



Dear Fellow Redeemed,

By the time you read this Newsletter we will be taking the next steps in the pastoral call process. Pastor Steven Newberg was moved to return our call and accept another call to a congregation in Charlotte, NC. President Maier immediately began updating our original call list with candidates that have come to his attention in recent months. Our Call Committee will combine new names with a couple from the original list and determine who to interview and who will be placed before the Voters at the next call meeting.

As I noted in a previous newsletter about half of first calls are accepted and half returned. Issuing a second or third call before securing a pastor is common and does not reflect on St. John's one way or the other. God uses the entire process to teach us to trust His wisdom and patiently wait upon His time-table. He knows exactly who our next pastor will be and when he will arrive. God simply asks us to follow the process prayerfully and let him take care of the rest.

MY COMMITMENTS FOR 2017

Last spring when the District completed our self study and told us we could begin the call process, it looked as if a new pastor would be in place by the end of 2016. At that time I was asked by the congregation in which I served my first interim if I could serve them during February and March of 2017. Thinking my work at St. John's would be completed by then, I accepted the request. Delays in preparing the call list unexpectedly pushed St. John's schedule back several months. If our first call would have been accepted it would not have made a difference. With the call process continuing we must make provision to cover ministry needs after January. Pastor Dennis Lassanske (who is also a trained interim pastor) has agreed to help us. He will partner with Pastor George Hamilton to fill the pulpit, visit hospitals and shut-ins, and tend to administrative needs for at least two months.

If we reach April and are still in the call process, they may be able to serve longer. Or, if I am not assigned to a new interim, I can return for the duration of the call process. Until a call is accepted it's prudent to have a 'Plan B' and even 'Plan C' in place.

JANUARY WORSHIP THEMES

Three major themes fill the Sundays after New Year. Two of them (Epiphany and The Baptism of Jesus) are part of the liturgical calendar. The third, "Life Sunday" is observed toward the end of January on or around the infamous Roe v. Wade Supreme Court ruling that sanctions abortion upon demand. The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has a long history of supporting pro-life causes. In keeping with our belief in the sanctity of all human life we preach and teach a scriptural approach to the difficult issues women face. At the same time we heed God's call to be merciful and forgiving especially when dealing with sins of weakness.

As our nation continues to wrestle with one of the most vexing issues of our generation, we do so guided by God's Word with reliance on the healing power of His love in Jesus Christ.

DEBT ELIMINATION UPDATE

Each month we make our regular mortgage payment to CEF supplemented by gifts for debt elimination. Our first pre-payment was September. After we made our November payment we had eliminated \$100,000 of our \$180,000 debt! PRAISE GOD!

We have over \$70,000 in commitments and cash. After we make our December payment we will cut even more deeply into the \$80,000 remaining debt. While some pledges are stretched out into 2018 & 19, at the current pace our people are responding we could complete this task before the end of 2017! I remain convinced one of the most enjoyable events our new pastor will lead, is burning our mortgage making St. John's a DEBT FREE CONGREGATION.

Continued on next page

When we look at our over-all financial health, the one area that needs our attention is General Budget giving. I am very proud of the way you have addressed our debt, the expansion of our Endowment Fund and the formula used by the Board of Ed to set day school tuition. Now, let's tackle the last obstacle standing in the way of full financial health by bringing weekly/monthly gifts to God's House in proportion to the way He has blessed us. God asks nothing of us that He has not first given to us. Faithful, Biblical stewardship allows God (not money) to be the driving force behind our mission and ministry.

LIVING IN TWO KINGDOMS

With the November election behind us and a new administration assuming its governing role, many look back on 2016 as a year of political upheaval and drama unlike anything we've seen in our life time. National politics has a very different feel that excites many while worrying others. As a citizen of this great nation I have my own hopes and concerns for our collective future. I try to keep abreast of the news and cast my vote as my conscience dictates.

At the same time I remember I am a 'Christian Citizen' which means I have membership in two kingdoms at the same time. Lutheran Theology refers to them as the 'Kingdom of the Left' (secular government) and the 'Kingdom of the Right' (God's rule over His people, the church). While the Kingdom of the Left is constantly changing and often in turmoil, the Kingdom of the Right is secure and unchanging.

The irony is, the same God is Lord of both. He rules His church for the sake of our eternal salvation, while He rules His created world to bring order out of chaos for the sake of the Gospel. One Kingdom is temporary the other eternal. One is unpredictable, the other stable. One is subject to fear, the other instills confidence.

While we experience the full range of human emotion as national politics unfolds, we have calm and trusting hearts under the blessed assurance Jesus has secured our place in heaven. When the emotions of politics threatens to get the best of us, look heavenward, take a deep spiritual breadth and know that God is in control. What a blessing it is to be citizens of two kingdoms.

In Christ,

Ronald C. Moritz, Interim Pastor

Christ-Like Servant Leadership

As mentioned in previous newsletters, our own **Craig Kaschube** is one of 59 professionals joining the 219 others who have participated in one of KINDLE's national training events! Craig will be hosting a Servant Leadership event on January 8. See page 5 of this newsletter for more details.

For more info on KINDLE and Servant Leadership, click [here](#). Watch for additional information in future newsletters!

New Home Bible Studies

The Board of Parish Education and Faith At Home have just purchased two new bible studies and an excellent family Christmas movie.

Joseph – Carpenter of Steel – This four-part video based bible study is based on the early chapters of Matthew and Luke which give intriguing details about the principal players in the Christmas Account but tantalizingly few about Joseph. This study from the Men's Network takes a look at the foster-father of Jesus. From seeking a shelter for Mary to deliver her Son to searching for the young Jesus in the busy streets of Jerusalem, Joseph occupies a unique place in the course of human history. As a carpenter, guardian, and parent, Joseph was above all – Faithful.

Rev. Gregory Seltz, speaker of the Lutheran Hour, leads this bible study with Dr. Paul Maier, who adds the historical depth and perspective to one of the Scripture's greatest unsung heroes.

Revelation – A Testament of Hope – This is an additional bible study to the Revelation Study that we have currently. However, this study is more in depth into the book as the 8 session video study takes a chapter by chapter approach in going through the entire book. There is perhaps no more misunderstood book of the Bible than Revelation. Yet it has a clear message for all who would devote themselves to it pages. This study is led by Rev. Mark Brighton who is a professor of Biblical languages and literature at Concordia University in Irvine, California.

Three Christmas Classics – This family Christmas movie has three different Christmas classics on it, Christmas Is, The City that Forgot about Christmas, and The Stableboy's Christmas. Each one is approximately 25 minutes in length. Each one of these are sure to give enjoyment to the entire family and provide a valuable lesson for all of us.



LUTHERAN
HOUR
MINISTRIES

Do you know someone who needs God's grace in their lives?

Whether it's friends, family, or people in our community, we all know people who are living apart from God. While these people are not in church, chances are they're online.

THRED is a new media project that is primarily based in this online space. The aim of THRED is to create an eco-system of material that provides opportunities for authentic, honest and respectful conversations about life, faith, Jesus and Christianity. We especially want to engage with non-churched Gen-Xers and older Millennials in a genuine dialogue about the words and message of Jesus, and the impact of Christian belief systems in contemporary culture. We are currently looking for volunteers to participate in THRED!

www.lhm.org/

Join us in this new media project by applying to be a THRED volunteer!

Loving our Parsonage

A Leadership team is moving forward to update/renovate the Parsonage. As we have received a new call list, we'd like to set a tone of urgency on the completion of these updates/renovations. We are asking for the congregation to use their talents and perhaps treasure in the completion of this work. We have identified three projects that need to be the first priority before any other updating can be completed.

1. Sanding, cleaning, and re-surfacing the floors of the 3 upstairs bedrooms and main floor office. A small team with expertise is needed to complete this task that will take approx. 40 hours of work. The church will provide the funds to rent the equipment and supplies necessary.

2. Painting each room, including the basement. A team of workers with various skill levels is needed to complete this task.

3. Updating the upstairs master bedroom shower. A small team is needed to remove the existing tile and update it with ceramic tile.

Please contact Ross Kittleman at (616) 842-4926 or rosskitt@chartermi.net, Craig Kaschube at (616) 842-4510 or ckaschube@silcs.org, or Richard Rothe at (616) 847-6908 or rjrothe@att.net if you would like to volunteer. If anyone would like to donate materials or funds for projects that would be much appreciated.

St. John's Lutheran Church · 527 Taylor Avenue · Grand Haven, MI · (616) 842-4510 · www.st-johns-lutheran.com January 2017 - 3

Movie Night: War Room

Don't miss the opportunity to see this excellent movie here in the comfort of our Social Hall on Friday, March 24 at 6:45pm. Refreshments and childcare will be provided.

Tony and Elizabeth Jordan have it all—great jobs, a beautiful daughter, and their dream house. But appearances can be deceiving. Tony and Elizabeth Jordan's world is actually crumbling under the strain of a failing marriage. While Tony basks in his professional success and flirts with temptation, Elizabeth resigns herself to increasing bitterness. But their lives take an unexpected turn when Elizabeth meets her newest client, Miss Clara, and is challenged to establish a "war room" and a battle plan of prayer for her family. As Elizabeth tries to fight for her family, Tony's hidden struggles come to light. Tony must decide if he will make amends to his family and prove Miss Clara's wisdom that victories don't come by accident.



LCMS Life Conference



Start making plans now to attend the 2017 LCMS Life Conference on January 27-29. Join fellow LCMS Lutherans for learning and fellowship at the Westin Arlington Gateway Hotel in Arlington, VA.

Conference highlights include:

- Marching at the [44th-annual National March for Life](#) in our nation's capital;
- Listening to presentations from speakers like Dr. George Delgado, who pioneered a protocol to reverse the abortion pill, and the Rev. Jonathan Fisk, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Oakes, N.D.; and
- Attending daily worship and devotions, with Divine Service on Sunday morning.

Join LCMS Life Ministry as we proclaim God's truth that all life is sacred — from the very beginning until the natural end.

Lady Warrior Saturday Basketball

For: Girls in grades 1st-3rd and 4th-6th

When: January 7, 14, and 21

Times: 1st-3rd 9:00-10:00
4th-6th 10:15-11:15

Where: Western Michigan
Christian High School

Cost: \$20.00 (Includes t-shirt, instruction & admission to a Varsity home contest)



Program emphasizes basic basketball skills and gives opportunities to implement skills in live scrimmaging. There will be approximately 30 minutes of skill instruction and 30 minutes of learning team play concepts through scrimmaging each Saturday.

The program will be led by members of the WMC coaching staff and WMC Lady Warrior players.

It's Easy to Buy SCRIP

1. Click [here](#), then "SHOP" tab
2. Click on a merchant, then "Find a location near you"
3. Enter a zip code to see locations available
4. Order online (if you have registered with St. John's), OR complete a SCRIP order form from the school.
5. Orders submitted with payment by Tuesday at 9:00am are available by Thursday of the same week.



If Grand Haven Area Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather (snow, ice, fog, etc.), St. John's Lutheran Day School is automatically closed.

School closings due to inclement weather conditions or any other emergency will be announced in the early morning over a number of area radio and TV stations. Please listen or watch the following radio or television stations for school cancellation or delays.

WGHN Radio (FM 92.1 and AM 1370)

WOOD AM (1300)

WZZM TV 13

WOOD TV - 8

DAYCARE WILL ALWAYS BE OPEN ON SNOW DAYS.

If there are any delays in the start of the school day, kindergarten will be automatically canceled for the day.

Save the date: School Auction News!

Come and celebrate St. Patrick's day with us on Friday, March 17 at Harbor Front Grand Hall (upstairs of Porto Bello)!

This is a great fundraiser for our school. This adult event serves you with a silent and live auction, dinner, cash bar (and maybe some green beer), music, and new this year a photo booth! Please mark your calendars and plan on attending!!



CLASSIFIED AD SECTION OF YOUR LOCAL ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Augsburg Confession Bible Study will resume on Sunday, March 4 and we will start again on Topic 3 Original Sin! In the meantime attend Pastor's Bible Study. See you on March 5 at 9:30am in the 5th/6th grade classroom.

The Board of Elders is recruiting men to serve as 'communion assistants'. Each elder will have one or two assistants (serving about once each 7 or 8 weeks) who will join them and pastor distributing the elements. There are no administrative duties or meetings other than a training session. If interested contact Al Lutz, chairman, at fritzlutz76@gmail.com or (616) 846-3614 or the church office at (616) 842-4510.

2017 Offering Envelopes can be picked up from Narthex. *[Please note new #'s have been assigned.]* Thank you for joining us in the support of our Lord's mission through the ministry we do here at St. John's. Any offerings given after Dec. 31 will be on your 2017 statement.

LCMS Global Mission Fund: Be a partner in Gospel proclamation and human care activities here in the U.S. and to the four corners of the world. You can change lives forever through your year-end LCMS Global Mission Fund gift. For more info, click [here](#).

Please Join Us For New Year's Worship: New Year's Eve at 5:00pm and New Year's Day at 10:30am.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Being Mom & Dad Convention: On February 11, join St. Matthew, Grand Rapids for an in-depth discussion on how the Gospel should transform your parenting and family life. No formulas, no how-to's, only the good news of Christ crucified meant to inform your vocation as a parent. Guest speakers are Elyse Fitzpatrick, Dr. Scott Keith, and Jessica Thompson. For more information, click [here](#).

St. John's friends, if you want to know what it means to be a Christ-like servant leader, grow in leadership skills to benefit your home, workplace, congregation, community and the world, you don't want to miss this! Everyone is welcome! Sunday, January 8, 9:30-10:20am in the gym.

Wanted: Gently used infant-preschool toys for the church nursery. Please drop them off in the church office.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Junior Youth Lock-In! Join our host, Koivvwia Tweens of Trinity Lutheran Church, for a fantastically fun time on January 20! The lock-in will run from 9:00pm Friday night through 6:00am Saturday morning. We will meet at St. John's at 8:00pm to depart for Trinity, and will return at 7:00am Saturday morning. **IMPORTANT:** Please bring your registration form with a parent's signature with you. A suggested donation of \$5 to help cover food and supplies cost is appreciated. Please bring: your Bible; a 2-liter pop and snack to share (chips, candy, cookies, etc.); comfortable clothes; sleeping bag and pillow (you can sleep if you want to, but nobody does...); camera (if you wish); and mission project items. Deadline to sign up is January 8--we hope to see you there! Please contact Sue LaLonde at suelalonde@charter.net if you plan to go!

Camp Restore is in Detroit: Mount Calvary, Detroit and RAI Ministries, Inc. are excited to announce the formation of a partnership that has brought Camp Restore to Detroit, with the support of the Michigan District, LCMS. Utilizing the proven Camp Restore model of partnering volunteer groups with local community organizations and churches, Camp Restore – Detroit will begin hosting volunteers at Mount Calvary in April, 2017. Opportunities exist to join in the preparation work already taking place onsite. For More Information, click [here](#), email detroit@camprestore.org, or call (313) 527-3366.





...to the **St. John's Lutheran Staff and Church volunteers** that helped with Journey to Bethlehem.
 ...to **Pastor Moritz** for his incredible job of leading us through the interim process. Please join us for a cake reception in his honor on Saturday, January 28 after our 5:00 worship service or on Sunday, January 29 in between services.

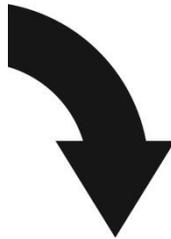
FROM THE CHURCH RECORDS

Births
 11/18/16 **Liesel Kay Lutz**, daughter of **Ben & Kelly (Luytjes) Lutz**, granddaughter of **Ken* and Debbie* Luytjes**.

Deaths
 11/20/16 **Loretta* Lemke**
 11/16/16 **Lou Tripp**, husband of **Dolores Tripp**. Lou is a former custodian and member of St. John's Lutheran Church.
12/2/16 **Roberta* Burke**
12/8/16 **Robert* Holzinger**, father of **Becky* (Doug*) Rasche**.

*** Members of SJLC**
 Our current membership stands at 574 baptized, 468 of whom have confirmed their faith.

Please consider supporting our youth by ordering yummy sub sandwiches



ST. JOHN'S YOUTH GROUP SUPER BOWL 6" SUB SANDWICH FUNDRAISER
 2017 ORDER FORM – PLEASE COMPLETE FULLY & LEGIBLY

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

COST: \$2.50 each or 10/\$20.00 (\$1.00 more per double meat sandwich)

** Submit payment (cash or personal check to "St. John's Youth") with order form **

SUBS ORDERED: _____
TOTAL COST: \$ _____

<u>MEAT CHOICES:</u>	<u>QTY.</u>	<u>DOUBLE MEAT?</u>	<u>AMERICAN CHEESE CHOICES:</u>
<i>* Bun is a 6" white hoagie *</i>	<i>* Write # of subs for double meat *</i>		<i>* Write # of subs with/without cheese *</i>
Ham	_____	___ Yes ___ No	___ Yes-DM ___ No-DM ___ Yes ___ No
Turkey	_____	___ Yes ___ No	___ Yes-DM ___ No-DM ___ Yes ___ No
Ham & Turkey	_____	___ Yes ___ No	___ Yes-DM ___ No-DM ___ Yes ___ No
Ham & Salami	_____	___ Yes ___ No	___ Yes-DM ___ No-DM ___ Yes ___ No
Ham, Salami, & Turkey	_____	___ Yes ___ No	___ Yes-DM ___ No-DM ___ Yes ___ No

*** EXAMPLE ORDER FOR SARAH & STEVE SUBMARINE ***

Ham & Turkey	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u> Yes <u>3</u> No	<u>0</u> Yes-DM <u>1</u> No-DM <u>3</u> Yes <u>0</u> No
Ham, Salami & Turkey	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u> Yes <u>2</u> No	<u>2</u> Yes-DM <u>2</u> No-DM <u>1</u> Yes <u>1</u> No

Their order's total cost is \$25.00 (10 subs for \$20, \$5.00 extra for 5 double meat subs)

Submit order form and payment using the Social Hall drop box by Sunday, 1/29/17.

Pickup orders at church after worship Saturday, 2/4/17 or Sunday morning, 2/5/17.



St. John's Lutheran Church
527 Taylor Avenue
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Rev. Ronald Moritz, Pastor pasmoritz@dls.net
Craig Kaschube, Youth & Family Life Director ckaschube@sjlcs.org
Laura Harvey, School Administrator/Business Manager lharvey@sjlcs.org

Worship Services:

Sacred Song (Traditional): 8:15am
Blended Voices (Contemporary): 10:30am
Night Song (Saturday service): 5:00pm

Please check calendar for all worship times!

God's Blessings To:

You and your
family!

