



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

If you watch television, I know you've seen them because they're shown frequently. I'm referring to the trailers for new movies or an excerpted scene from a movie shown when one of its actors appears on a talk show. Or when you go out to see a movie, you are subjected to about fifteen minutes of previews of other coming attractions.

The frustrating thing about all this, though, is that the “attractions” don't always live up to their previews. You surely know what I mean. The funniest or the most exciting scenes are selected for the previews, but once you're comfortably seated in the theater—having purchased a rather expensive ticket—the full movie is as funny or as exciting as the previews only about half the time—if that. The previewed scenes are still as anticipated, but the rest of the movie just doesn't live up to them and is simply disappointing.

I share this observation with you because it came to mind as I thought about the preview of a coming attraction that is never disappointing. I mean, of course, the season of Advent and its preview of the coming of Christ at Christmas. Of course, Advent is intended to be a more somber season of the church year, and that is precisely why the attraction it previews never disappoints. For Advent prepares us for the coming of our Lord by pointing us to the hard realities of life: our sin and our alienation from God.

For this reason, Advent is a special time for worship, because our preparation for the coming of the Lord—at Christmas and again at the end of time—needs to be one of depth and substance and not just hectic shopping with its tinsel and Muzak carols. As the world prepares for Christmas, led by the merchandisers and advertisers, we can't forget that the world is still engaged in war in the Mid-East and in social conflict and turmoil around the globe. When we remember such hard realities, we soon realize what Christmas and the coming of the Christ are really all about.

Christmas is God's way of redeeming our life—despite all of its harsh reality. The birth of our Lord marked by Christmas soon becomes the preview of his death on the cross, his resurrection from death at Easter, and his coming again in God's good time. Such is the way of God, and such is God's gift of new life, which is promised to all of us, despite whatever reality life brings our way. And such, too, is the attraction that more than lives up to its preview.

Now, on a more mundane note, this year the connection between Advent and Christmas is as “close” as it can get, because the Fourth Sunday in Advent and Christmas Eve are the same day. On this same note, we shall observe the end of Advent and the birth of our Lord with our annual Sunday church school pageant in the morning at 9:30 and with our annual candlelight communion service later in the day—this year at 4:00 in the afternoon, instead of our usual 7:30 in the evening. With the true spirit of the season in mind, I encourage you to attend both services, thus recognizing the hard realities of life and, at the same time, celebrating God’s gift of new life and love in the birth of his Son. O come, let us adore him!

SERVING ST. JOHN WITH OUR TIME AND TALENTS –

During December:

Ushers

Tom Knowlton
Fred Faust

Lay Assistant

12/3 Sue Reed
12/10 Fred Faust
12/17 Angie Cornwell
12/24 Steve Gemma
12/31 Linda Phyles

Custodial

12/3 Reed
12/10 Phyles
12/17 Berg/Grayson/Othote
12/24 Bott
12/31 Gemma

Lector

12/3 Philip/Susan Reed
12/10 Philip/Susan Reed
12/17 Tom Knowlton
12/24 Tom Knowlton
12/31 Judy Othote

Childcare

12/3 Chip & Shannon
12/10 Mike & Michele
12/17 Kyle & Heather
12/24 Rick & Cheryl
12/31 Kristin & Kira

Coffee Hour

12/3 Mary & Burt
12/10 Linda & Becky
12/17 Shannon & Angie
12/24 Christmas Pageant – All Members
12/31 Judy & Cheryl

During January:

Ushers

Carole Grayson
Raudna Pelletier

Lay Assistant

1/7 Steve Gemma
1/14 Angie Cornwell
1/21 Linda Phyles
1/28 Sue Reed

Custodial

1/7 Valletti/Carson
1/14 Dancewicz
1/21 Reed
1/28 Phyles

Lector

1/7 Judy Othote
1/14 Linda Phyles
1/21 Linda Phyles
1/28 Susan Dancewicz

Childcare

1/7 Mike & Michele
1/14 Kyle & Heather
1/21 Rick & Cheryl
1/28 Kristin & Kira

Coffee Hour

1/7 Raudna & Carole
1/14 Linda & Susan
1/21 Michele & Lydia
1/28 Annual Meeting of the
Congregation

During February:

Ushers

Volunteers
Needed

Lay Assistant

2/4 Steve Gemma
2/11 Angie Cornwell
2/18 Sue Reed
2/21 Steve Gemma
2/25 Linda Phyles

Custodial

2/4 Berg/Grayson/Othote
2/11 Bott
2/18 Gemma
2/25 Valletti/Carson

Lector

2/4 Susan Dancewicz
2/11 Philip/Susan Reed
2/18 Philip/Susan Reed
2/21 Tom Knowlton
2/25 Tom Knowlton

Childcare

2/4 Mike & Michele
2/11 Kyle & Heather
2/18 Rick & Cheryl
2/25 Kristin & Kira

Coffee Hour

2/4 Judy & Cheryl
2/11 Raudna & Carole
2/18 Linda & Susan
2/25 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 –

While Pastor Phyles and family were away on vacation over the Labor Day weekend, our own Steve Gemma conducted the worship service and preached the sermon. We certainly appreciated his willingness to serve in this way as an instance of his lay witness to our God.

On Sunday, September 10, the City of Peabody celebrated its annual International Festival held in Peabody Square. St. John was represented by our own WELCA group selling Nisu (a delicious Finnish coffee bread). Thanks to all who helped and supported this endeavor.

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 has taken photos and the proofs need to be selected.

St. John's youth group has an on going drive to raise money for 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. All contributions will be appreciated. Thank you in advance! All 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.

Our volunteer lists need to be updated. Please consider serving your church as lay assistant, lector, or a member of the choir. There are also other opportunities to serve as a cleaner, coffee hour host, usher and the list could go on and on! If you have any questions, suggestions or ideas in this regard, please speak with Pastor, Linda Phyles or Steve Gemma. Our congratulations to Angie Cornwell as she began her service of lay assistant on October 8.

On Saturday evening, September 30, our annual Fall Kickoff took place at the church. Of course, all the good cooks in the congregation fed us with a pot-luck supper – yum, yum. Afterwards we all participated in an evening of fun and spelling games led by Susan Dancewicz. (Where did she ever get some of those words?? Remember?? Even Pastor couldn't spell some of them.

Sunday, October 1, Lydia Todd presented a sexual abuse seminar. A sincere thank you to her for all her hard work in preparing such an informative and helpful seminar. The seminar was videotaped and will be used in the future at St. John to educate those who weren't able to attend as well as newcomers to our organization.

Our Sunday School is now back in full session. Thanks again to Susan Dancewicz and her staff of teachers and other helpers. They are off to a good start this Fall. Just a reminder, though, classes begin at 11:00 a.m. Please help us to conclude the coffee hour promptly.

Our Fall Fair took place on November 4 from 9:00a.m.until 2:00p.m. There were lots of white elephants, jewelry, books and baked goods available for purchase. The fruit basket raffle was won by Linda Berg!! Thanks to all who helped plan and organize this yearly event. As always, your hard work and generosity were greatly appreciated. All the profits that were made were matched by a special congregational grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

All young people, fifth grade and up, are invited to serve as acolytes on a rotating schedule. This is a great opportunity to assist in the conduct of our worship services. Please speak with Pastor or Linda Phyles if interested.

On Reformation Sunday, October 29, the Rite of Confirmation was held for three of our young people, namely, Heather Lianne Phyles, Celina Ingrid Valletti, and Ericka Jane Westfield. After two years of catechetical instruction they reaffirmed their own baptismal vows. This was a very special day in the life of these young women. A reception was held in the undercroft following the service in honor of the confirmands. Congratulations to all three of you!!!

On Sunday, November 12 we welcomed into membership Julie Kimbrell and her son Aiden and Paul Westfield and his daughter Corey. We rejoice with them as they publicly affirmed their commitment to worship and serve in our Lord's name. Again welcome!!!

WELCA NEWS

Our WELCA group collected small gift items for our troops in Iraq. Recently all the items were sorted and packed for shipment. Thank you for your support. It is greatly appreciated.

The next meeting of the WELCA is scheduled for Tuesday, December 5, at 7:30 p.m. here at the church. All women are cordially invited. At this coming meeting we ask that you all bring one or two dozen cookies to be packed up as little gifts for our sick and shut-ins. This has always been an enjoyable time for everyone. See you there!

THANKS AGAIN

We want to thank all of you who so generously supported the giving of gifts to the children of the Penobscot Indian Reservation located in Maine. Our friend, the Rev. Pat Bade is always so gracious and thankful for gifts that have been provided in the past.

We appreciate your support of the annual winter coat drive. Scarves, mittens, gloves, and hats are also welcomed. The winters in New England are cold and snowy. These warm items will help our less fortunate friends keep warm.

FOR SALE

Used Home Hammond Organ
Cadette Model V-322
\$300.00 or best offer
All money donated to St. John Church general fund
Two keyboards, auto rhythm, vibreto, reverb, foot pedals, & bench (needs work)
Can be seen at Church or contact Phil & Sue Reed

A REMINDER TO ALL

If you have not yet made a pledge of a weekly commitment to support our congregational ministry in 2007, we encourage you to give prayerful consideration for doing so. A pledge is a tool for planning our budget and a goal for regular and committed giving. It is not intended to be a burden or an inflexible obligation. We very much need, more than ever, your regular, every-week support—whether you are able to attend worship services on a given Sunday or not. Please be as generous as you can be in committing to support our congregational ministry in the year ahead.

On November 19, Timothy Cormier achieved the rank of Junior Black Belt in Uechi Ryu Karate. Timothy has been training at the North Shore Karate Academy for over 3 years. This is a huge milestone in his Karate career. Congratulations on your outstanding achievement.

FUTURE EVENTS AT ST. JOHN –

This coming Sunday afternoon, December 3, everyone is invited to enjoy our annual Advent Workshop. It is always a treat for the whole family! Craft materials will be available to make Advent wreaths, tree ornaments, and other projects. Hot cider and background music help provide the ingredients for a fun and peaceful time. There is a small suggested offering to help cover the costs of materials. Everyone come and enjoy!

December 24th is the annual Sunday Church School pageant at 9:30 a.m. Communion will not be celebrated at this service and there will be no Sunday Church School at 11:00 a.m. We always look forward to this special event. After the pageant, the annual Christmas brunch will be held in the undercroft.

The Christmas Eve service will be held at 4:00 p.m. this year. Communion will be celebrated. We look forward to special music by the Chancel Choir and our organist, Margaret Knowlton. All members and friends are invited to attend this festive worship service.

The Annual meeting of the congregation is scheduled for Sunday, January 28, immediately following the 9:30 a.m. worship service. Please plan to attend. All committee reports should be submitted by January 14 to be sure they will be included in the annual report.

Our annual trip to Camp Calumet in Ossipee, New Hampshire, will be coming up in February. Please speak to Rick Cormier for more information or if you would like to attend. Space is limited this year so it will be on first come first served basis.