

The St. John's Messenger

St. John's Lutheran Church and School

(Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

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Sleepy Eye, Minnesota 56085

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Rev. Robert Hellmann, Pastor ~ Mr. Dan Rick, Principal



www.stjohnsse.com

JANUARY 2014

How can 2014 be a good year for me?

And may this year to me be holy!

I try to stay away from sin, but it's hard. I have so many weaknesses. Temptations are all around me. I can't shake the guilt of my past sins.

Your grace so fill my ev'ry thought!

Yes! Grace! That's it! Jesus loves me in spite of my sins. His love for me moved him to die on the cross to take away every single sin. By his unbelievable grace I have the gift of eternal life!

That all my life be pure and lowly!

By nature I'm stained by sin. I thumb my nose at God. But Jesus makes me pure and gives me the power to live before him in a humble way.

And truthful, as a Christian's ought!

The truth hurts! It hurts to confess my sins and failures. But I need to be truthful and confess my sins to God. The truth of the gospel sets me free from sin. Then I can speak the truth in love to all people.

So make me while I'm living here...

I don't know how long my life on earth will last or what the new year will bring. But I do know that my present and future are in the hands of Jesus, my loving Savior. I trust in him for everything!

Your faithful servant through the year!

I am weak. The temptations I face are powerful. But Jesus will give me strength to live a life of faith in him — and to serve him every day in 2014.

May Jesus, your Savior and God, bless you in the New Year!

Note: For more encouragement, read the other stanzas of Hymn 73. Start the New Year off right — join us for our special **New Year's Day service on Jan. 1** at 9:00 a.m.

Presidents Report to St Johns Church Council & Congregation December 12, 2013

Pastor Hellmann's announcement on Sunday that Pastor Cordes has accepted our call to be our shepherd at St. John's was met with great excitement! We anticipate he and his family to be here in late January. There is much to do to prepare for their arrival. The parsonage work needs to be completed, arrangements for moving their belongings must be scheduled, and finally we must be ready to assist them as they move in. The installation service will need to be planned shortly after that. Then he and his family will start getting to know all of us, and we, them! Pastor Cordes has been coming into contact with more members each day in order get to know us and what we do at St. John's. He is very interested in our congregation and excited to be coming to Sleepy Eye.

Along with the excitement of Pastor Cordes coming, we also are well into the Advent season and soon Christmas will be here. The Elders and our elementary students have teamed up with Jack Draper to create a Christmas card from St. John's Church and School inviting all members to join us in the celebration of our Savior's birth throughout the Christmas season! Watch for your card to arrive in the mail soon.

The Women's Devotional Advent Dinner was held Sunday evening, December 8th. It was well attended and the evening went well. The food was excellent and the tables and church basement were decorated spectacularly. Upon seeing it, it goes without saying that much work went into the preparation for it. I can't say enough to describe how beautiful everything looked. The ladies worked well together to prepare an event that helps hearts be prepared for the coming of Jesus' birth.

The students of St. John's, along with the staff are preparing the Children's Service for Christmas Eve at 5 pm. (Please make a note of that new time this year.) Come and see them present their Christmas program and witness their excitement for the birth of Jesus.

The brick wall repair in the SW corner of the church has the new window in and the inner course of brick has been completed. The exterior brick will be finished soon, weather permitting. Our building and special needs fund continues to grow. By God's grace we hope to soon be able to complete the parsonage repairs and pay the line of credit off.

Kevin Leopold has been contributing many hours to the care of our church grounds and buildings. He and Mickey Meyer are also heading up the parsonage preparation for the Cordes family's arrival. If you can give them a hand it would be very much appreciated! Please remember to offer them your thanks next time you see them.

I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I thank you for all that you have done or contributed to St. John's: your time, talents & treasures are so much appreciated. Doing what we can to help spread God's word about His saving grace is our most important work.

I want to close with a pair of my favorite verses of the Christmas season:

Luke 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Merry Christmas!

Steve Windschitl
President, St John's Congregation



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.*

Welcome Pastor Cordes!

December 8, 2013



Dear Members and Friends of St John's Lutheran Church, Sleepy Eye, Minnesota,

By the grace and working of our God, you were led by his Holy Spirit to call me to be your pastor. I am humbled by the honor of this high calling.

After careful thought and prayer, and the input of many people in many places, in Sleepy Eye and beyond, the Spirit of our Savior has been leading my mind and heart more and more firmly in one direction only:

With gratitude and humility, I accept your call to shepherd you in our Savior's name. I look forward to this privilege and responsibility with you.

May our gracious God bless us all as we make the necessary preparations to begin working and worshipping together in and for his great kingdom!

Sincerely in his name,
Pastor Chris Cordes.



Lutheran Women's Missionary Society

It's a quiet time of the year for our area LWMS, but don't forget about the annual convention scheduled for June 26-29 in Dallas, TX! This year's theme will be "You will be My witness". You can find lots of great information about the LWMS, past conventions and more information about this upcoming convention by going to: www.lwms.org And while you are in the site, look around at the other great features that help you understand the scope of the organization as well as updates on mission sites and the mission families.

Befriend a Mission: In January, we will have the opportunity to support two missionary children as they celebrate their birthdays. At Trinity Lutheran Church in Castries, West Indies, Bailey Grace Spiegelberg, daughter of Missionary Tom Spiegelberg, will celebrate her 16th birthday on January 9th.

Then, in Peridot, AZ, we have the family of Craig Breikreutz, who serve at Our Savior Lutheran School. Their little son, Caleb, will turn one year old on January 29th! Cards, letters, notes, or little gifts are always welcome reminders that we, their brothers and sisters in Christ, remember and support their families as they share the gospel. If you are inclined to send something, here are their addresses:

Bailey Grace Spiegelberg
Gablewoods Mall GM Box 858
Castries, St. Lucia, West Indies**

Caleb Breikreutz
PO Box 556
Peridot, AZ 85542

And, in case you intended to send a Christmas greeting to any of our Missionary families, but time got away from you... you can still send one now! (Use the two above addresses with the missionary's name on the first line.) Our 3rd missionary family address is:

Jeffrey & Julie Gunn
1809 Moody Trail
Phoenix, AZ 85041

Thank you for your past support of the work of the LWMS, and for support of these mission families. Your encouragement does matter! Please remember to pray for our missionaries and families regularly, asking God to give them wisdom, strength and success in their efforts; and good health and vitality to continue to serve Him.

Paula Windschitl
LWMS Reporter



Church Council Minutes December 12, 2013

Present: Jerry Dittbenner, Shorty Haus, Jim Mielke, Steve Windschitl and Pastor Hellmann.

Pastor Hellmann opened the meeting with devotion and a prayer.

Minutes

Shorty Haus/Jim Mielke made a motion to approve the November 2013 minutes with the following corrections. Add Jim Mielke to those that were present. Per a vote of 4 to 2, should be a part of line one under Principal and Board of Ed. Report. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report

Discussed Pastor Cordes installation arrangements.

Treasurer's Report

No motion due to no written report. Jim Mielke and Shorty both updated council on financial activities.

President's Report

Written report was presented.

Board of Elders

No membership changes this month. Church Council reviewed a sample of a Christmas card to the congregation. This is a Elder project in cooperation with Dan Rick, principal, Jack Draper and children of St. John's School.

Principal & Board of Education

Reviewed highlights of the school board meeting given by President Windschitl.

Worship Committee

No report.

Maintenance Committee

Shorty Haus/Jim Mielke made a motion to go ahead with the complete project by Tennyson for parsonage basement drainage. Motion passed unanimously.

Outreach

Discussed promotional outreach project for St. John's.

Stewardship

No report.

MVL/WELS

No report.

Endowment and Trust Fund Committee

No report.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Shorty Haus/Jim Mielke made a motion under the provisions of section 107 of the internal revenue code of 1986 concerning to set male call workers parsonage allowance as follows:

1. Pastor Chris Cordes - \$22,000 per year
2. Pastor Robert Hellmann - \$6,000 per year
3. Principal Dan Rick -

Motion carried.

There was discussion on the organ dedication service and plans.

The quarterly meeting will be held Sunday, January 19th at 10:30 a.m.

The next Church Council meeting will be held Thursday, January 16th at 7:30 p.m.

Shorty Haus/Jim Mielke made a motion to adjourn.
Motion carried.

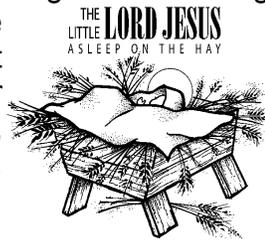
The meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Jerry Dittbenner, Acting Secretary



Principal's Report

As we reflect on Thanksgiving and blessings received in the last year, we can also reflect on Advent and Christmas and consider the greatest blessing of all, the birth of our Savior, Jesus, in Bethlehem.



I can speak for the faculty and staff when I share that all of us give thanks for the students that we are privileged to spend time with each day of school. We see many happy faces day in and day out as the students enjoy being at St. John's. They work hard in their classes and activities. Recent activities that our students have participated in are: a Forensics meet at Martin Luther College, Halloween Bingo at Ross Park Apartments, Basketball and Cheerleading, School Spirit and Dress-up Days, singing for church services, and our Christmas Eve Service. These activities are only a few that contribute to the joy and enthusiasm our students have for St. John's.

Our young were taught to love their Lord at a very young age by their parents. Now, that faith continues to be nourished by their pastor and teachers, who help parents with the spiritual education of their children.



Our task is to prepare them to succeed in life after St. John's: to prepare them for life on earth and for heaven, too. It's not a task to be taken lightly and our faculty and staff work every day to make sure that our students know that our Lord loves them. What a blessing it is to be able to share the Good News every day and to be able to talk with our students about sin and grace, Law and Gospel,

and the hope of heaven which we all share.

We are blessed again this school year and thank God for His goodness. Overall, as we prepare for Christmas, reflect on what our Lord has done for us!



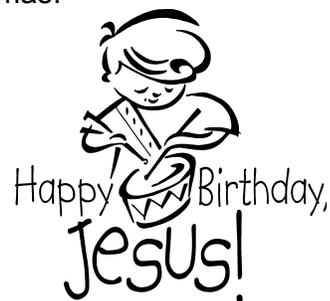
Mrs. Soloviyov's Preschool and Kindergarten News

The class has been studying the children of Israel leaving Egypt. It seems like an odd topic for Christmas, but we have found several connections to our lives. We discussed how the Lord is always with us and will help us. He has assured us of that in His Word. We also discussed how the Lord knows what is best for us. He may not answer our prayers the way WE want, but He will always answer our prayers the way HE sees best. He is our loving Father. Finally, we discussed the blessings the Lord has given us and how grateful we should be. Sadly, we aren't always as grateful as we should be. What a blessing to have a kind protector in our lives!

The children have also been studying winter and Christmas. We have written in our journals, graphed names, created patterns on our Christmas trees to study the different shapes, and turned our hallway into a winter wonderland.

The kindergarten class has been reading their Superkids series. They have covered 10 Superkids so far and are eagerly awaiting the last 2. It is fun to watch them grow and gain more confidence in reading words.

The class would like to wish all of you a Merry Christmas!



Mrs. Halvorson's 1-3 News



Winter is chilly but we are keeping warm and busy this January!

In our Bible lessons we continue our study of the Israelites as they wandered in the desert for 40 years. God showed His mercy again and again to His people then as He still does to us today.

This month in Math class Grade One is learning how to read a thermometer, add 2-digit numbers, and tally. Grade 3 is writing numbers in expanded form, multiplying by four, writing fractions greater than one and squaring numbers.

In Reading class Grade One is tackling longer stories this month. We are proud that we are that we know many sight words and phonics rules. Folktales with fun activities will keep Grade Two busy while Third Grade will be challenged by some harder novels.

Presidents and National Monuments is the topic for Grade 1-2 in Social Studies this month. We will take a "virtual" tour of famous landmarks in our country while we learn about their importance.

In Social Studies Third grade discovers more about the history of our country began as we continue our study of the Northeastern states.

Stay warm!



Hosanna circle

The Hosanna circle met in the church basement Tuesday evening, December 3rd. We spent time reviewing the plans for our Advent event and finished the evening decorating the basement. On



Thursday, December 5th, some circle members baked cookies for the dessert trays for our Advent event at the home of Rich and Connie Trebesch. We were treated to pizza baked in the Trebesch's firebrick oven before we left.

Our Women's Advent event was well attended despite the weather conditions and went smoothly.

We would like to thank anyone who played a part in it. The decorations were beautiful, the music was gorgeous and the messages were thought provoking and soothing.

The Hosanna circle also helped with decorating the church on Saturday, November 1st.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, January 2nd at 6:00 pm. We are still cleaning kitchen cabinets at 5:00.

Mickey



Ladies Aid

The Ladies Aid December meeting and Christmas Party scheduled for December 4th was canceled because of inclement weather. The school children were scheduled to present their carols and recitations, but were dismissed from school at 12:30 after their lunch.

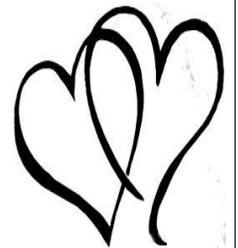
We look forward to attending the children's Christmas service on Christmas Eve.



Due to New Year's falling on the first Wednesday of the month, our next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 8th at 2:00 p.m. Come join us!

Marilyn Deibele
Secretary

Dedicated Hearts by Kelly Roper



Dedicated hearts like yours
Are not so easy to find.
It takes a special person to be
So generous and kind.

To care so much for your fellow man
Is a quality all too rare.
Yet you give of your time and talents,
For all in need to share.

So thank you for being a volunteer,
We're privileged to work with you.
We want you to know how appreciated you are,
Not just today, but the whole year through.

