

THE ST. JOHN NEWS

January 2016

Luster of the New Christian Perspective on the New Year

There is something special about things that are new. Some will argue that used and broken-in are the better way to go. But brand-new is hard to resist and it is what most people crave, whatever the “new” thing is.

It is no surprise, then, that celebrating the New Year is such a big deal. All throughout the world, cultures have some kind of celebration of the New Year. Many cultures, like ours in America, follow the Gregorian calendar, which begins the New Year on January 1. Also like ours, many cultures welcome in the New Year with fireworks, parties, gift-giving, and promises for a better year. Even a new year beginning has a unique luster to it.

As the old year ends, many people take time to reflect on the events of the past twelve months. Radio stations may play the best songs of the year. Newspapers highlight the top ten news stories of the past fifty-two weeks. TV and cable news shows air the “best-of” episodes that many will watch. While reflecting on the past year is quite common, hoping for the future is just as much done, if not more so. Even though each day gives us a new start, there is something more enticing about the new year that drives people to change their ways.

It is not too difficult to see why that is. A casual observer of world events recognizes the stresses and catastrophes that occur the world round. Those who are involved in their families know of

the heartaches that transpire throughout the year and even spill into the next. Many will make concrete plans to improve their lives for the next 12 months. Others will indulge in less productive means, seeing the next year as more of the same.

With its roots in more pagan celebrations, the early Christian Church saw fit to forbid Christians from participating in New Years’ celebrations. For a time, Christians were even required to attend worship services on New Year’s Day rather than indulge in raucous parties and irresponsible behaviors. Eventually, the Church moved away from that more legalistic approach and permitted the New Year to be welcomed by faithful Christians. In 1752, Pope Gregory officially made January 1 the first day of the New Year on the church’s calendar.

Today, the celebration of New Year’s Day by Christians has become a focus on confession and absolution for past sins and a faith-filled desire to make amends for those past sins in the year to come. And even more so, the Christian celebration of the New Year actually indulges that craving all have for the new. The Gospel reading for New Year’s Eve is Jesus’ word to his disciples to be ready for his return. “Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them... Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions” (Luke 12:37, 44).

Even as we end the church year, so we end the calendar year, with our attention drawn to the end of all time, when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory. In that moment, the twinkling of an eye, the final judgment will occur and we will be ushered into Christ's kingdom forever! It is then that we all shall see what St. John saw in the Revelation. "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband...And he who was seated on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new'" (Revelation 21:1-2, 5).

Our good and gracious God knows that all things in his creation have been ruined by sin, death, and the power of the devil. He knows how much his people suffer each and every day. He knows how we long for relief and true joy and peace. And our great and heavenly King longs to give us exactly that. A taste of that joy, peace, and relief come to us in our Lord Jesus Christ. The salve of forgiveness is poured into our sin-carved wounds, declaring us righteous before God. The cool and refreshing waters of peace are flooded over us in the waters of Holy Baptism. And the pure honey of joy is fed into our mouths with his very own body and blood in the Supper. All of this has been effected by Jesus' suffering and death on the wood of the cross. In the end of his earthly life was the promise fulfilled and new life for all creation begun. For Jesus has said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24).

In this New Year and until the Lord Jesus returns, this sure and certain hope is yours. You are his chosen people washed clean in the blood of Jesus, fed with his own body and blood each week when you come to his altar. Our all-gracious God and King has a craving for the new as well. You will see all things made new on that great and glorious day, as the Lord Jesus Christ returns with all of his angels, coming forth on the clouds of heaven. And until then, you taste that newness in his Word and Sacraments.

Thanks be to God for the great way in which he allows us to celebrate the beginning of another New Year, as a picture of the new heavens and the new earth still to come! And thanks be to God that we all get to await that majestic day together as brothers and sisters in Christ, truly clothed in his righteousness and living in his great grace!

In Christ's service and in yours,

Mission Statement: United in faith, we serve the Kingdom of God by building lives that are rooted in the Word, centered on Christ, and motivated by Grace; to reflect Christ's love and share His Gospel with all.

Let Us Pray

For Peace and Comfort: Jan and family at the death of mother Nellie , Gladys and family at the death of husband John



Following Surgery: John , Chuck

Hospitalized: Earl

For Healing and Recovery: Kathy, Joan, Ed, Nicholas, Lingli

For Successful Treatment: Jeannette , Linda , Joan, Joe , Lea, Nancy, Maxine, Jeff, Ken -son of Earl

For our Military: Ashley, Taylor, Andy, Jim, Brandon, Christopher, Suzzanna, Ben, Allyson -Schmidt, Tom

For our Missionaries: Pastor Randrianasolo Dembiniana Havanjanakary and the Madagascar Lutheran Seminary, Pastor Magnus Bengston and Lielsalaca Lutheran Church in Latvia, Pastor Obot Ite and the Lutheran Mission in Kingston, Jamaica

January LYF Event, Bowling at Old Orchard Lanes

For January's LYF fest we will be meeting at Old Orchard Lanes in Savoy Sunday, January 10, 2016 from 2:30 to 4:30. We will have a short Bible study at the bowling alley and then bowl the rest of the time. For this event we will be charging \$10 which includes bowling, shoes and one snack. Hope to see all of you there.

Drop off: 2:30pm at Old Orchard Lanes, 901 N. Dunlap St., Savoy, IL.

Pick up: 4:30pm at Old Orchard Lanes

What to bring: \$10 per person and any additional money for extra snacks.

Faith will offer the Becoming a Love and Logic Parent training course on Wednesday nights beginning January 13, 2016. We will meet from 5:45 to 7:00pm. The course will last for 8 weeks. The cost of the class is \$10 to pay for the workbook. Registration forms can be found on the narthex table. Children can attend the midweek classes while you attend the parenting class. (Midweek classes are offered for children in Kindergarten through 8th grade.) If you have questions, please contact Faith Block at fblock@stjohns.com. Please register by January 6, 2016.

PTF NEWS

Talent Show—Mark your calendars and start planning your act! The PTF Talent Show will be on Friday, January 29th following the Spaghetti Dinner. Registration forms will be available in the school office.



Men's Prayer Breakfast

The men of the congregation are invited the second Thursday of each month to Original Pancake House for food and fellowship, and devotion and prayers led by Pastor Caithamer. Please join us this month on Thursday, January 14th, at 7:00am.



Reading Buddies will meet at 1:00pm on Tuesday, January 19th.

LIFELIGHT RETURNS in January to study the book of Ezekiel, the prophet-priest called by God as a watchman over the house of Israel. Nine-week classes start January 13 and 14: You can attend on Wednesday evening, Thursday morning or Thursday evening. Sign up at the table in the overflow on Sundays starting December 13, or contact Steve, Eunice or Matt . We hope you can join us!

NYG Meeting—Youth & Parents

Sunday, January 24, 4:00-5:00pm

We will be sharing more information, collecting the remaining registration balance, discussing t-shirts and have a short Bible Study. This is for all High School Youth who are attending the National Youth Gathering in July, and their parents.

From the Finance Board

In an effort to keep the members of St. John informed about the financial condition of the Church we are including information about our current financial situation.

The Collapsed Income and Expense report shows the amount of income and expenses for the year to date. Unfortunately, our income is not keeping up with our current expenses.

Below is a report showing the quantity of envelope giving for the month of November 2015.

[see printed version]

Automatic Bank Withdrawal

Automatic bank withdrawal is an easier, more secure way to make your regular contributions to the church. No need to write checks or bring cash to church and the church is able to receive your contribution if you are unable to attend. The church benefits from consistent and predictable cash flow and less paper work. If you would like to sign up for automatic bank withdrawal, please contact the church office.

May God continue to bless all the members of St. John!

Kim Cox,
Finance Board, Chair



Music Notes



Choir schedules may be found at our church's website at <http://stjohnmedia.org/music.html>

Many thanks are due to our hard-working volunteers who provided so much beautiful music through Advent and on Christmas Eve. We have many talented musicians and fine singers in our congregation, and it is a tur blessing to us all.

Since we are using the one-year Lectionary this year, you may notice that the last Sunday in (the shortest of all possible) Epiphany-tide is not when we observe the Transfiguration of Christ. This happens earlier, on January 17. Watch for special music on this special day in the church year!

Alleluia Ringers	Wednesdays	6:00 – 7:00 pm
Men's Choir	Thursdays	6:00 – 6:45 pm
Mixed Choir	Thursdays	6:45 – 7:30 pm

Performance schedule

Wednesday, January 6 Epiphany	7:15 pm	Alleluia Ringers
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Sunday, January 10
(Baptism of Christ)

Sunday, January 17 Transfiguration	8:00	Alleluia Ringers Lois, violin
	10:45 Prelude	Alleluia Ringers

Sunday, January 24 (Lutheran Schools Week)	10:45	Men's Choir
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Sunday, January 31	10:45	Mixed Choir
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Sunday, February 7	8:00	Alleluia Ringers
	10:45	Alleluia Ringers

Wednesday, February 10 is Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent!

Soli Deo Gloria!

Keith Williams

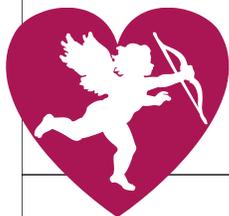
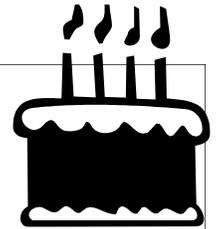


JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



- 1 Sina, Carson, Sherry, LaVonne, Miranda
- 2 Chris, Katie, Edna, Maria
- 3 Sarah, Sherrie, Linda
- 4 Kody, T.J.
- 5 Jennifer, Jeanette
- 6 Donaven, Brad
- 7 Ali, Mia
- 8 Finnegan, James, Hendricks
- 9 Cindy, Olivia, Dylan, Ken, Lou Ann, Donna, Kamryn
- 10 Peter, Sara, Margaret, Judah, George
- 12 Meaghan, Jim
- 13 Ryan, Betty, Karen, Allison
- 14 Tamara, Kaleb
- 15 Carrie, Doug, Darlene, Lindermann
- 16 Suzanna, Dennis, Zoe
- 17 Reagan
- 18 Jill, Christian
- 19 Van, Bret, Steve
- 20 Susan, Gary, Karen, Barb, Michael
- 21 Mike, Larry, Kaitlin, Richele
- 22 John, Jacelyn

- 23 Donna, Mark, Juleigh, Lorraine
- 24 Katelyn, Walt
- 25 Matthew, Charlene
- 26 Dawn, Larry
- 27 Gwyneth, Jim
- 28 Joshua, Robin, Erin
- 29 Mary, Esther, Kevin, Jennifer, Laura, Joseph
- 30 Tom, Daryl, James, Linda
- 31 Lila, Myla, Sierra



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Richard & Leona (59)
- 8 Eric & Kristina (11)
- 12 Matt & Kylee (15)
- 13 Daniel & Linda (26)
- 18 Bill & Phyllis (47)
- 19 David & Donna (53)
- 24 John & Eunice (46)
- 28 Jim & Jeannine (55)

PLEASE notify the church office (359-1123) if your birthday or anniversary is missing or incorrect. Unfortunately, we don't have 100% of our members' birthdays & anniversaries on file. Letting us know of errors or omissions is a great way to help us complete & correct our records.

ATTENDANCE FIGURES FOR DECEMBER



Sundays	8:00	Comm	10:45	Comm
Dec 6	207	159	131	116
Dec 13	213	172	122	98
Dec 20	170	150	118	113
Dec 27	114	83	n/a	n/a

Wednesdays	3:30	Comm	7:15	Comm
Dec 2	80	66	49	38
Dec 9	115	62	49	44
Dec 16	100	82	n/a	n/a

Christmas Eve	5:00	7:15	Comm	10:00
Wed, Dec 24	291	186	134	97

Christmas Day	10:00	Comm
Thu, Dec 25	108	85

New Year's Eve	7:15	Comm
Wed, Dec. 31		

january

2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																																																																																																		
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3 2nd Sunday after Christmas 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion	4 Day School closed	5 10:15 Adult Bible Class 6:30 Fellowship Board 6:30 School Board 7:00 Trustees	6 Epiphany 8:05 Chapel 5:45 Midweek School 6:00 Handbells 7:15 Holy Communion	7 12:30 Widow's Group 6:00 Men's Choir 6:45 Mixed Choir	8	9																																																																																																		
10 Baptism of our Lord 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion	11 9:00 MOPS 6:00 Finance Board	12 6:00 Elders	13 8:05 Chapel 10:15 Adult Bible Class 5:45 Midweek School 5:45 Lighthouse 5:45 Love/Logic Class 6:00 Handbells 7:15 Holy Communion	14 7:00 Men's Prayer Breakfast 9:00 Lighthouse 1:30 Mary Martha 6:00 Men's Choir 6:30 Lighthouse 6:45 Mixed Choir	15	16																																																																																																		
17 Transfiguration Sunday 8:00 Holy Communion (Alleluia Ringers) 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion	18 Day School closed 6:30 LWML	19 10:15 Adult Bible Class 1:00 Reading Buddies 6:00 Council	20 8:05 Chapel 5:45 Midweek School 5:45 Lighthouse 5:45 Love/Logic Class 7:15 Holy Communion	21 9:00 Lighthouse 6:00 Men's Choir 6:30 Lighthouse 6:45 Mixed Choir	22 <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	23																																																																																																		
24 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion (Men's Choir)	25 9:00 MOPS	26 10:15 Adult Bible Class 6:00 Parish Ed 6:30 PTF 7:00 Youth Board	27 8:05 Chapel 5:45 Midweek School 5:45 Lighthouse 5:45 Love/Logic Class 6:00 Handbells 7:15 Holy Communion	28 9:00 Lighthouse 6:00 Men's Choir 6:30 Lighthouse 6:45 Mixed Choir	29 5:00 PTF Spaghetti Dinner & Talent Show	30																																																																																																		
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31 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion (Mixed Choir)		<i>Devotions & Hymn-sing at Amber Glen on the 10th & 24th at 2:30pm</i>	<i>Church Office 359-1123 School Office 359-1714</i>	<i>Pastor Elliott's day off: Mondays Pastor Caithamer's day off: Fridays</i>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">December 2015</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	December 2015							S	M	T	W	T	F	S			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">February 2016</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	February 2016							S	M	T	W	T	F	S			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29				
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