



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 2016

Issue 113

Vol. 12

My Greeting to You:

In the simplicity of the story of Our Savior's birth, in the wonder of God becoming one of us (Emmanuel . . . God with us!), in the heralding cry of John the Baptist, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," in the humble voice of a peasant girl in response to Gabriel's announcement, "Let it be to me according to your will," in Gabriel's words to a mortified carpenter, "Do not fear to take Mary to be your wife."

And to unorthodox shepherds just taking care of sheep . . . angels give the greatest good news in all history . . . "Glory to God in the highest and Peace to God's people on earth!" "For to you is born this day in the city of David (Bethlehem) a SAVIOR, who is Christ the Lord."

May this season of Advent help you to prepare your heart to receive Christ anew.

As He comes to you daily . . . When and where you least expect it, if you have the eyes to see, and the ears to hear . . .

As you reflect on His First Coming, which we celebrate as Christmas.

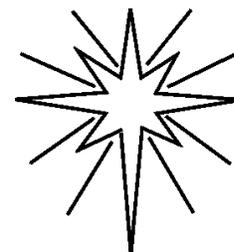
And as you prepare to meet Him face to face one day!

May your Advent Days be surrounded by the Wonder of God's Love for you!

May your Christmas . . . all the way to January 6th . . . know the Peace and Joy that only Christ can give!

In Christ's Love,

Pr. Connie Sassanella



Please join us for one of our Christmas Services listed below:

Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24, 2016

Candlelight Service at 7:00 p.m.



Christmas Day

Sunday, December 25, 2016

Candlelight Service at 9:30 a.m.

Familiar Hymns & Children's Sermon



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 (c) 330-692-6194

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

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



Church Updates



Donations:

Roger & Pauline Winterstein (Summer Day Camp),
Thomas Carleton (Breakfast for Hungry)

Memorials: In memory of:

Karen Hutchison (General Fund): Cheryl Banning, Ken & Carol Baybeck, Dan & Julie Behmlander, Shirley Blodgett, Daniel Boehler, Edith Burr, Mary Lou Case & Bill Snyder, Bob & Heidi Chasnis, Ron & Mary Ann Ebenhoeh, Ralph Ederer, Steve & Lori Hoffman, Susan Honig, Helen Kostrzewa, Patricia Kotenko, Susan Kotenko-Carelli, Gerald & Mary Ann Moore, Anica Schultz & Family, Sharon Smillie-Callahan, Suzette Summerfield, Kevin & Nancy Waier

Elizabeth Chamberlain (General Fund): Michael & Connie Lenkowski, David & Jacquelyn Moore

Arthur Menapace (General Fund): Robert & Alice Morgan

Please Remember Care Facility Members:

Please Remember At Home Members:

They would love a card or visit from you!



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 **December 8th**. 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.

SMM Food Pantry



FEED THE HUNGRY

Currently the Saginaw Metro Ministries Food Pantry is strapped financially. In order to make it through the holiday season, they are asking for your assistance to keep it running. Please consider donating \$5.00 (or more) to help feed our community. Donations can be mailed to: **SMM Food Pantry, P.O. Box 6472, Saginaw, MI 48608.** For more information, contact Karen Lupow at 517-712-8294 or karenjoylupow@yahoo.com.

St. John Lutheran Numbers

Date	Attend.	Deposit
10/30/16	46	\$9,741.72
11/6/16	57	\$4,807.00
11/13/16	45	\$2,452.50
11/20/16	42	\$1,965.03
11/27/16	51	\$916.50

Trust Fund Withdrawal to
Supplement Church Fund \$100,000.00

Memorials/Gifts Received

January 1 – November 27, 2016

Altar Flowers	\$ 553.00
Altar Guild	\$ 60.00
Breakfast for the Hungry	\$ 3,601.00
Camp Lu-Wix-E Gifts	\$ 75.00
Congregational Life	\$ 0
Evangelism	\$ 150.00
General Fund	\$ 4,746.30
Heating Fund	\$ 0
Music & Worship	\$ 45.00
Stamps	\$ 0
Summer Day Camp Gifts	\$ 371.00
Summer Day Camp Grants	\$ 28,500.00
TOTAL	\$ 38,101.30



Stephen Ministry

The Stephen Ministry will provide another training beginning January 3, 2017. Think of those in your congregation or individuals you know who are good listeners, encouragers, and love Jesus. Encourage the individuals to polish their skills through 50 hours of training in Stephen Ministry. Your encouragement can further help God's work in this world! For more information, call Pr. Tim Bender, Pr. Sue Hand, or Nancy Scott at 989-792-7135.

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



Anniversaries

none



Alternative Worship Service Opportunity



Planned by Representatives of:

Faith Lutheran Church, Our Saviour Lutheran Church,
Resurrection Lutheran Church, St. John Lutheran Church

1st and 3rd Sunday of each month

6:00 p.m. Meal; 7:00 Worship Service

December 4: St. John Lutheran



Lay led with pastors presiding at Communion. Goal: To share God's Love and Forgiveness with those young and young at heart. To reach those not attending worship regularly. **All are welcome! Invite others!**



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 11th**.

Saginaw Geographic Parish Board

The first meeting of the Saginaw Geographic Parish Board took place on Wednesday, November 16, 2016, at St. John Lutheran Church.

Officers Chosen:

Chair: Jim Biggins, Our Saviour (1 yr. term)
 Vice-Chair: Pr. Kathleen Basner, St. John (1 yr. term)
 Secretary: Melinda Klopfenstein, Our Saviour (2 yr. term)
 Board Member: Pam Aven, St. John
 Alternate: - open - , St. John
 Alternate: Sheryl Cleland, Our Saviour

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, December 14th, 6:30 p.m. at Our Saviour Lutheran Church on Hemmeter Road. If you are interested in serving on the Parish Board in the Alternate position, please give your name to Pam Aven at St. John.



Joint Worship Service on January 15th

Mark your calendars for a combined worship service at St. John on **Sunday, January 15th at 10:00 a.m.** when Pr. David Sprang is scheduled to preach. Our Saviour plans to join us. More information to come regarding plans for this date.



Christmas Concert Opportunities

Saginaw Choral Society presents "A Michigan Christmas," featuring Bay City natives Matt and Katie Travis, on Saturday, December 10th at 3:00 p.m. at the Temple Theatre. This will be a fantastic concert featuring many familiar carols, along with some beautiful new ones. See Beth Hale or Pr. Kathleen Basner by December 4th for discounted advance tickets.

The Classic Legacy Band of Saginaw will have its Annual Holiday Concert and Auction on Friday, December 16th at 7:00 p.m. at Peace Lutheran Church on Mackinaw (auction starts at 6:00 p.m.). This fun, **free** concert will be sure to put you in the mood for Christmas! See Beth Hale for more information.



New Year's Weekend

We are planning to gather again at Camp Lu-Wix-E for New Year's Weekend – Friday, December 30th – Sunday, January 1st. Bring your family traditions to share with us. A few years back when we started this, I showed the kids how my family banged pots and pans at midnight – they loved it. Last weekend as a group of us gathered at Camp, one of the younger ones was telling a new friend about it and how at home they sat and watched that silly ball drop. An old tradition became new. Contact Pam Aven if you wish to join us that weekend.

Thank You

"Thank you for hosting our 'Walking Together' day. Worship was wonderful and your hospitality, stellar. I was touched by the spirit of the place. The angels are certainly surrounding you."
Bishop Craig Satterlee

Thank You

"The Saginaw Metro Ministries and its Board of Directors are so blessed to have you as a faithful supporter of our work. Please accept our sincere thanks for your donation of \$500 and the generosity of supporters like you that we can continue the work of the Food Pantry in Saginaw. The Saginaw Food Pantry is serving more and more people each week."
Wanda Dankert, SMM Treasurer

Thank You

"Please accept this donation in memory of Elizabeth Chamberlain. I talked with Bishop Satterlee recently, and he said you are doing wonderful things. You served the Chamberlain family well over many years. Please use the money where it is most needed."
Connie (Chamberlain) Lenkowski

Goodbye – As of December 31st our Music Minister, Beth Hale, will be leaving St. John to pursue other ministry opportunities. Please join us for a special coffee hour on December 18th to recognize Beth's six years of service.

Ladies Christmas Gathering Sunday, December 11th



1:00 p.m. at Sullivan's Restaurant

Our Saviour Lutheran Church women have invited the women of St. John to their annual Christmas Gathering on Sunday, December 11th at 1:00 p.m. at Sullivan's Restaurant on Gratiot Road for lunch, fellowship, and prayer. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to join in a time of friendship, celebration of Christmas, and an afternoon of togetherness with the ladies in our Geographic Parish. This is not a buffet luncheon; we will be ordering from the menu (at your own cost). If you are interested in attending, please let Ginger Reed know at the church or by phone at 989-754-2176.



Breakfast for the Hungry Giveaways

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. At our Breakfast for the Hungry, we have given away many needed items. Our biggest and probably most needed Giveaway has been for winter items.

It started with us as a congregation providing hats and gloves to those who needed them. Last winter we noticed a great need for socks, as well as hats and gloves. We had some used blankets donated and realized the great need for those as well. In the three months of last winter, we gave away more than ever. The need grows bigger each year.

The Evangelism Board would like to thank all who donated to the November 26th Giveaway. We gave away an amazing amount of cold weather gear. Many members of our community would like to send their thanks also. God Bless You All!

We are asking for donations of new or gently used hats, gloves, socks, blankets, sweaters, or any other wearable winter items. Bring them to the church office or contact Marcy Andersen or Ginger Reed. Thank you for your generous contributions to help keep others warm!



A Christmas Prayer



Jesus, the Light of the World, as we celebrate your birth – may we begin to see the world in the light of the understanding you give us. As you chose the lowly, the outcasts, and the poor to receive the greatest news the world had ever known, so may we worship you in meekness of heart. May we also remember our brothers and sisters less fortunate than ourselves in this season of giving. Amen.