

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church



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January 2014

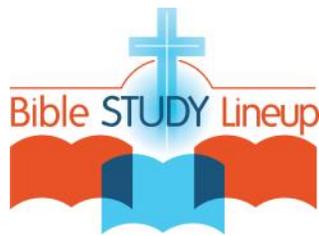
Mission Statement: We are called by God to be the light of the world. We are to go forth and show Jesus' love and forgiveness through loving care for all God's creation.

Winter Bible Classes

Our study of Hebrews on Sunday will resume on January 12 at 8:05 AM.

Lost Books of the Bible will begin on Monday, January 13 at 6:30 PM.

Tuesday Evening at Ross' will resume on January 7 at 7:00 PM.



Notice of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 21 at 6:00 PM in the church Sanctuary. The District Leadership Meeting will follow at 7:00 PM.

2014 Men's Retreat

The deadline for signing up for the 2014 Men's Retreat to be held at the Holiday Inn in Manitowoc on February 28-March 2 is February 14. The theme for this year's retreat is "god's at war." It is based on a book written by Pastor Kyle Idelman with the same title. He writes that men today do not believe that there are idols warring for our hearts in today's culture. Men today don't believe that money, pleasure, sex, technology, sports, materialism, comfort, success, gambling, pornography, achievement, entertainment, family, and our own self can be an idol in our lives. Pastor Idelman points out that idolatry is anything that becomes a driving force in our lives points back to idolatry of some kind. When something replaces the Lord in the position of glory in our lives that person or thing has become our god.

Jesus makes it very clear in the Bible that He wants to be number one in our lives. He states

twice in the Gospel's that we are to "Love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, with ALL your soul, with ALL your strength, and with ALL your mind." All of our sectionals on Saturday will cover a modern day idol and the entire weekend will build a man up to make Jesus #1 in their lives. Early registration ended on December 18 and deadline for all registration forms for the retreat must be in by February 14. Any questions about the retreat call Jim at 414-462-5871 or e-mail him at jnrberg67@gmail.com.

Pancake Breakfast

Join us after the Sunday, January 5 service for our pancake breakfast. Serving from 10:30 AM to Noon. The breakfast will be a free will offering and proceeds will go to "Journey to The Cross" a



spring event at St. John reliving Jesus' last days on earth from Palm Sunday to Easter. If you are unable to attend and would like to make a monetary donation envelopes marked "Pancake Breakfast" are available in the narthex and can be placed in the collection plate. Thank you.

Fellowship Sunday

January 12 will be our first Fellowship Sunday in 2014. If you would like to serve for Fellowship Sunday after church services (The 2nd Sunday of each month) please sign up on the sheet located on the north bulletin board. Please note that we are now having fellowship in our lower level. The area will be set up for you and coffee will be started that morning. Coffee cups, plates and napkins will be provided. Please bring bars or cookies. If you have any special needs please call the office and we will be glad to help.

Church Decorating

Many thanks to people involved with the church Christmas decorating. Mona & Les Heindl for outdoor decorating; Jon Sandberg for creating the nativity scenes; and our interior decorators: Marcia Doescher; Marion Oleson for decorating the beautiful Narthex tree; Nathalie Reinke; Rose and Jerry Schimke; Mona & Les Heindl for setting up the giving tree; and Donna & Jerry Strack.



Funeral Help

Thank you to our generous congregation for your donation of hot dishes, salads, cheese trays, deserts, and all the other food you brought in for the Curt Oleson funeral. Also thank you to the family members for their donations of food. Thank you to Cindy Knorr and Mona Heindl the co-chairman of group 2 and Barb Lundquist and Judy Ontl the co-chairman of group 3 for coordinating the meal. Thanks kitchen helpers! Thank you to the group that helped set up the tables. The Oleson family expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the fine job you did in serving the meal.

Advent By Candlelight

A huge Thank You to everyone who participated in the Advent by Candlelight Program. It was a joyous and festive occasion with God's Word empowering us to remember that Jesus is The Star of Christmas and every day.

Branson Trip

Thanks to Lois Ver Voort's excellent planning our bus trip to Branson was a great success! The show we attended ranked from super awesome to awesome—all with the same message of God, country and family. Another big thank you to our capable driver Keith—he was always there to give a helping hand. Along with Life Circle members we had many guest travelers—with whom we quickly formed friendships. Thank you, also, to those who provided for the evening gathering on our last evening on the road. It was much appreciated. We all returned home having had a great time with great people, great food, great conversation and a lot of laughter! I know that I have many fun and meaningful memories from our trip to look back on. I want to thank all members of Life Circles and our guests for making this trip possible and for supporting our Life Circles group. You are the best!—Sue Helmuth

From David Lutz & Family

David Lutz and family wish to offer a heartfelt thank you to everyone that attended and helped make the Hunters Chili feed a great success. It was a great opportunity to have some awesome food and enjoy fellowship among all that were there. The money raised will help defray the costs of my lay-ministry studies at Concordia. We appreciate your continued prayers and support in this endeavor.

Hopes Door

The generosity of our St. John Congregation is very impressive! This year you responded with enthusiasm to the needs and wishes of the three families we had from Hope's Door. Two families had seven members each and one family of six members. We were able to take 3 wonderful presents to each family member. Plus, we were able to give each family a \$25 gift card to help them purchase meat for their thanksgiving meal. Also with your donations of money we were able to give each family \$145.00 in script to purchase food for their Christmas meals and more. THANK YOU!

Cookie Walk

The day dawned a bit "crispy" at 12 degrees and a few snowflakes on Saturday, December 14—Cookie Walk Day!! The cool temperatures and snow did not slow down the traffic for the 19th Annual St. John Cookie and Candy Walk. The sale began at 9 a.m. with many shoppers waiting at the door! In a short time the tables were being emptied, and by 11 a.m. it was time to close the 2013 Cookie and Candy Shoppe!! Truly a success—a complete Sell-out!

A Special **Thank you** to those who baked and cooked goodies for the sale, both at home and in the church basement! A huge **Thank you** to all who came to help set-up and takedown for the event. This event would not be the great success it has become without the generous donations from the entire congregation!! St. John family has always been a caring and giving congregation and was once again demonstrated for the Cookie Walk. Monies from the sale will be used for a church-wide project. Thank you again to all who were involved in this Christmas-time sweet event! **The St. John Cookie and Candy Shoppe** will again be open on **Saturday, December 13, 2014**—start choosing some new favorite recipes for the 2014 Christmas season.



Library Corner

Bullying is a dangerous and widespread form of harassment and most young children are not able to handle this kind of intimidation alone.

Bye-Bye, Bully! A Kid's Guide for Dealing with

Bullies by J. S. Jackson is a great book that explains the who, what, and whys of bullying. Aided by its little elfin characters kids will learn nonviolent ways to assert and protect themselves and when to ask for adult help.

Looking for a great family mystery series to enjoy with your family? Check out The Sugar Creek Gang DVD's: **Secret Hideout**-75 minutes, **Teacher Trouble**-65 minutes, or **Race Against Nightfall**-70 minutes.

Or how about one of these?

Animals United (DVD) In the African savannah, all of the animals are wondering what happened to the water. Join Billy the Meerkat, Socrates the Lion and all the other animals in an incredible journey as they unite and fight back to regain the water that is being held for a human luxury resort. It's a true call of the wild for an action-packed African adventure full of family fun! 93 minutes.

The Book of Ruth (DVD) A biblical Cinderella story from the archives of the royal Jewish bloodline! Choosing to leave her homeland and follow her mother-in-law to Israel, a young widow, Ruth, captures the heart of wealthy Boaz. Their romance sets the stage for the kingship of Israel...and the coming of the Messiah. 91 minutes.

Last Ounce of Courage (DVD) The death of Bob Revere's son brings his faith to problems that involve his grandson. Will his faith be strong enough to follow through this problem? 101 minutes. Teens through adult.

Big Birthday Bash

Biggest birthday celebration ever! At Life Circles on January 9 at 1 PM we will honor everyone's birthday with games, birthday cake, ice cream and presents. Come join the fun!

Advent By Candlelight DVD's

DVD's of Advent by Candlelight are available for \$5.00 each. Contact Jerry or Donna Strack at church or by phone 715-423-5874, if interested.



Thank You From the Board of Education

Thank you to all that helped make the children's Christmas Service such an enjoyable event. The kids did a wonderful job telling the story of Jesus' birth. Without the help and support of parents, congregation and those that dedicate time each week to contribute to the youth of St John this wouldn't be possible.

Also, a big thank you for those that contributed to the Caroling from the Kids fundraiser. It was such a fun afternoon for all, those receiving and giving the gift of song. The children sang to 10 people. Those people all had a carols purchased from someone else in the congregation and the funds raised will go towards future children activities.

Both of these events wouldn't have been possible without Sandra Sweeny. A big thank you from all of us on the Board of Education.



Cookie Walk Report

The 19th Annual Church-wide Cookie and Candy Walk was a **GREAT** success! The church basement came alive with the many holiday aromas—cookies and candies as well as many additional Christmastime favorites!

A Big **THANK YOU** to everyone in the congregation who basked cookies and made many delicious Christmastime favorites including the homemade soups!! Special thanks to those who helped with the set-up, and takedown for the event!

Thank you also to those who came to purchase the goodies and the monetary donations! The sale was a total **SELL-OUT**—not a crumb remained after Saturday!!

The monies realized from the **Church-wide Cookie and Candy Walk Sale** came to a total of **\$1,877.16!!** This is a church-wide project and so the congregation is being asked for their input as to where the monies should be used. If you have a suggestion, please notify Laurel in the church office. Suggestions will be received until January 15, 2014.

Quilt Winner!

The winning ticket for the Raffle Quilt was drawn after services on Sunday, December 16. The winner is....Wendy Rosenthal! Congratulations Wendy! Sales of the tickets is \$561.00. Thank you everyone for your participation—The Ladies Aid

Scrip Scrap Corner

Thank you for purchasing Scrip in 2013! Your continued support of the Scrip program is truly appreciated! New to Scrip —El Mezcal \$10 at 10% profit. Our profit total for December was \$ 302.31

SWCEPS Collection

There is an increasing need by the South Wood County Emergency Pantry Shelf (SWCEPS) for non-perishable food items. The Human Care Board will place a basket in the Narthex to collect your generous donations over the next couple of months—The Human Care Board.

Bethesda Thrift Shop

From all the 100+ volunteers at the Bethesda Thrift Shop in the Rapids Mall, we want to wish you all a very blessed New Year and thank you for a great year just ended! There will be some special sales in January including a yellow-tagged clothing sale and a Clearance Sale of 50% off on almost everything in the store on January 24-25. Come in and check out all our used items, Valentine items, and new furniture and mattresses at very reasonable prices. Thanks for supporting the folks at Bethesda.



Celebrating Epiphany

Epiphany, from the Greek word *epiphaneia*, means an appearance or manifestation. Christians celebrate this festival each year on January 6, the 12th day after Christmas. Epiphany ends on Ash Wednesday, when Lent begins.

Epiphany marks the coming of the Magi, or wise men, to worship the baby Jesus. Because the Magi were Gentiles, Epiphany symbolizes the first recognition of Christ by non-Jews. It's a reminder that Christ came as the light — and Savior — of the whole world.

The traditional color for Epiphany is green, indicating life, growth, hope and eternity. Symbols for the season include a light, candle or star; a crown or three crowns; three gifts; and a globe. In the modern church, Epiphany has become a time to focus on reaching out and “showing” Jesus as the Savior of all people. It's also a reminder to engage in Christian community and to heal divisions among God's children.

A Child is Born

Jesus received many different names — even before he was born. Isaiah 9:6 (NIV) prophesies about four of these names.

Directions: Unscramble the words on the name tags below. (Hint: The first letter is capitalized.)

MY NAME IS
gyhMti

dGo

MY NAME IS
lerWnofud

esnruooCl

MY NAME IS
vrelEnsitga

eahFrt

MY NAME IS
niPcre
_____ of

aPcee

A New Year – New Opportunities

Each new day brings promise of a new start. For many, the start of a new week is the time to begin that diet, get serious about exercising, or forego TV viewing. For a vast majority, though, there's something especially motivating and invigorating about seeing the JANUARY calendar on the wall. This is the year we'll accomplish great things.

God doesn't necessarily call us to do great things, however. He asks that we be trustworthy in small things (Luke 16:10-11). To that end He gives us gifts to use to build up the Body of Christ and to reach out to those outside His voice.

Some of us have many gifts. People like Michelangelo – painter, sculptor, and poet – and Thomas Jefferson – architect, statesman, and scientific farmer – come to mind. God, the Giver of gifts, knows that the number of gifts each of us has varies. Jesus told the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30) pointing up this fact and teaching us that success lies in using what we've been given, not in having the greatest amount.

Our gifts also differ in degree. There are many sculptors but few, if any, compare to Michelangelo. Yet their art can bring satisfaction and inspiration to others. You may not be able to sing opera, but you can sing God's praises. You may not be a great orator, but you can witness to the love and grace of God in Christ. You may not be a mechanic, but you can provide transportation for someone needing to get to an appointment or to church.

That's why God gives us gifts and abilities – that we may be equipped to serve others. The start of a new year offers us an opportune time to assess those gifts and see how we can use them for God's glory and the good of His people. The motivation to do this comes from the same One Who gave the gifts! Just as He was motivated by love for us to give us, not just our gifts, but His greatest gift, His Son, so we are motivated by love for Him to serve those He calls us to serve.

**USE THE TALENTS GOD HAS
GIVEN YOU IN SERVICE TO
OTHERS FOR HIS GLORY.**

“Whatever you do, work heartily,
as for the Lord and not for men”
(Colossians 3:23).

