

# St. John's Newsletter

Volume 33, Issue 6

June 2009



## Memorials

### Undesignated

- \* \$100 in memory of  
Thomas Stanton &  
Timothy Davis
- \* \$10 in memory of  
Gib Geissler

### Roof Fund

- \* \$10 in memory of  
Anna & Albert Turner

### Preschool Fund

- \* \$50 in memory of  
Marion Sczwedel

### Library Fund

- \* \$25 in memory of  
Gib Geissler

### Building Fund

- \* \$110 in memory of  
Gib Geissler
- \* \$25 in memory of  
Vernice Hassemer  
for kitchen remodeling



## Happy Birthday Church!

*When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Acts 2:1-4*

Pentecost Sunday is the day we remember when God gave the Holy Spirit to the followers of Jesus. This is considered the birthday of the Church for it is God's Spirit that gives life to the Body of Christ. So on Pentecost Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> we are going to have a birthday celebration complete with cake and ice cream. Plan to spend a little more time enjoying the celebration after worship Sunday and Wednesday.

This will also be the first week of our summer series called **Word Spreads** which is a journey through the book of Acts. One of the practices of Church life that we find in the book of Acts and need to copy today is found at the end of chapter 2: *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.* So this summer we're having an intentional time of community fellowship with food in the dining hall after each worship service. Young and old are invited to gather at a table for a time of guided conversation for the purpose of getting more acquainted and briefly discussing the topic of the day. It will only last about 30 minutes. This time will also be a model of what families can do at home at the dinner table or before bedtime to establish family devotions.

This effort is one example of training that helps take our faith beyond the walls of the church building into our everyday lives. It's training that is meant to have a lifelong impact. Discipleship is a lifelong process and establishing that mindset in our congregation is something I want us to address in two ways at our annual meeting on Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:20 am.

The first way has to do with how we instruct children in the meaning of the Lord's Supper. One of the things we know more than ever is that experience is a more effective teacher than books or lectures. When we want to teach children that in this meal Jesus reminds us that we are part of God's family, what better way than to include them in the meal as soon as they seek to participate in it. I'm uncomfortable with toddlers and young children experiencing this meal as something not for them when they are in fact full members of the family. Better for them to remember this special meal as a time they were always included and then grow from there.

The second way I'd like to instill the idea that discipleship is a lifelong process is by changing the name of the time of Bible and Catechism instruction during the middle school years from *Confirmation* to *Discipleship Training*. This makes it clearer that this time of preparation is not focused on a confirmation day but rather on a lifetime of being a disciple or follower of Jesus. It more clearly identifies the goal of this period of instruction.

Your attendance at the annual meeting will also be helpful as we need to approve additional aspects of upgrading our existing facility. Removing the ceiling in the dining hall has made us aware of other ways we can upgrade the infrastructure in our building. And you will soon get to enjoy the fruit of your giving toward **Building for the Future** as you will likely be able to worship in air conditioned comfort by the end of June.

Pastor Bruce

## Ministry Notes from Martha

I always appreciate the less-structured summer months. God gives some of us a Sabbath almost every day of the summer! The last three months have been particularly busy for me since I've helped out the high school music program by accompanying the choir and solo/ensemble performances for students in both choir and band. Pastor Bruce and I agreed that I would help the school district this spring after Lynn Dietsche cut off the end of a finger in a barn accident in the first week of March. Hopefully, she will continue healing at a record rate and be able to play piano again by fall.

I will be on vacation June 8 through 13 – mostly babysitting grandchildren in Minnesota. But now that Francis has retired, we can go together and share all those soccer games and sibling rivalries!

We're learning a new praise song

for the 9:20 Sunday worship entitled *Still*. The worship planner edition has a wonderful reflection on this:

"How was it that 'time out' became a punishment? I'm sure that I was around; I just don't remember when it came about. In this frantic, over-committed, 24/7/365 kind of world, it seems like we've gotten that message loud and clear, and so we avoid 'time out' at all costs. More activity, more activities, and more effort are our answer to most things, and we pay the price in physical, emotional and spiritual health.

"Our effort and busy-ness are not the way out. God called the people of Israel on that issue through Isaiah many centuries ago. *This is what the sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.*' (Isaiah 30:15, NIV)

"Ouch. Those words could be

said to us today, and maybe they should. We look for our salvation everywhere and in every way but in Him and in the path He prescribes. This powerful song by Reuben Morgan reminds us of other Scriptures we would do well to remember...

*'Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from Him.'* (Psalm 62:5)

*'Be still, and know that I am God.'* (Psalm 46:10).

"It's pretty clear. 'Time out' is not a punishment, it's a way out – into the rest that only God can give in the midst of the storm. Give yourself a 'time out' for not paying attention to His Word – be still and know that He is God."

That's another reason I like the summer months. I get the "time out" I need to get more of His perspective...time to tune my heart to hear the 'still, small voice' of God giving comfort and context to whatever comes my way. I pray your

---

## Marla's Musings

Oops! In the blink of an eye another month has come and gone. Here's a quick catch up before I share the concern of my heart:

The month of April was filled with activity. Pete and I had the privilege to spend a week in Atlanta with Mason, Bella, and Gracie while mom and dad (our daughter and her husband) took a short vacation. We enjoyed Gracie's preschool Easter gathering, watched Mason spar at Tai-Kwon-Do, walked/ran alongside Miss Bella while riding her bike, ate lots of ice cream, and did all the stuff grandparents do when parents aren't there. We returned in time to share Easter worship and breakfast with our church family at St. John's. By the way did you thank Dennis Rubenzer and his kitchen crew for the yummy food at the breakfast? It was fantastic, and an additional benefit was the Sr. high youth earned \$500.00 toward their mission trip to Atlanta in July. April ended with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Youth Encounter retreat to Wisconsin Dells. The youth participated in worship celebrations, bible studies, servant project, as well as enjoyed the water parks. They were excellent representatives of St. John's Lutheran church. You could say it was a busy month indeed.

It's quiet in my office this afternoon. As a matter of fact, quiet is all around me. The year of formal Wednesday/Sunday learning hours, confirmation, Preschool—as well as several other ministry opportunities—has ended. There are times during the year that I wish for quiet, but when it arrives, I realize that the life of St. John's hinges around the people and activities that often bring noise and chaos to life.

The concern of my heart this year has been to focus on and contemplate how we as adults nurture the faith journeys of each other, as well as our youth and children. The mission statement that was adopted by St. John's in 2001 is, and I quote: "TO GROW FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS OF JESUS WHO

EAGERLY SHARE HIS SAVING LOVE."

I have begun to notice a smaller number of people in worship. Our elementary learning hours began in September with 80+ children and finished with approximately 40 children attending regularly. Where have all the families gone? I'm speaking of our larger church family, from infant to children to youth to adult through senior citizens as well.

While in Atlanta I came face to face with the busyness of our lives today, hurrying to get a quick snack after school, doing homework enroute to the next activity, getting home in time for a quick bath, then stories and off to bed, only to begin the process upon waking up the next morning. Adults—myself included—face the same dilemma of choosing what activity/event to schedule without bumping into another commitment and find themselves exhausted at the end of the day, sometimes without being sure what we have accomplished.

The concern that I am struggling with is this: Where does my faith—God time—fit, and what level of importance do I give to the most important commitment of my life?

My own faith journey is possibly one some of you can relate to. My family lived in the country when I was a child. My mom did not drive and for a reason I'm not aware of, my dad did not bring us to church or Sunday school. When I reached the magic age of confirmation, which for me was 7<sup>th</sup> grade, my dad brought me in to confirmation class each week. I felt like a fish out of water. I didn't know any of the other kids who were in my class. We had to memorize, memorize, memorize, and I was often sick to my stomach on Friday night (confirmation was on Saturday morning) because I was sure I wouldn't remember everything I needed to.

At the end of my 9<sup>th</sup> grade year, I was confirmed and my parents decided they had completed their responsibility as far as my Christian education was concerned. Church

again became a very irregular experience for me. But something exciting had happened during my confirmation experience: my teacher cared for and accepted me unconditionally, and I experienced the love of Jesus through her. I felt a hunger to know more about this Jesus person who died for me.

As a high school student, I would often stay in town with my grandma so I could participate in activities. That opened the door for me to walk to church on Sunday, which I did as often as I could. The gift of the Holy Spirit that I received at baptism tugged at my heart and brought me to worship and fellowship with believers as often as possible.

I am thankful that God continues to nurture me and enrich my faith journey through worship, fellowship and small group enrichment.

I have spent hours reading articles filled with information addressing the declining participation in Sunday school and faith growth environments. This year I have had the privilege of working with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class for confirmation. I wonder how many of them are considering their confirmation worship on November 1<sup>st</sup> as a graduation from church? We, as a community of believers, need to break the cycle of graduation from church after confirmation—as well as encourage parents to come in to worship, rather than drop their children off for learning hour—and embrace the noises and movements of small children sitting next to us in the pew. Christ is calling all of us—infants, children, youth, parents, grandparents, senior members—"To grow faithful followers of Jesus who eagerly share His saving love." I encourage you and thank all who are involved in opportunities of faith nurture such as teaching a workshop, attending learning hour with your child, praying at home, joining a small group or time of fellowship. It takes a village to raise a child as well as adults and nurture faith journeys.

## PASTORAL/ CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Need a visit?  
Yearning for holy communion?  
Have a problem?  
Want to suggest ways we can be of more help  
to you and your family?  
Feel you'd like to pray with someone?

### CALL:

#### Pastor Bruce

Church #568-5446, extension 11  
Home #568-2588  
Email: [stjohnsl-bruce@bloomer.net](mailto:stjohnsl-bruce@bloomer.net)

#### Martha Libersky

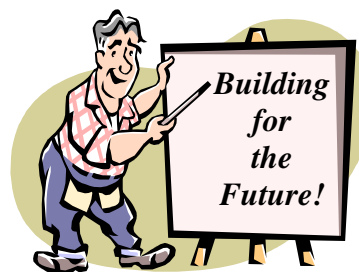
Church #568-5446, extension 13  
Home #568-4653  
Email: [stjohnsl-martha@bloomer.net](mailto:stjohnsl-martha@bloomer.net)



## *Building for the Future*

### Update:

So far, \$59,855 has been given in fulfillment of pledges for the *Building for the Future* campaign.



### Registration Deadline for Upward Basketball Summer Camp (K-2) is June 3rd!

Cost per camper is \$30  
Contact Gregg Anderson  
(568-3328/ C: 933-0658)  
or the church office  
(568-5446)  
for more information.



**Still needed:  
Adult help &  
high school-aged  
coaches**

### Capital Campaign Children's Offering Donation:

**\$280.78!**

The children have donated their offerings from Dec. 2008 thru May 2009 to the Capital Campaign fund. Thank you for investing in the growth of St. John's!

### WHAT: OPEN GYM

WHO: MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH  
FROM 3-5PM  
& SR. HIGH YOUTH  
FROM 7-9PM

WHEN: ALL WEDNESDAYS  
JUNE 10 THROUGH AUGUST 26

WHERE: OLD MIDDLE SCHOOL GYM  
ACROSS FROM ST. JOHN'S

ALL ST. JOHN'S MEMBERS  
(MIDDLE SCHOOL & SR. HIGH)  
AND FRIENDS INVITED.

ADULT SUPERVISION PROVIDED



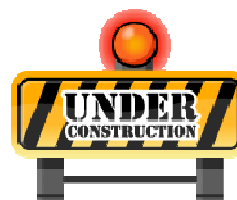
## Thank you !!!

...to Sharon and Dawn Knoepke for 7 years of service staffing our nursery on Wednesday and Sunday. We appreciate the safe, warm environment provided and your continuing faithful service in caring for our children.

## DEMOLITION WEEK, JUNE 1-6.

In preparation for the remodeling of the kitchen and dining hall and upgrading the HVAC systems we are asking for volunteers to move dishes and other things out of the kitchen and others to remove the tin from the ceiling and the plaster on the north and south walls. This work will be scheduled Monday, June 1 through Saturday, June 6.

Talk to Pastor Bruce if you'd like to help.



**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**

1403 Newman Street  
Bloomer, WI 54724

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

715-568-5446  
Email: STJOHNSL@BLOOMER.NET

*To grow faithful followers of Jesus who  
eagerly share his saving love*

---

Non-Profit Org  
US Postage Paid  
Permit #15  
Bloomer, WI

---

**WOMEN OF FAITH PRESENTS:  
"A GRAND NEW DAY"  
Xcel Energy Center, ST. Paul, MN  
October 16 & 17, 2009**

All ladies and your friends are invited to an evening  
of renewal on Monday, June 8 from 6:30-8pm.

Celebrate summer with Women of Faith speaker Patsy Clair-  
mont, reconnect with your Women of Faith girlfriends who en-  
joyed last year's conference, and get a sneak peak, prices, etc.  
for this year's conference if you're thinking of attending. This is  
a come-as-you-are event.

A small number of tickets are available for the conference, how-  
ever you need not purchase a ticket to enjoy an evening with  
friends.

All ladies and your friends are welcome. No RSVP needed.  
See you then! Marla

**LUTHER PARK : WHERE FAITH IS  
NURTURED THROUGH HOLY PLAY**

TAKE A BREAK FROM LIFE...  
EXPERIENCE A WEEK OR SEVERAL DAYS AT  
LUTHER PARK, LOCATED ON PRARIE LAKE  
IN CHETEK, WI.

CAMP BROCHURES ARE LOCATED ON THE  
INFORMATION DESK NEAR THE COFFEE AND  
FELLOWSHIP AREA, AND ON THE BROWN DESK  
OUTSIDE MARLA'S OFFICE.



SEVERAL MIDDLE SCHOOL  
YOUTH ARE ATTENDING  
ON WEEK 7: JULY 19-24.  
IT'S NOT TOO LATE  
TO REGISTER.

MEMBERS AND NON-  
MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.  
INVITE A FRIEND AND TAKE  
A BREAK FROM LIFE AT LU-  
THER PARK.  
YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID!

**SAVE THE DATES!**

**AUGUST 3-7, 2009:**  
LUTHER PARK VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL,  
CAMP STYLE.



"LOVE TO SERVE" IS THE THEME OF THIS YEAR'S  
EVENT.

DAYS WILL BE FILLED WITH BIBLE STUDIES,  
SONGS, CRAFTS, GAMES, SNACKS AND MORE.

CLASSES WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PRESCHOOL  
CHILDREN AGE 3 BY SEPT. 1 & 4K FOR HALF DAYS  
AND 5K THROUGH 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE FOR FULL DAYS.

WATCH FOR REGISTRATION BY SNAIL MAIL SOON.