



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

JULY 2016

Issue 113

Vol. 07

Dear Friends in Christ:

How often have we said, "It's already the 4th of July! My how the summer is flying!"? All the more in a church with a very busy summer.

The reports I get and my own observations reveal a smoothly running Summer Day Camp. From the first day I noticed a large number of returnees. And Ms. Geraldine, who has been with us in Arts & Crafts all 19-20 years, confirmed that it is the largest amount of returnees she has ever seen! That says last year the kids had such a good experience they wanted to come back. I saw a grandma coming to pick up her grandkids an hour or so early, sitting in Knauer Hall. She said the kids begged her to stay until the end of the day. That amazed me!

Thank God the people of St. John and the grantors from the community that make this wonderful summer experience possible! The children and staff warm my heart! Please stop by and see for yourself. Folks you will recognize who are involved include: Russell Hale, the organized and calm Director; Kalifah Sharper, a seasoned veteran of the Summer Day Camp; Mikayla Aven, recent high school graduate, substitute, and volunteer; and Betty Quackenbush, whose grandchildren are participants and she is a full-time volunteer in Arts & Crafts. Thank you all for your love and commitment to God's children!

Speaking of kids and summer, Brandy Blohm, Madison Agnew, Kylee Hildebrand, and I will go to Confirmation Camp at Stoney Lake ELCA Church Camp July 24-29. We will be joined by four others from Resurrection Lutheran Church, plus a camp full of kids, staff, and advisors, like me. Since I am on the Board of Living Waters Ministries, I have been there once for a meeting. This will be my first time with campers of Stoney Lake.

Speaking of church camps, our St. John Family Camping weekend at our own Camp Lu-Wix-E will be early this summer (in July not August) due to allowing rentals to book

first. It is the weekend of July 15-17. What a fun time for the weekend or even just an afternoon. Saturday afternoon is the potluck picnic. See the details elsewhere in the Newsletter.

By the August Newsletter's publication, I will have had an experience of a lifetime, officiating at a burial in Arlington National Cemetery. Having visited it a few times, I have dreamed of such an occasion, never imagining it would happen. In the 1990s, while LaVina's son, Lee, who was career military, we sat with his mother as she was dying. Later he told me his plans to be buried at Arlington, asking if he could put me down to officiate should he die before me. Lee's wife, Margaret, died in May and while she was a civilian, her career had been working with the military. Thus, enabling her to be buried at Arlington as well. Surprising to me, she also in her funeral arrangements listed me as the officiant. While there was a memorial service for her outside of Atlanta, where they reside, which I was not able to attend, her burial at Arlington had to be delayed until August 3rd. This is due to the great number of WWII veterans dying daily and being buried there. Lee is paying for all expenses to get me there and I will not miss a Sunday from St. John, for which I am thankful.

This 4th of July I give thanks for those, who having great courage, established this nation and for those who continue to work that it truly become a place of "liberty and justice for all." I think of the flags flying in cemeteries across our land to honor those who served in the U.S. military and I continue to pray for those who serve and those who suffer the effects of having served.

Serving at Martin Luther Lutheran Church in Youngstown, Ohio, I became close to a retired school nurse, LaVina Jenkins, who in the summer was camp nurse at Camp Frederick, within an hour of the last two

(continued on page 5)

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



Church Updates

Donations: Roger & Pauline Winterstein (Summer Day Camp).

Memorials: In loving memory of **Art Menapace**, Jack Stolz (General Fund), Larry & Lori Roenicke (Summer Day Camp Fund), Charles & Ginger Reed (Altar Guild Fund), Carl & Betty Quackenbush (General Fund), Frank & Shirley Trybulski (General Fund), Linda LaFlair (Worship & Music), Frank & Shirley Trybulski (General Fund).

Hospitalized Since Last Month: Gerald Hutchison.

SouthernCare Hospice

If you would like to be a volunteer for SouthernCare Hospice, please call Dee Ann Bliss at 989-790-7533 or email her at: dee.bliss@southercareinc.com. Volunteering your time is very rewarding and it is so important to the patients and their families. People volunteer for a number of different reasons and one of them is a way of giving back.



Thank You to Pr. Connie

“My family and I thank you and all of St. John Lutheran Church for allowing us to have my Father’s funeral at St. John.

My Dad, Arthur F. Menapace, was a loving, Christian man, and he was totally committed to Jesus, even after Alzheimer’s Disease stole some of his thinking ability.

Thank you also for allowing my brother-in-law, Pr. Steven Schou, to conduct the funeral service. It was extra special for our family.

Finally, we say a special ‘Thank You’ to the members of St. John who graciously assisted us with the service – ushers, planners, and with Communion. May God bless you always.”

Karen & Bob Burmeister & Family

Please Remember Care Facility Members:

Please Remember At Home Members:

They would love a card or visit from you!



Friday Night Live & St. John Lutheran



On Friday, July 15, 2016, beginning at 5:30 p.m. and every Friday through August 19th, St. John Lutheran Church will be having its Second Annual Booth at Friday Night Live, at Morley Plaza in downtown Saginaw. Each Friday we would like to have at least four volunteers to enjoy and play games with the children and adults. 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.

St. John Lutheran Numbers

Date	Attend.	Deposit
5/29/16	47	\$1,716.00
6/5/16	52	\$4,868.90
6/12/16	35	\$2,260.00
6/19/16	45	\$3,014.50
6/26/16	49	\$6,946.56

Memorials/Gifts Received

January 1 – June 26, 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	\$	3,611.30
Heating Fund	\$	0
Music & Worship	\$	45.00
Stamps	\$	0
Summer Day Camp Gifts	\$	175.00
Summer Day Camp Grants	\$	4,000.00
TOTAL	\$	11,770.30



July Birthdays

- July 4 Alexis Venegas
- July 8 Kimberly Hoppe, Jane Scherzer
- July 9 Raul Venegas
- July 11 Tracy Hagar
- July 14 Dale Glover
- July 16 Ashley Hoppe, Louise Powell
- July 21 Laurel Buchholz
- July 26 John Braun
- July 28 Debrah Herzberg, Lorna Keaner, Scott Taylor
- July 29 Luella Markel, Edythe Passariello
- July 30 Sue Albrecht, Nina Jackson
- July 31 Craig Glover, David Kramer, Linda LaFlair, Betty Leitow



July Anniversaries

- July 8 Charles & Ginger Reed
- July 11 Larry & Lorelei Roenicke
- July 25 Robert & Madeline Blohm, Dylan & Danelle Harrington



Trust Board Scholarship Forms

St. John Trust Board Scholarship Fund Forms are in the church office for those who will be taking college classes soon. Forms must be filled out and returned by August 1, 2016. If you have questions about these forms, please contact Carl Quackenbush at the church.

Annual St. John Pig Roast

at the Quackenbush Farm
10830 Sheridan Road, Burt, MI

Sunday, August 14th 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!



Free Community Dinners



Our **Free Community Dinners** are on the second Thursday of each month, with dinner served from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Our next dinner is on July 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.



Summer Day Camp

"God's work, our hands." A simple four-word phrase that truly embodies our Summer Day Camp. Staff and Campers are having a great time! The 1st Session of Summer Day Camp is full!

Please continue to lift us in prayer daily. Join us for our 1st Session Talent Show on Thursday, July 14th at 1:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Russ Hale says, "It is a blessing to be the Director."

Family Camp at Camp Lu-Wix-E



St. John Members will need to reserve space with a \$10 deposit by July 3rd if you are planning to stay at Camp Lu-Wix-E for the weekend of July 15 – July 17, 2016. There will be a potluck on Saturday, July 16th at 2:00 p.m. Your stay at the camp and small planned craft projects are also included. If you are not staying overnight, please bring a potluck dish and spend some time enjoying our camp. Hope to see you!

I'm a Lutheran: by Rick Steves

Rick Steves is from Trinity Lutheran Church in Lynnwood, Washington. He is a travel writer and TV host.



- I found my faith in my upbringing and in my need to not be alone.
- My first experience with church was probably in a cry room during a long sermon.
- On a pilgrimage through Martin Luther's land, I appreciated what a blessing it is to have the freedom to explore the word of God in my own language and how hard-earned that privilege was.
- I believe God loves his creation very much and loves each of us as His child.
- Faithful travel is packing light, but bringing Jesus along.
- I pray few requests and lots of thanks. Life is so good, especially when we get out and explore.
- I think travel can help people celebrate diversity, not be fearful, gain empathy for the rest of humanity, and appreciate the blessings of home and family when your trip is finally over.
- I struggle with balance, thinking my work is more important than other dimensions of my being.
- To stay centered amid my busy schedule, I start and end my day with a prayer and say to myself "life is good" a lot, which means to me, "praise God."
- My favorite part of traveling is stretching my perspective, gaining a global perspective, better appreciating nature, learning, and then – through my work – equipping and inspiring others to learn from my travels and have more meaningful travels themselves.
- An issue I'm fighting for is helping Americans not confuse risk and fear, and helping them get out and get to know the world. Then when they employ their desire to "be Christ-like," they'll do it knowing happiness and suffering are as real across the sea as they are across the street, and that every person on this planet is equally deserving and lovable in God's eyes.
- Most people think God is to blame for dumb things people do in the name of organized religion. I cut organized religion lots of slack because I believe having a faith is nourishment for your soul and organized religion is to faith what a restaurant is to food. You need the nourishment – how you consume it (Thai, Italian, etc.) and the quality of the cooking is up to you. You can

(continued)

- complain about the restaurant or the chef, but don't turn your back on the value – and necessity – of the ingredients.
- My favorite church memory is going through stages of my life with the most important people in my world next to me in the pew and hiding the silly tears I shed when touched by my faith while sitting there.
- I practice my faith on the road by knowing Jesus is with me and celebrating (or at least striving to celebrate) God's creation every step of the way.
- My faith is challenged when I'm among people I respect who have no faith.
- People are surprised when I get all excited about Martin Luther.
- If I could change anything, I'd make the subdued "Passing of the Peace" in an American Lutheran church lively by injecting the fiesta-like energy I found in liberation theology churches in Central America.
- My favorite place to be a "temporary local" is worshipping as a Christian in a mosque as Muslims worship and enjoying the fact that we are all "People of the Book" loving the same God.
- Interacting with different cultures has affected my faith by reminding me that this world is filled with billions of equally precious children of God.
- I'm a Lutheran because it fits my personality – pack light; keep it simple; embrace life; celebrate diversity; jettison needless rules; stand up to authority when the truth needs a hand; and dance through the blessing of life on Earth like a child in God's eyes.

"I'm a Lutheran" is a monthly profile featuring ELCA members around the world. The profiles showcase ELCA members in all their diversity, connecting one another through individual faith stories as Lutherans. If you'd like to nominate someone for "I'm a Lutheran," email: megan.brandsrud@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:

Voices of Faith: livinglutheran.org/voices-of-faith

Faith: livinglutheran.org/tag/faith

I'm a Lutheran: livinglutheran.org/tag/im-a-lutheran

Lutheran: livinglutheran.org/tag/Lutheran

Martin Luther: livinglutheran.org/tag/martin-luther

Prayer: livinglutheran.org/tag/prayer

Rick Steves: livinglutheran.org/tag/rick-steves

Travel: livinglutheran.org/tag/travel

Special Congregational Meeting & Vote

The Design Team and Church Councils from St. John and Our Saviour met on Monday, June 20, 2016, with Pr. David Sprang from the Synod Office, regarding the next steps for the Geographic Parish. Pr. Connie and Pr. Ann, who is the Intern who just arrived at Our Saviour on June 1st, also attended.

There is an available Seminary Intern in the area and it was proposed that the Intern serve as part of the Pastoral Team for the Geographic Parish, apparently beginning as soon as August 2016.

The Synod has offered to pay \$10,000 annually for each of the two years. Our Trust Board met on Thursday, June 23rd, and they have proposed that they pay up to \$12,000 for this specific pre-chosen male Intern, about age 55, to come to St. John for nearly two years. As we understand it, this particular candidate does not need any other benefits other than salary and work travel mileage reimbursement, as they are covered by his wife. No housing needed since they live locally enough to travel to St. John.

After discussion of our Church Council also this past week of the offer on the table, we will be bringing this proposal to you in a **Special Congregational Meeting on Sunday, July 10th (after the worship service) for a vote.**

Again, since Our Saviour Lutheran Church just received their Interim, Pr. Ann, they need a bit of time for closure on the departure of Pr. Jeff Bonn, and to get ready to take their next step in the Geographic Parish.

This Intern would serve solely with Pr. Connie at St. John until Our Saviour is ready to let their Interim leave and become involved solely with the Geographic Parish.

Pam Aven, Church Council President
St. John Lutheran Church, ELCA



(continued from page 1)

congregations that I served. Pr. David Sprang, Assistant to Bishop Satterlee, was Camp Director at Camp Frederick about that time (everything is “small world” in the ELCA).

Speaking of prayers, in the last eight months, I have not mentioned in the Newsletter, the most troubling situation I have faced as a Pastor in 39 years. (Oh yes, I passed that milestone quietly on Father’s Day, June 19th). Having been in the courtroom once with the St. John folks and the Pike family, I prayed that I wouldn’t have to speak or attend the sentencing. Oddly enough George’s lawyer was ill on June 20th and it was postponed until June 27th, when I was in Salem, Ohio, helping prepare the community dinner (The Banquet in Salem, OH) in memory of my friend, Maxine Boron, who visited St. John last summer and died in the fall. Please pray for George and the Pike family, during this time of incarceration and making restitution to the St. John Trust Fund.

As you likely know, the generous gifts to the St. John Trust Fund enable us to support many community ministries, as well as those that take place in and through our building!

And finally, on July 10th we will vote to enter into an arrangement with Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, OH, to become an Internship site. It is a wonderful opportunity to be part of the hands on education of a future pastor. St. John folks remind me of their rich history with Interns, who are pictured on the wall in Knauer Hall. I am forever grateful for Faith Lutheran in Massillon, OH, who took the huge risk of having me as in Intern, the first congregation in Ohio to have a female Intern. I pray that if we do so, that the congregation becomes an excellent teaching, learning site. For it will shape the Intern for a lifetime! Summer Blessings!

In Christ’s Love, *Pr. Connie Sassanella*

Independence Day Prayer

Dear Lord: There is no greater feeling of liberation than to experience this freedom from sin and death that you have provided for me through Jesus Christ. Today my heart and my soul are free to praise you. For this, I am very thankful.

On this Independence Day I am reminded of all those who have sacrificed for my freedom, following the example of your Son, Jesus Christ. Let me not take my freedom, both physical and spiritual, for granted. May I always remember that a very high price was paid for my freedom. My freedom cost others their very lives.

Lord, today bless those who served and continue to give their lives for my freedom. With favor and bounty meet their needs and watch over their families.

Dear Father, I am so thankful for this nation. For all the sacrifices others have made and I thank you for the opportunities and freedoms we have in the United States of America. Help me to never take these blessings for granted.

Help me to live my life in a way that glorifies you, Lord. Give me the strength to be a blessing in someone’s life today, and grant me the opportunity to lead others into the freedom that can be found in knowing Christ. Amen.