

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA

MONTGOMERY, MINNESOTA

Proudly Serving One Master Since 1861

DECEMBER 2016

IT'S ALRIGHT TO GET A PEEK

Wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead-- Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming. 1 Thessalonians 1:10

It's that time of year again. No, it's not Christmas yet, but it is Advent. Advent is the season in our church year that means – Arrival. The arrival of what? Well, as with any arrival, we know that there is excitement and anticipation as we wait – just wait for that time to come to an end, as we finally get what we have really, really been waiting for.

We know that at the end of Advent is Christmas. The time when we remember each year that Jesus Christ did come into our world, as the gift of God's Only Beloved Son who was sent to die for our sins, so that we may receive forgiveness in His name.

Christmas has also become a time where we have come to expect that we will receive other gifts. Presents all wrapped up nicely. The one who sees their name upon the present is filled with wonder and excitement. We just want to open up the present already, take a peek inside, and finally get what is ours. I know, however, that we just hate to wait. I know that I have been guilty of it to the extent that, on rare occasion, I have found some way to pull back the tape just enough, open the box just a little, and peeked inside to see if it was what I thought it was. Only then to reverse the processes, waiting while knowing, and then on Christmas acting totally surprised at what I had received.

I know that with material gifts my joy and anticipation fades a little once I've peeked inside the present, but when it comes to the priceless gift that we have received in Christ's name, there is a difference. In fact, God continues to understand us better than we do ourselves. Our Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit continue to give us little peeks at what is to come through faith. In the Word of God alone, we are given the faith to see what we cannot yet see and to know that it is God's will that we know what we are to receive ahead of time.

Advent is also, the time that we look forward to that day and time when Jesus Christ comes to gather us together with the whole Christian Church. This isn't a spoiler of the gift that is to come, but it allows us to live in joy and anticipation right now.

And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he is revealed we may have confidence and not be put to shame before him at his coming. If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who does right has been born of him.

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. 1 John 2:28-3:3

Enjoy your peek this Advent and have a Merry Christmas!
Peace of Christ,

Pastor Jason



Pastor's Notes

December Worship Helpers

Readers

- December 4 Doris Hendrickson
 December 11 Gail Skluzacek
 December 18 Sunday School Program
 December 24 Christmas Eve
 Volunteers Needed
 December 25 Tammie Pan

December Head Usher

- Eric Schroeder
 December 24 Christmas Eve Services
 Eric Schroeder (3:00)
 Renee Sorenson (5:00)
 Connie Cihak (10:00)

Ushers / Greeters

- December 4 Jesse & Gail Skluzacek
 Brenda Peterson
 Charles Richter
 December 11 Gerry & Dianna Smith
 Kelle Scheis
 Eric Schroeder
 December 18 David & Rhonda Solberg
 Phillip Solberg
 Lynn Schuknecht
 December 24 Christmas Eve Services
 Volunteers Needed
 December 25 Myrna Terwedo
 Paul Vollmar
 Volunteers Needed

Communion Assistants

- December 11 Rhonda Solberg
 Myrna Terwedo
 Volunteer Needed
 December 24 Christmas Eve
 Volunteers Needed
 December 25 Wendy Vargo
 Joslyn Vargo
 Cindy Westerhouse

Acolytes

- December 4 Madelyn Wehe
 December 11 Madison Gilbertson
 December 18 Madelyn Wehe
 December 24 Christmas Eve
 Volunteers Needed
 December 25 Madison Gilbertson

Altar Guild

- December 4 Connie Cihak
 December 11 Tammie Pan
 December 18 Altar Guild Volunteer
 December 24 Altar Guild Volunteers
 December 25 Altar Guild Volunteer

*If you are unable to help on the day assigned,
 please EXCHANGE with someone else
 and call the church office at 507-364-5002.
 Thank you for your help!*

Remember in your Prayers...

Jaime Schultz (Diane Schultz's step-daughter), Kim Edel, Gauge Kodada, Lindsey Jensen, Betty Braun, Wayne Schonning (Gwen Hanzlik's father), Greg Vlasak, Keith (Zeke) Zahratka, Margaret Lawson, Lois Schmidt (Megan Pratola's aunt), Milton Bauer, Haven Peterson (Jesse Kukacka's son), Gail Embretson, Rev. Bob and Ardyce Boda, Phyllis Swidorski, Amy Korthuis (Judy Ferguson's sister-in-law), Nancy Creger, Reinhold West (Carol Kiekow's father), and Kris Huhner (Kathy Peterson's sister).

Remember those serving our country...

Travis Ferguson, Colin Hulke, Shane Morris, Matthew Astorino, Adam Vlasak, and Matt Nelson.



Sympathies

We extend our sympathy to Betty Braun and family upon the death of her sister Shirley Bluhm.

We extend our sympathy to Pastor Jason and Megan Pollington and family upon the death of Pastor's aunt Patty Nordrum.

We extend our sympathy to Janet Cotten and family upon the death of her husband Jim.

We extend our sympathy to Dr. Mark and Mary Brahs and family upon the death of Mark's mother Yvonne.

Gift

Memorial gift received in honor of Hazel Holm's 97th birthday for the Feed My Sheep program.

Wedding

Congratulations and best wishes to Phillip and Vanessa (Zins) Solberg who were married here on Saturday, November 26.

Baptism

Connor Richard Bartels received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism Sunday, November 27. Connor was born July 29, 2016 to Nick and Holly Bartels. Connor's sponsors are Mary Miland and Wade Young. God's blessings to Connor and his family.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who donated aluminum cans. The cans brought \$135 which will go to Operation Christmas Child postage. Thank you to Paul Busch for taking cans to Mankato.

Financial Corner General Fund - October

	October	Year to Date
Receipt	\$ 14,846.77	\$ 144,149.12
Expenses	\$ 18,817.90	\$ 151,986.57
Cash Flow	\$ (3,971.13)	\$ (7,837.45)

St. John Church Council Minutes

November 15, 2016

Present: Kathy Peterson (1/17), Wendy Vargo (1/17), Eric Schroeder (1/18), Connie Cihak (1/18), Liz Vlasak (1/18), Renee Sorenson (1/19)

Absent: Dan Hardel (1/17), Pam Edel (1/19), Greg Westerman (1/19),

President Kathy Peterson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Pastor Jason opened with devotions and prayer.

Eric Schroeder made a motion to approve the minutes from the September meeting. Renee Sorenson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Connie Cihak made a motion to approve the treasurers report. Eric Schroeder seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Pastor's Update: Pastor Jason reported on his official acts from the month of October. Some upcoming events for November will be 5th graders receiving their first communion on November 20th and the Ecumenical service will be on November 22.

Head Ushers: Eric Schroeder will be head usher in December. For the Christmas services: Eric Schroeder will be head usher for the 3:00 service, Renee Sorenson will be head usher for the 5:00 service and Connie Cihak will be head usher for the 10:00 service.

Feed My Sheep: Connie Cihak made a motion to give \$450.00 to a family in need at this time. Wendy Vargo seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Can Recycling: Next load will go for Operation Christmas Child.

Old Business:

Clean up day was not well attended. Will try to set another date in spring.

We are still looking for people to serve on the Nomination Committee with Dan Hardel for new church council members. Staff Christmas bonuses were discussed. A motion was made by Wendy Vargo to give employees a \$50 Visa gift card and Pastor Jason a \$150 Visa gift card. Eric Schroeder seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Water testing is currently being done to find out where the damage to the bell tower was coming from. As soon as the company is done we will get a report on what can be done to fix the problem.

New Business:

Kickplates will be made for the doors in the Sunday School areas.

Bids are being taken on landscaping work at the Parsonage.

Employee reviews will be done by the council before the end of December.

There were some plumbing issues which the facility committee will look into.

Committee Reports: A reminder that all committee reports need to be in to Kay by December 31st.

Endowment: Some new members are needed.

Women of the Church: Egg Bake fundraiser was November 13th and was a great success.

Cemetery: Will be meeting November 26th.

Audit: Will be meeting on Thursday, November 17th.

Stewardship: Renee Sorenson: No report.

Evangelism: Wendy Vargo: Soldier boxes will be sent out the first week in December. New member Sunday will be Sunday, December 4th.

Education: Liz Vlasak: Meeting on January 8th.

Youth: Eric Schroeder: Meeting on November 19th.

Facility: Greg Westerman: Absent, however, sent report that sign on Hwy 13 and Spruce needs to be repainted or touched up.

Church in Society: Kathy Peterson: Operation Christmas Child boxes to be collected November 19th with a group going to the distribution center on December 7th. Salvation Army Bell Ringing is planned for December.

Communications: Dan Hardel: No report.

Fellowship: Connie Cihak: No report

(Church Council cont.)

(Church Council cont.)

Worship and Music: Pam Edel: Absent, however sent report that St Patrick church requested \$25 to defray costs for printing for the Ecumenical service. Connie Cihak made a motion we send the \$25. Renee Sorenson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Liz Vlasak made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Renee Sorenson seconded the motion. Motion carried. Pastor Jason lead the council in the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting is set for December 13th - 6:30 pm. This will be strictly a budget meeting.

Welcome New Members Sunday, December 4, 2016

*Mark and April Ehmke
Jennifer Krenik and children Allen and Kylee
Jesse Kukacka
Klayton Kukacka
Leon and Beth Nash and son Austin
Bryce Niemeyer and Kelly Pieper
Mike and Amy Peterson and daughter Olivia
Pastor Jason Pollington and Megan Pratola
and children Preston and Michael
Dave Winge.*

First Communion Class Sunday, November 20, 2016

*Morgan Gjerstad
Kalyn Krautkremer
Maxwell Krautkremer
Blake Kuball
Paige Larsen
Alice Schroeder
Isaac Schroeder
Izabela Slechta
Sophia Smith
Anastasia Stasney
Dylan Westerman*

Congregational Annual Meeting

The Congregational Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, January 22, 2017. All reports are due to the church office by Saturday, Dec. 31.

Volunteers Needed

We need readers, ushers, and communion assistants for all Christmas Eve Services. You can sign up on sheet in Fellowship Hall.

Time and Talent Sheets

Thank you to everyone who returned their Time and Talent sheet which was in the November newsletter. If you haven't returned your sheet, please take the time to fill one out and return to the church office. Additional sheets are available in the back of the church.

Have an announcement for the bulletin or newsletter?

Drop off or e-mail (stjohnelca@frontier.com) information to the church office by:

- ◆ Thursday for the bulletin.
- ◆ The 23rd of December for the January newsletter.

Groups & Organizations that meet at St. John!

*To ensure our calendar is correct and that we have the church open for your event, please inform Pastor Jason or Kay of your planned meeting dates.
Thank you for your cooperation.*

SNOW POLICY

In case of inclement weather the church closure policy will be as follows:

The Pastor and Church Council President or Vice President will make the decision if a church service will be cancelled. Notifications will be posted on the front door, KCHK Radio-1350 AM, and there will be a message put on voicemail at church.

December Music Notes

December 4

Liturgical Dance by Sophia Smith, Alice Schroeder, Morgan Gjerstad

December 11

Bells of St John ring "Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella"

December 18

Sunday School Christmas Program starts at 9:00 a.m. Come and listen as we tell of God's love in the Christmas story with Mary & Joseph, angels, shepherds & wise men. Our goal is to share the Good News of Jesus' Birth with others!

December 24 - Christmas Eve

3:00 p.m. N/P/K sings "Away in a Manger" and Grades 1 - 4 sings "Amen"

5:00 p.m. Rock'n the Church sings "Hallelujah"

10:00 p.m. Bells of St. John ring "Go Tell It on the Mountain"

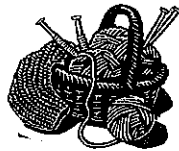
December 25 - Christmas Day

9:00 a.m. Women's Choir sings "He Is Born"



Prayer Shawl Ministry

A prayer shawl ministry was started in Montgomery in 2008. Since that time over 1,600 shawls have been given to people who might benefit from an extra touch of the Lord's peace and comfort. As a prayer shawl is made, the maker prays that the shawl will warm the receiver with God's comfort and love. St. John Lutheran Church has joined with Holy Redeemer Parish to make and distribute prayer shawls. If you know of anyone suffering a loss, in need of healing, encouragement or comfort please give the name and address to Pastor Jason or leave a message with Kay. If you would like to learn the easy cro-knit (a combination of crochet and knit) method of making the shawls, call Colleen Wondra at 952 758-5462.



Christmas Eve Worship Services

- 3:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
- 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
- 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Santa Anonymous

Le Sueur County Santa Anonymous again is collecting donations for low income families in the county. Unwrapped gifts for children newborn to 18 years of age may be dropped off at Holy Redeemer School, TCU High School, CornerStone State Bank and Frandsen Bank and Trust, Montgomery, through December 9. Monetary donations (please make checks payable to Le Sueur County Santa Anonymous) can be made at both banks or mailed to Cornerstone State Bank, 401 4th Street NW, Montgomery. Santa Anonymous served 615 children from 221 families countywide last year, including 37 families/109 children from Montgomery and 7 families/22 children from Kilkenny.

Mitten Tree

The Mitten Tree is up and ready to be decorated with scarfs, gloves and mittens which will be donated to Santa Anonymous. Please have items on tree by Sunday, December 11.



Salvation Army Kettle Campaign

It's time again to ring in the Salvation Army Kettle Campaign. Ringing will be held at Mackenthuns Grocery in Montgomery starting December 8th through December 23rd. All the money collected will stay right here in Le Sueur County. Individuals or organizations interested in ringing are asked to contact JoAnn Dawson at 507-364-5835. We are grateful for any time you can give.



Fall Grief Support Group

"I am thinking of her nearly always."

C.S. Lewis

This quote comes from the book, A Grief Observed written by C.S. Lewis about his experiences after the death of his wife. When you have lost a loved one it is oftentimes hard to understand what you are feeling and if those feelings are normal.

We just finished a six-week fall grief support group at the church. Grief support groups are one of the best helping resources for those who have lost a loved one thru death. A participant shared that attending "helped them in not feeling alone and feeling comforted from others in the group". They also learn that while their own grief is unique they can experience similarities and understand they are not alone in their feelings. Also, to be patient and compassionate with themselves and feel what they feel - no one can tell them how they should be feeling as they are the expert in their own grief.

A grief support group will be offered again in the spring so watch your newsletter for dates closer to that time. If you have any questions please contact me or the church.

Thank you to the church for hosting this much needed community service "*helping people mourn well so they can live well and love well*" (Dr. Wolfelt). Also, thank you to Irene Jindra for being co-facilitator.

Brenda Peterson
701-269-1439



**PLEASE CONSIDER GIVING FROM
THE HEART THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.
ANY AND ALL GIFTS ARE APPRECIATED!!**

AMOUNT

GET RID OF THE RED

**KICK PLATES FOR
LOWER LEVEL DOORS**

LANDSCAPING PARSONAGE

**REPAIR OF CEILING/WALLS
WATER DAMAGE**

REPAIR OF KITCHEN PLUMBING

**AUTOMATED EXTERNAL
DEFIBRILLATOR (AED)**

NAME

PLEASE RETURN TO CHURCH OFFICE OR PUT IN OFFERING PLATE.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFT.



ST. JOHN YOUTH



T-shirts for Sale!

Youth sizes M & L \$10 Adult sizes XS-XL

**Will be for sale after church,
also available through Kay in church office or Missy in youth office.**

Youth League night!

Little League will meet Wednesday, December 7th at 3:15-4:15 PM in the youth room.

Junior League Wednesday, December 7th at 6-7 PM in the youth room.

Senior League will have Coffee House Night on Wednesday, December 21st at LaNette's coffee shop on Main Street 7-8:30PM.

2017 Calendars for Sale

\$7

**All proceeds to benefit the 2017 Mission trip to
Pine Ridge South Dakota.**

**Purchase through Missy in Youth office or any
Mission Trip participant.**

PIZZA RANCH FUNDRAISER

The mission trip group will be doing a Pizza Ranch fundraiser on Monday, December 12 starting at 4:45 p.m. Come out for the buffet and support the mission trip!



All League Christmas Caroling



Sunday, December 11th at 11-12:45 Please join us for an all leagues Christmas caroling event! We will meet at 11 AM and carol at local assisted livings. We will return to the church by 12:45. Parents please let me know if you can help drive kids to the locations or do a hayride. Thanks!
mgregor@montgomerymnelcalutherans.org or Facebook message me.

Hope to see you there.

Coffee Sales

We have COFFEE from European Roasterie! We have Breakfast Brew, Toasted Marshmallow, Cherry Devils food cake, Banana bread, Blueberry swirl, pumpkin spice and Irish Cream. \$9 for a 12 ounce bag.

You can purchase during coffee hour or at the church office during the week. We take special orders if we don't have the flavor you want, whole bean also available by special order.

All proceeds go to the youth league.

