



The **St. John Eagle**

“Celebrating over 100 years, 1904 - 2006”

Member Congregation of the ELCA and LCMC



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St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

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From the Pastor's Pen Macintosh

We say it every year, and every year it seems—somehow—to be more true. Where has the summer gone? Where have the promised days of leisure and sunshine vanished in what seems to be such a short time? We ask it every year, and this year is no different. Summer has come and gone, and we are all returning to our more normal activities of school and work and planning for the months ahead.

While this summer did go quickly for me, I must confess that I am happy to put it behind me and look forward to the return of our busy schedule at St. John. In the pages that follow, you will read of the resumption of our Sunday church school, the upcoming Fall Kickoff, and the scheduling of the many meetings that are intended to plan for and carry out the various ministries of our congregation.

In a real sense, this return to our busier schedule at church is nothing new. We have done it before and, I pray, we will do it again for many years to come. But this year I would raise a concern that is really a constant with me and that is too frequently a danger for every congregation of Christians, including our own. I refer to the danger that all of our activity within the church—teaching classes, planning fellowship gatherings, reaching out to others—is ultimately spiritual in its intent and purposes, but too frequently remains merely human in its planning and execution.

I think you know what I mean. Regularly at our worship services and in our meetings, we talk about the spiritual dimensions of life—about doing God's will and following God's lead. Even when we pray our Lord's prayer, publicly or privately, we ask that “your will be done.” But the danger I point to here is the real possibility that our church planning and practice, even our language, may not actually follow after our prayer. The monthly meeting of the church council, or a committee meeting, or a relaxed gathering of our fellow church members and friends begins with our heads bowed and our prayer that God's presence, wisdom, and guidance will be part of our meeting. Yet, too frequently I suspect, when the “Amen” is said by all those present, it signals the end of the spiritual part of the meeting and the beginning of business as usual, which is done pretty much like business anywhere: receiving information, weighing decisions, and seeking consensus from all who are present.

I must confess that I am as guilty of this as is anyone. Too often our decisions and planning are informed by individual preferences and *Robert's Rules of Order* rather than by what we invoke in our prayer. And yet our faith, which we confess together, holds that it is God who rules. It is God who promises that there is more available to us than our own personal preferences in carrying out his will in the life of our congregation and in our own individual lives. I wonder now what it would be like if our business and planning meetings, our worship and fellowship gatherings, actually followed in intentional ways our prayer for God's will to be done. We all know in our hearts, I think, that seeking and following God's will is what the life of the Spirit and our own individual spiritual lives are all about. Certainly, it is the primary purpose of any congregation of God's people.

So it is, as we begin another year of praying and planning, that I invite each of us—regardless of the role, large or small, that we play in the life of St. John—to be intentionally aware that the work of the church, including the everyday business of our congregation, is about seeking and carrying out God's will. It is about being consciously aware that the Holy Spirit must have a role in our deliberations and activities or else our endeavors will be anything but spiritual.

As we come back together after another short summer, I invite each of us to seek directions and activities that are filled with faith and hope, with joy and love for God and for our neighbor. Clearly, to do so would be to strive to answer the constant call that comes to every member of our congregation to serve God on a level that is higher than that of the rest of our society. Meetings in the church cannot be the same as meetings in the world. Our fellowship in the church is not the same as just another social club. No, the church of Jesus Christ must be a gathering and dispersing of spiritual people striving to do the Spirit's work. As we plan for and work together in the months ahead, I invite you to renew your commitment to join in that work.

SERVING ST. JOHN WITH OUR TIME AND TALENTS –

During September:

Ushers

Judy Othote
Carole Grayson

Lay Assistant

9/3 Fred Faust
9/10 Steve Gemma
9/17 Linda Phyles
9/24 Susan Reed

Custodial

9/3 Phyles
9/10 Berg/Grayson/Othote
9/17 Bott
9/24 Gemma

Lector

9/3 Philip/Susan Reed
9/10 Doug Johnson
9/17 Doug Johnson
9/24 Tom Knowlton

Childcare

9/3
9/10 Lydia & Heather
9/17 Donna & Kira
9/24 Chip & Shannon

Coffee Hour

9/3 Sue & Linda B.
9/10 Shannon & Angie
9/17 Judy & Cheryl
9/24 Raudna & Carole

During October:

Ushers

Chip Bott
Tom Knowlton

Lay Assistant

10/1 Fred Faust
10/8 Angie Cornwell
10/15 Steve Gemma
10/22 Linda Phyles
10/29 Susan Reed

Custodial

10/1 Valletti/Carson
10/8 Dancewicz
10/15 Reed
10/22 Phyles
10/29 Berg/Grayson/Othote

Lector

10/1 Tom Knowlton
10/8 Judy Othote
10/15 Judy Othote
10/22 Mary Johnson
10/29 Mary Johnson

Childcare

10/1 Mike & Michele
10/8 Kyle & Heather
10/15 Rick & Cheryl
10/22 Kristin & Kira
10/29 Chip & Shannon

Coffee Hour

10/1 Linda & Susan
10/8 Michele & Lydia
10/15 Linda & Becky
10/22 Mary & Bert
10/29 Shannon & Angie

During November:

Ushers

TBA

Lay Assistant

11/5 Fred Faust
11/12 Angie Cornwell
11/19 Steve Gemma
11/26 Linda Phyles

Custodial

11/5 Bott
11/12 Gemma
11/19 Valletti/Carson
11/26 Dancewicz

Lector

11/5 Linda Phyles
11/12 Linda Phyles
11/19 Susan Dancewicz
11/26 Susan Dancewicz

Childcare

11/5 Mike & Michele
11/12 Kyle & Heather
11/19 Rick & Cheryl
11/26 Kristin & Kira

Coffee Hour

11/5 Judy & Cheryl
11/12 Raudna & Carole
11/19 Linda & Susan
11/26 Michele & Lydia

****Please ask someone to fill in for you if you are unable to make it when you are scheduled. Phone numbers are in the church directory.**

ST. JOHN NEWS AND NOTES –

We welcomed Susan Dancewicz to the organ console for several Sundays during the summer while our regular organist, Margaret Knowlton, was on vacation. As always, we are sincerely grateful for Susan's ministry of music.

The annual Church Picnic was held at Camp Naumkeag in Salem on June, 11. The day began with a short worship service led by Pastor Phyles. Even though the day was a bit windy, it was still fun and relaxing. Thanks to all who brought good food and fellowship.

We would like to give a special thank you to Pastor Duane Westfield, Tom Knowlton and Steve Gemma for filling in for Pastor Phyles while he was away. We genuinely appreciate the spiritual leadership they gave to those who were present for worship.

We are in the process of updating our congregational member directory. A copy of the current directory is on the piano in the undercroft. Please use it to make additions, deletions, and corrections that you know to be accurate. **Please note the new directory will be a photo directory.** Chip Bott will be taking photos on 10/8, 10/10-10/13. Photos will be taken by appointment only. A sign-up sheet will be posted downstairs with the available time slots. Please contact Chip if you have any questions.

St. John's youth group is beginning a drive to raise money to help children in the area. Once a month, on the Sundays that the Youth group has meetings, a collection box will be put out during the coffee hour for any extra coins you may have. Any coins you can contribute will be appreciated. We thank you in advance. We hope to make this an ongoing project for many years to come. Any money collected this year will go towards buying books for the children at the Inn Between shelter in Peabody. Remember, look for the "Coins for Kids" collection box soon.

Our volunteer lists need to be updated. Please consider serving your church in this way. Or, if you need to be replaced, please speak with Linda Phyles or Pastor.

If you observe any kind of need or problem at the church, please notify Pastor or a member of the Church Council. It is better to be told of a problem a half dozen times rather than not at all. We all will be grateful for your help.

FUTURE EVENTS AT ST. JOHN

Our Sunday Church School classes will resume on September 10, at the usual hour of 11:00 a.m. Please invite and bring all young people to church for the first day of classes. All students must bring completed permission slips. If you are able to teach or assist in any way, with our Sunday School, please speak with Susan Dancewicz.

Peabody's International Festival will be held on Sunday, September 10, beginning at 11:00 a.m. This year, St. John's WELCA group will be selling Nisu, coffee and cold drinks. Please plan to attend and show your support.

The Bible study led by Tom Knowlton, which met on Wednesday evenings prior to the summer, will resume their weekly meetings starting September 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m. All interested persons are cordially invited to attend. Just bring your Bible, your questions and a friend.

Please mark your calendars for Saturday evening, September 30. This evening has been designated as our "Annual Fall Kick-off." It will feature a potluck supper, followed by fun filled activities for all. Please prepare and bring your favorite dish for the meal. We look forward to enjoying fellowship and a fun filled evening.

On Sunday, October 1, Lydia Todd will be giving a workshop/seminar in the undercroft to raise awareness on addressing the issues involved with children's safety. All are welcome to attend. However, it is especially recommended for anyone who has contact with children, not only at St. John, but also in the community. Please watch the Sunday bulletin for more details.

The next WELCA meeting of St. John will be held Wednesday, October 4, beginning at 7:30 p.m. We invite all the women in the church to attend.

On Saturday, November 4, the annual "Fall Fair" will be held at the church from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There will be a lot of white elephants, jewelry, books and baked goods. We have had success in past years offering bag lunches for sale and plan to offer them again this year. Donations will be gratefully accepted. If you need help with getting things to the church, please speak with Becky Comeau or Linda Phyles. If you have any small items, please bring them in on Sunday, October 29, when you come to church, as our storage space is limited. On Friday, November 3, the church will be open in the evening so that we can set up and be ready to go!

In the near future, we will be performing various repairs throughout the church. If you are able to assist in anyway, please speak with Rick Cormier or Pastor Phyles.

QUESTIONS GOD WON'T ASK

God won't ask what kind of car you drive, but He'll ask how many people you drove that didn't have transportation.

God won't ask the square footage of your house, but He'll ask how many people you welcomed into your home.

God won't ask how many friends you had, but He'll ask how many people to whom you were a friend.

God won't ask the color of your skin, but He'll ask about the content of your character.

God won't ask in what neighborhood you lived, but He'll ask how you treated your neighbors.

God won't ask why it took so long to seek Salvation, but He'll lovingly take you to your mansion in heaven, and not to the gates of Hell.