



The St. John's Messenger

Monthly Newsletter

St. John's Lutheran Church & School

221 Walnut St. S.E.

Sleepy Eye, MN 56085

Church 794-6202 School 794-6200 Pastor 794-4500

www.stjohnsse.com



DECEMBER 2007

VOLUME 6

NUMBER 12

A Christmas Tradition!

Martin Luther loved Christmas. Some sources even claim that Luther started the tradition of bringing an evergreen tree into the home and decorating it at Christmas time. This is an interesting thought, but even though the Christmas tree tradition did start in Germany around the time of Luther, there is nothing to tell us conclusively that Luther started it.

One Christmas tradition we can certainly attribute to Luther is the hymn "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come". Luther wrote this 15 verse hymn specifically to teach his children about the real meaning of Christmas. The first seven verses tell the story of Christ's birth from the viewpoint of the angels and the shepherds. The opening line, "From heaven above to earth I come," is the angel announcing his arrival to tell about the savior. In the last eight verses we proclaim what this wonderful event means for us.

It was the Christmas of 1534 when Martin Luther and his family first sang this hymn. Every year they would sing the verses of the hymn in this way. A man dressed as an angel would sing the first seven verses, announcing the Savior's birth. Perhaps this man was Luther himself, a friend, or one of the University students that Luther took into his home. The rest of the family would respond with the final eight verses, rejoicing in God's gift of his Son.

This year as you celebrate Christmas, remember Luther's Christmas tradition and the real reason to celebrate.

Pastor Draper

St. John's Mission statement: *The continuing purpose of this congregation is to serve all people in God's world with the gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of the Holy Scriptures.*

Ladies Aid

The Ladies Aid held their regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, November 7th at 2PM. Vice President Mary Ann Trebesch presided at the meeting. Pastor Draper read Psalm 46 for our devotion.

A motion was made and seconded to pay the cost of \$107.50 for Cradle Roll packets.

On October 11th, members helped serve cake and ice cream to the residents at the Sleepy Eye Care Center.

A report was given on the LWMS Fall Rally held at St. Paul's in Arlington on October 13th. Six members from St. John's attended.

The Hosanna Circle is hosting an Advent Dinner on December 9th. A sign up sheet can be found in the narthex.

The Ladies Aid is asking you to consider the survey that was sent in the November newsletter. This is to help assist us with ways of handling funerals and other endeavors. A committee will be following up on the survey at a later date.

Circles One & Two will be hosting a Bake & Craft Sales between services on December 16th. **Members of the congregation are invited to participate by bringing items to sell and by purchasing items on the day of the sale.**

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 5th at 2PM. Our Christmas Party will also be held that day. All ladies of the congregation are invited. Come and join us!

Marilyn Deibele
Secretary



Hosanna Circle

Hosanna Circle met November 8th, five people were present. Sallie Draper lead us in a devotion entitled "Remodeling our Hearts".

Thank you to all who have signed up to be hostesses for the Advent Dinner. Tickets are available for the event. Don't miss it!

A potluck dinner and caroling is scheduled for December 16th following the late service. We're requesting that participants **bring finger foods: sandwiches, snacks, hors d'oeuvres. If possible bring your food items in disposable containers.** Our aim is

quick and easy clean up so that the servers can also be carolers, as there are several other events that day as well. There will be a list of shut-ins in the narthex. We will make several copies. Please consider visiting, or including them on your Christmas card list.

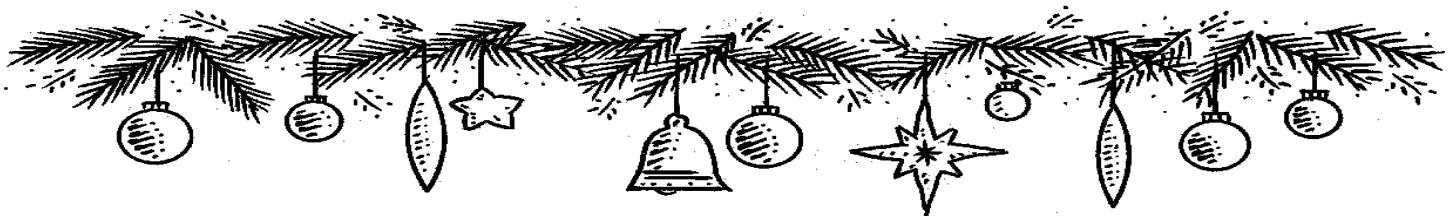


Special hand made cards and fruit baskets will be delivered to local shut-ins by the youth group, carolers and volunteers that day. Please help out so no one is missed. A special door offering will be taken to cover the cost of the fruit baskets.

Items for the children's Christmas treat bags are being purchased. We are also looking for donations of small size candy bars for the bags. If you are able to help out, please leave candy on the counter in the church basement. Label donations for children's treat bags. We have an anonymous donor of peanuts for the bags this year. Thank you. Door offerings will also be taken to cover the remainder of the cost of the bags.

The funeral committee appreciates the responses so far filling out the surveys found in the November newsletter and on our church web site. If you haven't responded yet please consider doing so. It will assist us in coming up with a plan to continue to provide the traditional funeral lunch and service for other events through out the year. Our next meeting is December 6th. 7PM.

In Christ,
Connie Trebesch and Pam Dittbenner



Church Council Minutes – November 12, 2007

Present: Leo Derkowski, Todd Marotz, Kurk Kramer, Paul Maasz, Dennis Dittbenner, John Mueller, Barry Hillmann, Jim Mielke and Pastor Draper.

Pastor Draper opened the meeting with devotion and a prayer.

Minutes

John Mueller/Todd Marotz made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 2007 meeting. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Draper provided a written report on statistics. Leo Derkowski/ Todd Marotz made a motion to transfer Gordon Kuelbs to St. Paul's, New Ulm. Motion carried. Pastor has researched digital video cameras and selected the model he thinks will work best for us. He believes he has a person or persons willing to pay for acquiring the camera. Pastor is also looking into acquiring a church management software package developed by the Missouri Synod. We need to keep more accurate records, particularly on church membership. The software costs approximately \$900.00 and Pastor will try to find a member willing to help purchase the program. The software will also help keep better track of offerings.

Treasurer's Report

Leo Derkowski/Todd Marotz made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

President's Report

Paul had no formal report. He reminded us all to watch for the times of service around the holidays and extended a "Merry Christmas" and happy holiday greetings to all members.

Board of Elders

A verbal report was given by Jim Mielke. Nothing important to report.

Principal & Board of Education

Kurk Kramer submitted a formal report.

A motion to approve the use of church facilities to hold a benefit and silent auction on Friday, November 16, 2007 for Julie Brown, a member of St. John's diagnosed with cancer, was made and carried at the October meeting. Kurk reported that the event will be held at City Limits instead.

Leo Derkowski/John Mueller made a motion to change the Internet service provider for the church and school from Sleepy Eye Telephone to Mediacom. Motion carried. The change will result in access speeds up to ten times faster than what we now have. It could cost as much as \$30.00 more per month, but the consensus is that the improved performance is worth the extra cost. Thanks to Sallie Draper for doing the research and making the recommendation.

Terra Nova Test results showed that every grade in every subject performed at a higher grade level, as high as four grades in some subjects.

Worship Committee

No report. At the October Voter's Meeting Willard Romberg/Harold Bartz made a motion for a time of meditation before the service. The organist may not play until two minutes before the service begins or when the bell tolls. This motion defeated and the matter was referred to the Worship Committee for further consideration. After a discussion with the organists the worship committee recommends letting the motion stand as defeated and the topic is closed. Pastor Draper will talk to Dr. Romberg and explain the situation.

Maintenance Committee

We need to find a means to shovel snow from the sidewalks around the church and school. John Mueller will look into finding someone to do this on a paid basis.

After reviewing two bids, Leo Derkowski/Todd Marotz made a motion to award the floor cleaning contract to Jason Thom, costing between \$3,500 to \$5,000 per year. Motion carried.

Outreach

No report.

Stewardship

No formal report.

Endowment and Trust Fund Committee

No report.

MVL/WELS

MVL – no report.

WELS – Leo Derkowski provided highlights from the synod newsletter, specifically actions undertaken by the Synodical Council. Leo gave Pastor the order form for WELS Connection DVD for 2008 that he will pass on to LeAnn Berkner. Pastor mentioned that we have to submit our Synod Support budget for 2008. He will forward to form to Leo. It was agreed that we would use our 2007-2008 budget line item amount as our planned support amount.

Old Business

Leo Derkowski and Marcia Derkowski have offered to coordinate an English and a Second Language program as a part of Hispanic outreach efforts. Leo will contact Pastor Charles Degner of St. Peter's, St. Peter, MN as a first step toward learning how to set up the program. Target date for startup is after the Christmas holidays.

New Business

New confirmands need to get offering envelopes. Pastor will mention this to LeAnn.

We received a check for \$71.50 from Trinity Lutheran School in Nicolet to support our Hispanic outreach programs. Leo will send a thank you letter to Mrs. Joyce Lendt.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for **Monday, December 10, 2007 at 7:30 PM** in the Church basement.

John Mueller/Todd Marotz made a motion to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted

Leo Derkowski, Secretary

New Web Site Addresses

Please use

office@stjohnsse.com for Pastor & Lisa
 pastor@christinsight.com
 lisa.hillmann@stjohnsse.com
 kurk.kramer@stjohnsse.com
 laurie.halvorson@stjohnsse.com
 naomi.evenson@stjohnsse.com
 stephanie.zastrow@stjohnsse.com



Any other address will not get to us as we are going to Mediacom. Thank you.

St. John's Shut In Members

As you prepare your Christmas cards this year, please consider including the St. John's shut in members. Your card would be a real encouragement to them.

Nita Brown	114 6th Ave NE	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Melva Christensen	1220 Karl Dr #107	New Ulm, MN 56073
Chuck & Carol Eckstein	717 Walnut St. SW	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Pearl Ellevold	305 E. Main St.	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Elaine Keim	Rt. 1, Box 74	Hanska, MN 56041
Elmer Lehnert	1105 3rd Ave. SW	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Leonard Lowinske	405 W. Main	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Gilbert Maas	1105 3rd Ave. SW	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Emily Netzke	117 Remmele St. SE	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Lucille Orth	830 N Sunrise Dr.	St. Peter, MN 56082
Esther Pabst	724 Water St. SW	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Verna Painter	421 Summit St. SE	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Anna Petermann	313 4th Ave. SE #311	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Agnes Piotter	416 3rd Ave NW	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Don Radel	North Point Senior Living Center 2135 Lor Ray Dr. #208	Mankato, MN 56003
Neoma Schmid	1100 1st Ave. S, Apt #109	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Jean Schulz	1105 3rd Ave. SW	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Norma Siegmann	200 5th Ave. SW	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Alicia & Corina Simoni	462 2nd Ave SE	Wells, MN 56097
Minnie Stockstead	1105 3rd Ave. SW	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Robert Sucker	1100 1st Ave. S, Apt #204	Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
Carol Walden	South Waite Court, Apt #204	Redwood Falls, MN 56283

Pre-School and Kindergarten News

By Miss Zastrow

Merry CHRISTmas! The celebration of the birth of our Savior is most definitely one of my favorite times of the year. Although it is easy to get caught up in the chaos that the Christmas season brings with it in the world today, I pray that we will all stay focused on the real reason we celebrate Christmas, our Lord and Savior!

November has flown right past us! We have now begun the second quarter of the school year. Where has the time gone? On November 9th, the Kindergartners and I took a walking field trip to visit Dan's Bakery, the Police Station, and First Security Bank. At the bakery, Dan showed us all of his big mixers, ovens, ingredients, etc. We even got to have a donut at the end of our tour! Thanks Dan! At the police station, we got to climb into one of the Police vehicles and see the red and blue lights



turned on! We got to see the office and we even got pencils that change colors when you touch them! Then, at the bank, we got to see all the different places in the bank where people work. We saw where our money is kept safe in the bank, and we

got to see people come through the drive-thru window! We even got coloring sheets and notepads from the President of the bank!

In our Christ-Light lessons for December, we are learning the Old Testament stories about the Israelites in Egypt, the plagues, crossing the Red Sea, and the Ten Commandments. "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me." –Psalm 50:15 is one of our memory treasures this month. Especially with all of the activities that go on, on and around Christmas, we need to remember that God is indeed with us in everything. He loves us and wants us to call on Him for help.

The Preschoolers are finishing up learning all about "Getting Along With Others" with Mr. B, Ms. K, Mr. D, Ms. F, and Mr. O. Next up, Mr. C, Ms. E, and Ms. Y will teach us that everyone needs food, exercise, and rest.

Kindergarten has been working hard, learning all about how to keep our bodies healthy. From washing germs off our hands, to eating healthy foods, to getting plenty of exercise, we know all about staying healthy. We thank God for blessing us with healthy bodies! We will soon be learning all about "Animals, Animals, Animals!"

May God bless you all richly this month as we celebrate the birth of His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ!

1st – 3rd Grade News

By Mrs. Halvorson

During this short month we will be busily preparing for our Savior's birthday. We are already working hard to learn our bible verses and songs for the Christmas Service. We are looking forward to several upcoming opportunities to share our Christmas service songs. All the children will be caroling to the Ladies Aid as well as local nursing home residents this month. While we continue to learn about the Old Testament Children of Israel in our morning Bible lessons, we are also preparing our hearts for our Savior's birth with special daily Advent devotions.

Nouns, word families, measurement, and so much more fill up our school days.

In Science class we are learning about Light, Heat and Sound.

First graders are becoming more fluent in their reading skills and love to act out the stories we read. Grade 2 are into short chapter books and a several Folktales with fun activities.

May you take quiet "joy time" this month to reflect on and thank God for the greatest gift we have received...His Son!



7th & 8th Grade News

By the Students

Math: The 7th graders reviewed ratios, averages, unit multipliers, unit conversions and order of operations.

The 8th graders learned about multiplying factors and whole numbers as well as multiplication and division of mixed numbers. They also learned about different types of graphs.

Geography: This month, the students studied Latin America, its history, culture, industry and lifestyle. They also began studying Europe.

Spelling: The 7th graders learned about plurals, possessives and plural possessives as well as irregular plurals.

The 8th graders continued their work on words with no sound clues. They also learned suffixes and compound words like “well-known.”

English: The students learned about different types of verbs and nouns. Currently, they are learning about verb tenses such as past, present and future tense.

Catechism: This month, the students reviewed the works of Jesus Christ’s redemption for us, His exaltation, the person and work of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Christian Church.

American History: The students learned about the Declaration of Independence, the causes of the Revolutionary War and George Washington, our first president.

Literature: The students completed reading of “My Brother Sam is Dead” and “The Fighting Ground.” Both books are works of historical fiction which take place during the Revolutionary War.

Bible History: Believer or unbeliever, the book of Acts includes Paul’s missionary trips and his spread of God’s Word.

Hymnology: Currently the students are learning “Lord Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word”, “If God Himself Be for Me”, “Praise to the Lord Thee Almighty”, “Jesus Lead Us On”, and Now Thank We All Our God”.

Science: The students are learning about cells, and how genes work including the possible outcomes of genetic crosses.

Art: 7th & 8th graders have been very busy making posters using oil colors.

Music: Recently the students have been working with hand chimes, and singing carols like; “Joy to the World”,

“Oh Little Town of Bethlehem”, “Angels We Have Heard on High”, and “Behold A Branch is Growing.”

Current Events: Recently the students learned about drugs and how harmful they can be to their bodies. Currently they are focusing on a newspaper called Focusing on the Finances. The goal is to learn how to save money and how to handle their money wisely.

Phy Ed: The students explain that flag football is when you have two velcro flags attached to your waist and when carrying the ball people can remove them. They are divided up into a gold team called The Cucpenders, and a blue team called The Pennsylvanian Pickles!

Befriend a Missionary

Befriend a Missionary Christmas Cards

Please consider sending Christmas greetings to the following missionaries as part of our Befriend a Missionary program. If you send an international card, remember to check for additional postage due and mail as early as possible! Also, international missionaries should not be addressed with the title “Missionary” or “Pastor” due to security reasons. Just use their name as printed below. Thank you!

* * * * United States* * * *

Pastor Jeremy & Amanda Schulz
12913 82nd Ave. Ct.
Puyallup, WA 98373-6408

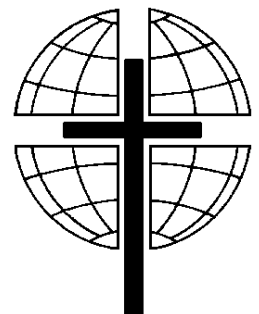
Pastor Mike & Mika Borgwardt
5852 No. Talman Ave.
Chicago, IL

Pastor Michael & Kim Nitz
8642 W. Rose Garden Ln.
Peoria, AZ 85382-3411

* * * * International* * * *

Bruce & Barbara Ahlers
RR Ali Pasche Gucia Nr. 84
Tirana, Albania

David & Holly Beckman
39/20 Venkatratnam Nagar
Harmony, 1-B Adyar
Chennai 600 020
India



4th – 6th Grade News

By Mrs. Evenson

Youth Group

For the past few weeks, Mr. Beitlich (Mr. K's student teacher) has been leading our morning devotions and ChristLight lessons. We have enjoyed learning how God worked everything out for good with Joseph and his brothers. We pray that the Lord would help us follow Joseph's example of showing kindness and forgiveness to one another.

During math class, the fourth graders have been introduced to new concepts such as the squares and square roots of numbers, while fifth grade has been comparing fractions and working with angles and polygons. The sixth graders are learning about multiplying and dividing by decimal numbers.



We took a little break from our studies with a costume party late last month. We did fit in an educational game in which teams “boned up” on the main bones of the skeletal system. Bobbing for apples was a new experience for many students, and they played many a round of Limbo!

To end our study on SE America, each student chose one of those states to research and assembled a pouch of information which was presented to the rest of the class. We learned lots of interesting facts from their writing and drawings of maps, flags, state flowers, etc. In Science, students interviewed a panel of “expert” classmates on different organs of the human body, including models of the stomach made out of cheese – mmm! We also sampled some clam and crab during reading reports based on the mystery book, The Trouble at Marsh Harbor, which is set in the Chesapeake Bay area. Some of the 5th and 6th graders performed a skit for the MLC Forensic Meet and inspired the rest to act out skits and even write some of our own! We also enjoyed our visit to the Sleepy Eye Care Center, where we joined the residents in playing quite a few games of bingo!

We are getting anxious to celebrate the birth of our Savior by sharing that Good News through recitation and songs on Christmas Eve. May we all remind those around us that Jesus is the Reason for the season now and throughout the new year!

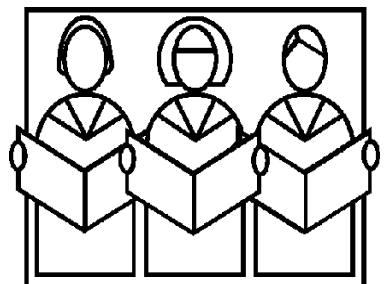
In November, the Youth Group began covering the topic “Recovering from Addiction” based on a video about a WELS teen who had an eating disorder. We will continue to meet in the computer lab between services on December 2 and 16. We will also need to discuss future activities (such as a possible trip to Mount Kato and Lenten soup suppers) at these times. All youth members should be encouraged to attend these Bible study meetings!



We will be taking a door collection after the church services on December 2 to buy supplies for assembling fruit baskets for shut-in Christmas gifts. Youth members, please let Mrs. Evenson know at which service you would be able to help out.

Our Christmas party will be held on Friday, December 14 at 7 pm! Youth members, please let Mrs. Evenson know if you can come and if you are planning to bring some snacks along. Watch the bulletin for more details.

On Sunday, December 16, we will join the choir and other church members to go caroling! We will also deliver fruit baskets to shut-ins at this time. Once again, please contact Mrs. Evenson if you will be able to go that day n_evenson@hotmail.com or (507)834-6968). Thank you!



CARE CONNECTOR

A Word of Thanks

Thank you!

Thanks to all who brought donations of food for the MLC Food Shelf drive in November! These contributions will greatly help married students at MLC make ends meet during their program of education to serve the Lord.

Thank you to St. John's Congregation

Thank you for your support, kindness, caring, cards and service during this trying time of my mother's funeral. *Barbara & Bill Dickson*

Wanted

Bags of fun-size candy for kids Christmas treat bags. (Mark bags and leave on basement counter by Dec. 23rd.)

Members in Military

Support for Military Personnel

SRA Mattes, Jessica
[birthday: Dec. 16]
PSC 41 Box 5596
APO AE 09464
[England]



Events

Christmas Decoration Schedule

On Tuesday, December 18th the Finance Committee is scheduled to decorate our church @ **6PM**. This includes anyone who is on the **Counting Committee**. In January, the PTO/Board of Education is scheduled to take down these decorations. To God Be the Glory!



*St. John's Ladies Aid Christmas
Bake & Craft Sale*
Sunday, December 16th
between services

Fudge Fundraiser

St. John's School is selling fudge coupons for \$10.00 each. Coupons are still available for the gift giving season. We receive 40% profit from each coupon. If you are interested in buying or helping us sell these coupons, please contact Lisa at 794-6200. Thank you.

Prayer Pals

The prayer pal Christmas gathering will be held on Sunday, January 6th at 2:00 pm at the W.W. Smith Inn. More information will follow in the January newsletter and late December bulletins. Mark your calendar now!

Announcements

New Year's Day Service

On January 1st there will be a New Year's Day service at 9AM.

Newsletter

Is your son or daughter in college receiving the newsletter? If not, please call or email the church office at 794-6200 or lisa.hillmann@stjohnsse.com

Confirmation Picture

If you were confirmed this past May and did not receive your 2007 Confirmation picture please contact Mary Ann Trebesch at 794-6784.

Lutheran Chapel Christmas Radio Service

A special Christmas worship will be aired on KNUJ 860 AM on Tuesday, December 25th @ 8:30AM



New E-mail Addresses

Make sure to use the correct e-mail addresses. See an article in this newsletter.