Ann Brunston, June Roenicke, Janice Sexton, Joan Leppien, Jerry & Barbara Brush, Gloria Wendland.

Hospitalized Since Last Month: Arla Basner, Karen Hutchison, Duncan Shaw (Evelyn Gatzsche's uncle).

Our Dearly Departed: – Our Christian love and sympathy to Pr. Connie Sassanella, family, and friends on the death of her uncle, **Peter Hanel**, on Tuesday, November 3rd and her friend, **Maxine Boron**, on Tuesday, November 3rd. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of former member, **Debra Schumann**, who died on November 7, 2015.

Living Nativity

Friday, Dec. 4th 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 5th & Dec. 6th 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Presented by Immanuel Lutheran Church of Frankentrost
8220 Holland Road (M-46), Saginaw, MI 48601

This is a free 30-minute walk and is mainly an outdoor event, so dress for the weather. Enjoy light refreshments and fellowship after the walk. For more info., call 989-754-0929.



Poinsettias for Christmas

Enclosed in the Sunday Bulletin is a Poinsettia Envelope for those who would like to make a special memorial to a loved one or to simply honor someone special. This year's **cost per poinsettia** (7 in. pot with bow) is **\$14.00**. **Please make checks out to: St. John Lutheran Church.** Those who purchase a poinsettia may take it home to enjoy after the worship service on Christmas Eve. **Please return your envelope and payment by December 6th.**



Christmas

Christmas is a time for giving,
A time for love and joyous living,

For glistening splendor and lots of laughter,
Making happy memories forever after.

But with all the glitter, fun and mirth,
Let's not forget the Christ Child's birth.

And the peace that was meant to be.
Dear Lord, let it begin with me,

And may it spread throughout the earth
In celebration of our Savior's birth.



by Anna Beth Minyard

ELCA Presiding Bishop Encourages the Support of Refugee Resettlement

In response to the terrorism around the world and people displaced from their homes and seeking refuge, the Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), issued a statement November 18th to the 3.7 million member church. The full text of her statement follows:

“We are shocked and dismayed by the terrorist attacks in Paris, Beirut, Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East, but also in Nigeria, Kenya, Bangladesh, and the Philippines. Senseless acts of terror will maim and forever have an impact on innocent victims and their families. Our hearts and prayers go out to all whose lives have been shattered and are grieving the loss of loved ones. We know all too well the frightening memories of terrorist attacks in the U.S. and the uncertainties of possible future attacks.”

“Yet, we Christians and all others of good will cannot let fear rule the day. Fear paralyzes, divides people, fosters distrust, and clouds judgments. We also stand shoulder to shoulder with people of faith who are firmly opposed to vengeful reprisals and prejudice. In particular, we are concerned for and committed to standing with our Muslim neighbors who are facing threats and acts of discrimination and hate by those who conflate Islam with terrorism.”

“Even in the face of evil, we remain confident that the good news of Jesus Christ liberates us and gives us the freedom and courage to discover and boldly participate in what God is up to in this world. ‘The Gospel also frees us from fear to see others as brothers and sisters for whom Christ died and lives’ (ELCA Social Message on Terrorism, 2004).

“We are not naive about possible new threats of terrorism, but denying refuge to thousands of desperate people is not who we are as Christians, nor will it guarantee our security. The United States is a welcoming country with a religiously diverse society, and our refugee resettlement program should continue to reflect this. We must redouble our efforts to work for a more secure world – one with less hate and more understanding. Doing less than that only feeds into the terrorist propaganda.”

“The thousands of courageous Syrian refugees fleeing their homeland go through a rigorous security screening involving the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, the Department of Defense, and multiple intelligence agencies. Refugees are the most scrutinized and screened individuals to enter the United States. Intensive security screening by the government of all refugees prior to admission to the U.S. is and should continue to be a detailed and thorough process.”

“Lutherans have a long history in this country of settling refugees, including those fleeing from dangerous situations like the war in Syria. We draw on both Biblical witness, as well as the best of our nation's traditions, as a refuge and

~ continued ~

haven for the persecuted and destitute. We support ‘a generous policy of welcome for refugees and immigrants’ and ‘will advocate for just immigration policies, in visa regulations, and in admitting and protecting refugees. We will work for policies that cause neither undue repercussions within immigrant communities nor bias against them’ (ELCA Social Message on Immigration, 1997).

“Currently, more than 25 governors are opposed to allowing Syrian refugees into their states. While the states do not have the legal authority to prevent resettlement, it is distressing that these governments could make refugee resettlement for Syrians and those from other war-torn areas more difficult. Of the Syrian refugees being referred by the U.N. for settlement, more than half are children and a majority are women or elderly men.”

“I urge the members of our church to call upon our elected officials to be leaders in speaking up for refugees already persecuted and traumatized and ensuring that our country continues to reflect the principles and values of a nation committed to freedom. The legacy of our welcome to refugees is that our economy, social fabric, communities, and nation as a whole are stronger. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) has developed many resources on this topic for your congregations. You can also contact your elected officials through the ELCA Advocacy action alert: <http://support.elca.org/site/R?i=TYxDvJpE0jLnKipA6XST1w>.”

“Let us recommit ourselves to sharing encouragement to those persecuted as we seek to be a disturbing, reconciling, serving, and deliberating presence in God's world. This will demand difficult, courageous work from each of us. ‘As shoes for your feet, put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace.’ (Ephesians 6:15)”

The text of statement is available at <http://www.elca.org/en/Resources/Presiding-Bishop-Messages>.

About the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: The ELCA is one of the largest Christian denominations in the United States, with more than 3.7 million members in more than 9,300 congregations across the 50 states and in the Caribbean region. Known as the church of “God's work. Our hands,” the ELCA emphasizes the saving grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, unity among Christians, and service in the world. The ELCA's roots are in the writings of the German church reformer, Martin Luther.



Evangelism Board News

Our next project will be our “Hats and Gloves Giveaway” during November, December, and January. If you would like to donate new or gently used hats, gloves, socks, or blankets, they would greatly be appreciated! Drop off donations at the church office. Contact Marcy Andersen at 989-791-3657 for further information or with questions.

St. John Lutheran Numbers

Date	Attend.	Deposit
11/1/15	55	\$5,234.20
11/8/15	64	\$3,734.72
11/15/15	55	\$3,800.74
11/22/15	36	\$1,442.16

Memorials/Gifts Received

January 1 – November 22, 2015

General Fund	\$ 4,107.00
Altar Flowers	\$ 387.50
Music & Organ	\$ 0
Breakfast for the Hungry	\$ 2,465.00
Summer Day Camp Gifts	\$ 9,430.20
Summer Day Camp Grants	\$ 27,923.99
Camp Lu-Wix-E Gifts	\$ 154.14
Congregational Life	\$ 202.75
Luther League	\$ 574.00
Heating Fund	\$ 25.00
Stamps	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 45,269.58

Surviving the Holidays Grief Support Group



Thursday, December 3, 2015

6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Zion Lutheran Church

1209 Hancock Street, Saginaw

Please RSVP for this class by calling 989-859-4491
and speak to Pr. Sue Hand

Memorial Service

Monday, December 7, 2015

6:30 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church

December Birthdays

- December 10 Tracy Talbot
- December 11 Max Foster
- December 12 Geoffrey LaFlair, Robert Morgan
- December 14 Dana Aven, Shirley Bell, Jill Venegas
- December 15 Olivia Aven, Nancy Podgurski, Adam Talbot
- December 18 Emily Aven
- December 20 Arlene Spears
- December 21 Kellee Glave
- December 26 Marla Cooper-Harris, Jeffrey Hoppe,
Sandra Meyer



December Wedding Anniversaries

none

If you don't see your birthday or anniversary listed, please inform the church office so our records can be updated.

SMM Food Pantry



The Saginaw Metro Ministries Food Pantry is in need of your help with unloading the food from trucks and stocking shelves here at St. John. Truck unloads are at 7:00 a.m. every two weeks. The next unload days are Wednesday, Dec. 2nd and Dec. 16th. There are jobs for everyone to do and it's not hard work! Please contact Dewey Burke at 989-971-4316 or at dewburke@hotmail.com.



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 December 10th. There is a signup 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 Committee

A St. John Future Committee Meeting was held on November 3rd with the following members in attendance: Bob Chicky, Art Meyer, Eugene Miller, Bob Morgan, George Pike, Ruth Sharper, and Carl Quackenbush.

The meeting started by informing the Committee about the October 15th visit at Neighborhood House with Director Daniel Soza by Bob Chicky, Bob Morgan, and Pr. Connie, to learn more about the scope and nature of their various outreach programs. After discussing the information obtained as it applied to our outreach situation, it became clear that we would need a full-time person to handle the various functions involved with maintaining and expanding our outreach activities. As envisioned, such a person would be responsible for the administration and coordination of our mission outreach projects, including supervision of the Summer Day Camp, as well as handle grant writing, and finding other sources of funding in support of our present and new outreach programs.

Our hope is that instituting new and maintaining present outreach programs will enhance recognition of St. John as a center of Christian charity in the Saginaw area, resulting in growth of the congregation by those who desire to become involved in such a ministry. Such growth, along with grants and other outside funding, is badly needed to help defray our operating expenses.

A recommendation was made and approved by the Committee to ask the Church Council to approve funding a qualified person to fill a full-time position as Outreach Coordinator. Looking to our future from Bob Chicky & Bob Morgan, Co-Chairs.