

THE EVANGEL



JANUARY 2010

To know and proclaim Jesus Christ and as disciples reach out in love.

Worship Times

Saturdays:

5:15 p.m.

Sundays

8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Sunday Coffee Fellowship

9:15 a.m.

Education Hour

Sundays at 9:15 a.m.

Something for everyone!

Office Hours

Monday through Thursday

8:30 a.m. to noon

1 to 5 p.m.

Friday

8:30 a.m. to noon

1 to 3 p.m.

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The Evangel

is a monthly publication of
St. John Ev. Lutheran Church
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A challenge for married members

The Love Dare

Unconditional love is eagerly promised at weddings, but rarely practiced in real life. As a result, romantic hopes are often replaced with disappointment in the home. But it doesn't have to stay that way.

The Love Dare is a 40-day challenge for husbands and wives to understand and practice unconditional love. Whether your marriage is hanging on by a thread or healthy and strong, The Love Dare is a journey you need to take. It's time to learn the keys to finding true intimacy and developing a dynamic marriage. Take the dare!

(from the back cover of the book *The Love Dare*)

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. 1 Corinthians 13:7-8

On February 13 we are inviting you to Dare to Love. We will be meeting at 6:00 in Fellowship Hall for a nice romantic dinner followed by the screening of the movie "Fire-proof." We will then break off into small groups to discuss the movie. You will then be able to buy the book *The Love Dare* and challenged to complete the dare during the 40 days of Lent. Look for more information in the January bulletins.

You're Invited to
Aiden Berg's



Baby Shower

Sunday, January 17
9:15 a.m.

Fellowship Hall

Please join the Youth & Family Board
in welcoming Aiden, son of our
Youth and Family Ministry Director
and wife, Ben & Maria.

(In case you're not able to attend
a box for your cards will be in the
narthex.)

It's Your Choice

If our new phone number, 254-9763, is a toll call for you please use the old number, 524-4516. It's true that using 524-4516 might result in a charge to St. John, but it is less than you would pay.



Congregation Council Notes — December 8, 2009

Beside regular members of the council, newly elected members, Lorraine Traeder, Deb Adams, Bill Henke, and Blain Hedberg were present. Guests included Jake Jacobson and Warren Frank. Excused members were Pastor Marsha Swenson, James Wheeler, and Jeff Steel.

After calling the meeting to order, President Percy welcomed newly elected council members, and thanked outgoing members, Neah Lohr, Bunny Frank, Barb Stone and Jeff Steel for their years of service.

Reports and Presentations:

- Jake Jacobson spoke about the resolution passed by ELCA at the Churchwide Assembly in August 2009 concerning approval of pastors in same sex committed relationships. There are members in the congregation who would prefer not having any part of their offerings go to support the synod or ELCA. He asked the council to consider developing a two pocket envelope for giving, in which members who preferred not to give to the synod could have the usual amount of their offering designated for ELCA causes sent instead to other benevolences.

It is important at this time that the congregation be reminded that as a congregation there is no protest, and we are not withholding funds to the ELCA.

A committee has been formed to explore the two pocket envelope system, as well as communicate the purpose and system to the congregation. The committee will bring back a proposal no later than the February council meeting.

- Warren Frank brought a written proposal for a Membership Renewal Project, which has been placed on file in the office. He and Todd Sauey are proposing two task forces. The first is to contact “inactive” members, and the second will identify actions to encourage “new members” to consider joining St. John. These projects will be ongoing, with no end date.

Warren was commended for his enthusiasm and interest in this huge task. He and Todd will bring back more information to the council. This project will require many people in order to carry out the plan. Membership Renewal Project was approved.

Treasurer’s Report – Treasurer, Norma Peters presented the figures for the month of November. Contributions were 103.5% of budget,, and expenses for the month were 82.5% of budget. Average attendance for November was 312, down from November 2008. Year to date average attendance is 305 compared to 307 in 2008. Treasurer’s Report was approved

Other Topics

- Pastor Marsha’s report for the month was read, as she was ill and not at the meeting

- After discussion, a motion to switch insurance carriers from Guide One to Church Mutual effective January 10, 2010 was approved.

- Annual meeting format discussion – Two forums, held on Sunday mornings prior to annual meeting will be held. Also there will be one service on the Sunday of the annual meeting at 8 a.m. This time frame will allow for the meeting to continue longer than an hour if necessary.

- Council devotions - At the beginning of each council meeting a different council member will lead devotions, which will last no longer than 5 minutes. Patty Sauey has signed up for January.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. – Next meeting will be 7 p.m., January 12, 2010.

— *In His service,*
Migs Percy, Council President



The Green Way — Recycled Paper

All recycled paper is not created equal: it can comprise as little as 10% recycled content with the balance coming from virgin timber; or it can contain as much as 100% recycled content.

- If the three chasing arrows symbol is white on a black background, it means the paper is made of 100% recycled content. • If the arrows are black on a white background it is made of recycled and virgin fiber and the manufacture is required to note what percentage comes from recycled fiber.

There is also the source of recycled content to consider.

- Paper made with wood shavings from a lumber mill is classified as post-industrial waste and can be labeled recycled. Buying this type of paper does nothing to support consumer recycling programs. To find paper made from recycled material collected from consumers, look for paper marked with “PCC” or “PCW.”

- Two things you can do when grocery shopping. 1. When asked to choose between paper and plastic bags, say “neither.” Use durable cloth bags. Take them back to your car after unpacking your items at home so they’ll be there when you next shop. 2. Stash some cardboard boxes in your car. At checkout, reload your items back into your shopping cart (sans bags), then cart your purchases to your car and pack them into the boxes.

From Pastor David

Our fort was the best.

Seriously, it was a wonderland. We discovered odd bits of cast off farm machinery, bits from an old shed, branches in the grove next to our house and who knows what else and we assembled them in the row of pine trees that lined the back of the church lot. We even scrounged an old console TV carcass from the city dump for our fort. We didn't have cable so a couple of us would crawl inside and "do" TV. It was great, and best of all it was secret place — never mind that just about every kid in town (all 12 of us?) had some part in assembling this fantastical hideout. We thought it was secret and that was what mattered. Whenever we played there we posted a lookout. We had a lookout because, well, it was a secret place, not because anything nefarious was going on. Shoot, we didn't know from nefarious.

One day I was posted as look out. Simply put, I was not a good choice. I had, and some may say I still have, the attention span of a gnat after 12 cups of coffee. While I was supposed to be "looking out" I would get bored and wander into the pines to the fort to see what was on, or rather who was in the TV. It was no fun being the "lookout" and I wanted to see what Tracey, Kent, Sarah and Bruce and the rest of the kids were up to. After a short bit they would realize that I was supposed to be the lookout and, thus chastised, I would wonder back to the edge of the pines to keep an eye on things. And that I did, I looked at the pinecones, I would lay on my back and stare at the clouds floating in the sky, I would pick dandelions that always seemed to speckle the area behind our house and the church.

Next thing I knew there was my Dad.

Ooops!

He informed me it was time for lunch and asked if I knew where Sarah was. With a lump in my throat I said yes and called for Sarah to come out. I guess that was the wrong choice, because once she came out and Dad was on his way back to the house I got chewed out by the rest of the kids. I don't remember if Dad ever saw the fort. He never mentioned it, but it seems nonetheless I had failed miserably as a "lookout." The secret place, though it never really was, now certainly wasn't.

Being a lookout is hard work; it takes focus, patience and a notion of what or who you are to lookout for. This story came to mind because as I tried to look forward into January in the midst of December with Christmas music coming from my speakers, and Christmas cookies in the oven, I was stuck in the midst of Christmas.

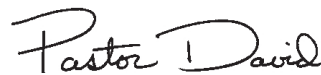
While being "stuck" in Christmas is a pleasant place to be, it is not where we are called to stay. Even the Christ child was forced to flee from Bethlehem. As the new year dawns for us we are called to be on the "lookout" for what God is doing today and in the future, as well as giving thanks and learning from what God has done in the past. We are also called to live in the present and not worry about the future. But in Christ we are also called to be a people of hope and hope is a future thing.

The future can be a scary place. What are we to "lookout" for? What awaits us in the days to come? Struggles, blessings, challenges, joy, sorrow and change; you can be safe betting that all these will surely come. In this we hear the word of the Lord from Jeremiah "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." (29:11)

We might not know exactly what to be on the "lookout" for, but we know who we are to seek. It isn't a secret either. The angels announced with great joy that God is among us in Christ Jesus and in his grace we can look to the future, secure in the promise of life offered for us. We can offer that same gift as we live into the future, as we become what we already are in Christ Jesus.

As a final note I would like to thank all of those who remembered us at Christmas. Your gifts and cards are greatly appreciated and they remind me once again what a blessing it is to minister among and with you each day. May God bless you in the year to come.

In Christ,



Pastor David

A winning pattern for the New Year

Some anonymous wise person penned the following directions for living without bringing pain to others or oneself:

"You will never be sorry — for thinking before acting, for hearing before judging, for forgiving your enemies, for being candid and frank, for helping a fallen brother, for being honest in business, for thinking before speaking, for being loyal to God and the church, for standing by your principles, for refusing to participate in gossip, for holding your words when tempted to demean another, for not entertaining impure or hateful thoughts, for sympathizing with the afflicted, for being courteous and kind to all."

From Pastor Marsha

A blessing to all of you for 2010 — all of it!

What a wonderful Christmas season we had at St. John! We are really good at celebrating Jesus' coming to live among us. That really is a blessing for the entire year and all the way into eternity.

A special thank you for celebrating with me my 10-year anniversary of ordination. Our Advent Concert is always WONDERFUL. To have it honor the ministry God has given me made it even more special this year. Thank you. Thank you.

Another thank you is very much in order to the family of Bonnie Hardy. Bonnie passed into new life a year ago. In her memory, her family has given a generous gift that will begin the Rainbows program.

Rainbows International helps children who are grieving (a death, divorce, or anything else). They participate in peer groups with age-appropriate activities. I am beginning the training now, and we already have some interest from volunteers. Hopefully we will have a pilot program beginning even before Easter. If you are moved to volunteer, or if you know of children with this need, please let me know.

Here's a Bible verse to keep near your heart this month: "[Jesus said] Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." Matthew 19:14

— *Joy and peace,*
Pastor Marsha



A Special Thank You to Thrivent Financial for Lutherans representatives Sharon Petersen, Rosemary Fosland, and Wendell Watts for their efforts on behalf of St. John Lutheran this past year, and to those members of the congregation who assisted with the various projects receiving financial support from Thrivent.

Ozanam Update

As some of you know, Sue Johnson has resigned as house manager of Ozanam House. Sue's compassion for the homeless and her fundraising and organizational skills were invaluable. We miss her and wish her and Mike God's richest blessing. Katie Kalepp of Reedsburg has been hired as her successor.

In the past six months, we have had the pleasure of working with 12 women and 13 children. Ten of those women have found employment and/or apartments, and are doing well on their own. In addition to offering instruction in life skills, tenant/landlord issues, parenting, nutrition, budgeting, and meeting their transportation needs, we also visit them in their new homes periodically to insure that all is going well for them. Three of the residents have been baptized, one at St. John.

Our sincere thanks to all our members who have been so generous this past year with volunteer help, financial and in-kind donations. These are our lifelines. Without their help, we would not be able to provide the services we do.

We are currently seeking to fill two board positions. If you're interested in finding out more about the board, please contact me at 985-7455.

May each of you experience God's peace and joy in the new year.

— *Bunny Frank*

Meetings & Greetings



Dorcas Circle

• 9:30 a.m., Wed., Jan. 20. Check the weekly announcements for location.

Hannah Circle

• 11:30 a.m., Tues., Jan. 5, Check the weekly announcements for location.

Sarah Circle

• 1 p.m., Thurs., Jan. 21, Check the weekly announcements for location.

Sunshine Circle

• 1:30 p.m., Thurs. Jan. 14; Church library

Garden Club

• No meeting in January

St. John Quilters

• 9 a.m., Thurs., January 7. Join the ladies in Fellowship Hall making quilts for Lutheran World Relief and coffee.

Empty Nesters: Chili at Church — Since we can't count on the weather for much in January, let's plan to have a Chili Pot Luck in our Fellowship Hall after worship on Sunday, January 17. Maybe some of you "8:00 folks" can organize the meal after Education Hour — things like combining the chili all into one Nesco? Just a thought. Sign up on the worship attendance form to bring chili, crackers & cheese, or dessert no later than Sunday, January 10th.

Thanks, Pastor Marsha.

Thanks to Barb Stone, Connie Rueter and Dorothy Gant

for all their work decorating the narthex and the education wing for Advent and Christmas.

We also thank our LIFE students and guides for their efforts decorating the sanctuary and education wing during this season of celebration.

calendar

Worship Assistants

8:00 January 3

Acolyte: Nathan Erbs, Maggie Berning
 Greeters: Tom & Delores Geimer
 Lector: Fred Behn
 Ushers: Myron LaRowe (H)
 Fred Farber
 Kathy Finn

8:00 January 10

Acolytes: Adam Colvin,
 Nicole Schroeder
 Greeters: Mike & Sheila Masica
 Lector: Arlene Utley
 Ushers: Jeremy Zuhlke (H)
 Mary Zuhlke
 JR Colvin
 Shawn Foss

Communion Assistants: Please Volunteer
 Communion Bread: Patty Sauey

8:00 January 17

Acolytes: Jacob Wilbrandt
 Laura McGlynn
 Greeters: Jerry & Mary Zuhlke
 Lector: Les Sandberg
 Ushers: Scott Sidell (H)
 Fred Behn
 Bob Kessler
 Patti Kessler

8:00 January 24

Acolytes: Lexi Hayes
 Bethanie Thompson
 Greeters: Todd & Jean Polk
 Lector: Beverly Hoeg
 Ushers: Myron LaRowe (H)
 Bill Nelson
 Amy Nelson
 Ron Snyder

Communion Assistants: Please Volunteer
 Communion Bread: Lisa Hoff

8:00 January 31

Acolytes: Ashley Lewin, Danni Imhoff
 Greeters: Alice Vandewater
 Lorna Spohnholtz
 Lector: Kathy Finn
 Ushers: Dave Julius (H)
 Barb Demaske
 John Kammerud
 Don Erickson

Communion Assistants: Please Volunteer
 Communion Bread: Yvonne Brekke

10:30 January 3

Acolytes: Hunter Templin, Ian Senzig
 Greeters: James & Susan Peterson
 Lector: Julie Adelman
 Ushers: Brad Bauer (H)
 Ev Skinner
 Ron Chovan
 Kim Chovan

10:30 January 10

Acolytes: Callie Senzig
 Angie Utley
 Greeters: Paula & Allison Steinhorst
 Lector: Rosemary LaRowe
 Ushers: Tim Greenway
 Becky Greenway
 Ed Zobel

Communion Assistants: Please Volunteer

10:30 January 17

Acolytes: Hannah Belk,
 Kyran Horkan
 Greeters: Diane Douglas,
 Lynelle Roessler
 Lector: Lynn Horkan
 Ushers: Bill & Julie Ratajczyk (H)
 and family

10:30 January 24

Acolytes: Kaylie Polk
 Sam Peterson
 Greeters: Ron & Kim Chovan
 Lector: Judy Willis
 Ushers: Norma Peters
 Kristi Roth,
 Kasi Roth
 Tami VanBeek

Communion Assistants: Please Volunteer

10:30 January 31

Acolytes: Cassie Stone, Marcus Stanley
 Greeters: Ryan & Kim Pearson
 Lector: Tami VanBeek
 Ushers: Bill Klang (H)
 John Swiscz
 Darcy Swiscz
 Patrick Boyd

Communion Assistants: Please Volunteer

January & February Sponsorships

Altar Flowers - \$30 All of January & February are available.

Bulletins - \$25; All of January & February are available.

TV Cable Broadcast - \$40; All of January & February are available.

Radio Broadcast - \$95, 60, or \$30 All of January & February are available.

Parochial Report

Baptisms

— Nov. 27, Alex Thomas
 Julius, son of Travis & Jackie Julius

— Dec. 13, Brady John Westphal, son of Scott & Teresa Westphal.

Weddings

— Dec. 19, Courtney Erickson and John Wood

Funerals

We extend our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Richard Shultis who died Dec. 14, 2009.

Radio Monitor

Rich Sorom

TV Crew

Todd Gardner, Fred Farber

Money Counters

Linda White
 Ardell Albers
 Rosemary Fosland

How to keep warm in church

- Rush to the front of the sanctuary. That will warm you up, and you'll avoid the draft in the back of the church.
- Invite your friends and neighbors, and sit 12 people to a pew.



Christian Education News

This logo represents Christians of mature faith holding the cross, inspiring the growth of others, while creating a shell of love and guidance.

Sunday Morning Bible Studies

There are no adult studies planned for Sunday, January 3.

After the first of the year — January 10 is the celebration of the Baptism of our Lord and our Bible Study will take a biblical look at baptism.

Beginning January 17 we will start a four-week session on 1st Corinthians. In 1st Corinthians, Paul writes poetically and passionately about what it means for the church to live as Christ's body in the world. In this study we will look at these questions:

- Do we see ourselves as the gifted Body of Christ? (1 Cor. 12:1-11)
- What is the gift of the Body of Christ? (1 Corinthians 12:12-31)
- How does the gift of love shape the Body of Christ? (1 Corinthians 13:1-13)
- Are we giving what we were given? (1 Corinthians 15:1-11)

If you are interested in purchasing the study guide for this class the cost is \$12. Please inform the church office as soon as possible.

For 6th grade students and their parents

- 6th Grade Bible Orientation: Thursday, January 14, 6:00-7:00

The Bible is the most important book ever written—a gift to us from God himself. During this session you and your child will be introduced to the Bible that they will use reverently through their confirmation years and beyond. We will meet in Fellowship Hall.

- 6th Grade Bible Presentation: Sunday, January 17 during the 10:30 service.

In keeping with your and the congregation's promise at baptism to put the gift of God's word in your child's hands, the Bible presentation will be during the 10:30 service, January 17. Please make plans to attend.

Attention Mentors and Students:

It's time for a check-in with Tina & Pastor David. Due to a conflict with the high school schedule, the date has changed to Sunday, January 10th, 6:00-6:30 p.m. We are looking forward to hearing your thoughts as we are continuing to develop this new program for 9th graders. Please let us know if you are unable to attend.

LIFE

This month we will be studying the Lord's Prayer. Topics include "A Holy Name," "The Kingdom," "The Divine Will," "Give Us This Day," and "Forgiveness." Sessions are from 6:00 to 7:30 on Wednesday nights.

Adult Forums

Here's what's coming up:

Jan. 3	No forum or Bible Study	Jan. 17	Sexuality Statement Topic: TBA
Jan. 10	Book of Faith Artistic Expressions: Choosing a verse to sing	Jan. 24	Questions of Value
		Jan. 31	Green Theology

Scripture Readings for January Weekend Services

January 3 — Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:10-18

January 6 - Epiphany — Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

January 10 — Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 17 — Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

January 24 — Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21

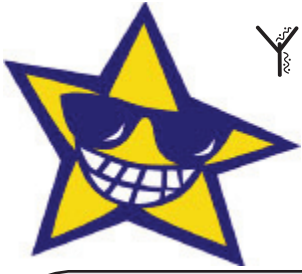
January 31 — Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"I wish I could stay up 'til midnight on New Year's Eve, but I don't know why."

from *The Juggler Newsletter*
Reprinted with permission of Bill Keene



YOUTH GROUP & FAMILY MINISTRY

info

MSYG/Family Ministry

Calendar of Events

King's Kids — January 6 & 20

Son Seekers — January 13 & 27

MSYG

Mount Olympus — Sunday, January 17

YG

Wednesday nights at 7:00 in Youth Room!

Come and join us for a fun, family day at Mt. Olympus Indoor Water & Theme Park. The cost is \$7 per person with a dollar donated back to the St. John Youth program. When you arrive at Mt. Olympus tell them that you are with St. John Lutheran Church in Reedsburg to get this great deal.

When: January 17th

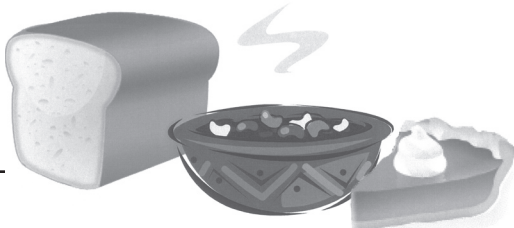
Time: Noon-5

Cost: \$7

Bring: A friend or two

Calling All Cooks and Bakers

We need your help! The youth are going to Boundary Water Canoe Area this summer. We need your help again to make soup, bread, and pies during Lent. We will be having Soup, Bread, and Pie before the Lenten services as a fundraiser for our trip and we need your help. So if you can bake bread, pie, or make a good soup sign up in the narthex. This not only a good fundraiser for the youth, but it is also a great fellowship event for everyone.



From the Mouth of Ben:

Hey, everyone! I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving and Christmas Season. This has been the best holiday season I have ever had. If you have not yet heard, Maria and I had a son. Aiden was born on the 19th of November.

We would like to thank everyone who has blessed us with gifts and food over the past couple of months. It is awesome to see the giving heart of our congregation. I am excited for all of you to be a part of Aiden's faith journey.

As you start a new year don't forget to look for the many blessings that God brings into your life.

Thanks,
Ben, Maria, and Aiden Berg

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Thoughts for 2010 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

New Year Resolutions

In chapter 4, beginning with verse 13, James talks about our planning. He reminds us that our lives and plans and futures are in God’s hands, and that we should pray, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that” (verse 15). With that preface, then, we can begin to do some self evaluation of how we can best spend our time, abilities, and resources. A new year can provide a new resolve and commitment to do many things in a new and better way. We may find that our priorities are a little skewed. Our lifestyles could possibly use some redirection, and a New Year’s resolution based on God’s plan for us could be what we need.

How can we make our resolutions a reality? One way is to talk with one of the members of the church staff or the chairperson of one of our boards and volunteer our time, energy, and abilities. Another commitment may be to spend more time reading God’s Word and join a Bible study group to stimulate spiritual growth. We may find that God is leading us to increase our knowledge and commitment in the area of our financial stewardship as well. God has blessed us so we may be a blessing to others.

The Apostle Paul tells us, “work out your salvation with fear and trembling, because, he adds, “it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.” (Philippians 2:12-13). To the faithful, God has made known his will and purpose which is “to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ (Ephesians 1:10). God wants us to have a relationship with Jesus as the head. The personal relationship Jesus develops with us compels us to serve and honor Him through our faithful stewardship. Faith enables us to understand that we “are God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10). May it be our resolve and commitment to do what we were “created to do” as God’s workmanship.

Resolve in the new year ...

- to be so strong nothing can disturb your peace of mind
- to look at the sunny side of everything
- to forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future
- to wear a cheerful face and give every living creature you meet a smile
- to laugh more
- to give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others
- to be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to allow trouble to distress you.



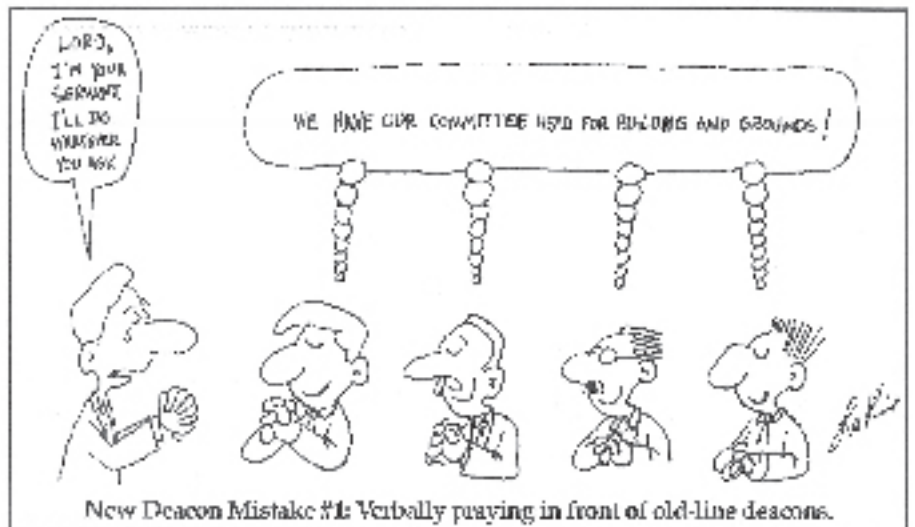
from journoteletter.com
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In the long run, the pessimist may be proved to be right, but the optimist has a better time on the trip.

— D. Reardon

Hanging on to resentment is like letting someone you dislike live rent-free in your head.

— Unknown



New Deacon Mistake #1: Verbally praying in front of old-line deacons.

from TheJokingMinister.com
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THE EVANGEL

January 2010

A Publication of
St. John Ev. Lutheran Church

Volume 49, No. 10

307 6th Street
Reedsburg, Wisconsin 53959

This newsletter was especially prepared for:



————— **Congregation Council** —————

Migs Percy, President <i>Administration</i>	524-5150	Patty Sauey <i>Worship</i>	524-6150
Rich Sorom, Vice-President <i>Education, Cemetery Board</i>	524-2720	Don Ondersma <i>Youth & Family</i>	415-5259
Norma Peters, Treasurer <i>Budget Task Force, Foundation</i>	524-8707	Blaine Hedberg	524-2896
Jill Burmester <i>Education</i>	524-8472	Bill Henke	524-8606
Patricia Lewis <i>Congregational Life</i>	522-4148	Deb Adams	524-8004
Jim Wheeler <i>Youth & Family</i>	985-7067	Lorraine Traeder	524-3821

Italics indicate the board or committee on which the council member serves as liaison.

————— **St. John Staff** —————

Ministers:	Members of St. John	Assistant Secretary	Leta Palmer
Lead Pastor	Pastor David Glesne	Financial Secretary	Shirley Buss
Second Pastor	Pastor Marsha Swenson (Cell Phone 415-2277)	Saturday Music Coord. Custodian	Leta Palmer Tim Brown
Visitation Pastor	Jake Jacobson	Head Organist	Diana McGlynn
Global Ministry Partner	Ojars Friemanis	Sr. Choir Director	David Knoble
Youth & Family Director	Ben Berg	Jr. Choir Directors	Diana McGlynn
Education Director	Tina Bauer	Bell Choir Director	Lori Penkwitz Les Sandberg
Secretary	Carol Julius		

————— **St. John Foundation Board** —————

Lou Kirt	524-9612
Norma Peters	524-8707
Jane Zuehlke	524-4676
Warren Frank	985-7455
Eleanor Luehrson	524-2634
Terry Penkwitz	524-8638
Bill Weis	524-9875

————— **St. John Cemetery Board** —————

Jake Steinhorst	524-2874
Rich Hahn	524-6609
Barb Demaske	524-3379
Jerry Zuhlke	524-6811
Rich Sorom	524-2720

————— **Chairs of St. John Boards** —————

Administration	LeRoy Petersen
Church in Society	Andrea Holcomb
Congregational Life	Julie Ratajczyk
Education	Kristi Glesne
Worship	Jolene Westerman
Youth	Judy Hacker

Pastors' & Youth Director's Days Off: Pastor Glesne - Mondays; Pastor Swenson - Fridays; Ben Berg - Fridays

A New Year-A New Direction

It was a strange thing. One morning I woke to the voice in my head telling me, “you are not going to work today.” As I have in the past, I rolled over and mumbled to myself, “I know, I am getting up.” The voice repeated, “You are not going to work today.” It was then that I realized that I had for the past few weeks been questioning whether I was on the right path and now I was being encouraged to really consider this question. I want to share with you some thoughts on taking a new direction.

Many of you might be thinking wow, if she has voices in her head she should see someone about that or maybe even be committed! My experience, however, with voices in the night has been that they have come from my spirit calling out for attention. My spirit was once again telling me that something needed to change. My spirit was feeling somewhat sluggish and I had been questioning whether or not I was fulfilling my mission in life. This particular morning I was being called to take a leap of faith and listen to what my spirit had to say about the direction I should be taking.

I am telling all of you this story because in many ways it affects our relationship. I have been blessed with the role of Parish Nurse Coordinator in your congregation for about 9 years now and it is difficult in many ways to be at a crossroad where I am being called in a new direction. Yet, I believe, it is the right direction for me to go. Therefore, I will no longer be the Parish Nurse Coordinator working with your congregation. I will not be putting up health bulletin boards or planning blood drives, health fairs or retreats (although I hope to facilitate retreats as needed in the community on my own time). I do plan to continue to do my writing and I will be sending a copy of my monthly reflection to the church for distribution as they see fit. Your encouragement of these reflection letters over the years has helped me to grow personally and I hope they have been a source of spiritual growth for you as well.

Back to my story. I explained to my director, Beverly Hoege that I needed to take the day as a personal day, that something was not quite right although I did not know exactly what it was. She was very supportive and encouraged me to take the time I needed and to keep her posted if there was anything she could do to help me on this journey of discovery. She has been a great source of strength for me over these years and I thank her for trusting me to do what I needed to do.

I did take the day and during that time the pieces started to fall into place. I felt drawn to develop a program that offered more support to the organization, a program that would allow me to be more active in the lives of those experiencing loss, loss of health, anticipatory loss, loss of control over situations. I began to share these ideas with Beverly and she listened attentively encouraging me to continue to explore the options. I continued to think about the possibilities and realized I needed to develop a mission and vision for this program. As I was walking a week later I was able to put into words what I believe and hope to do as a Spiritual Care Coordinator.

I believe that spirituality is not limited by time and space, but is found deep within every moment of every day and is essential for optimal health. My mission is to promote spiritual awareness in patients, families, and staff thereby facilitating healing in the presence of illness and the absence of cure from birth to end of life.

I believe that there is a time for all things under heaven and death is a natural part of life and I believe there is a need in our society to support natural death. Clearly, there are questions about the timing of ones death in regard to families and society and I do not have answers to those questions, but I hope to help support those for whom death is imminent while supporting their families as well.

It is a new year and for me a new direction. Listen to the cry of your spirit. When you begin to feel as though something needs to change or somehow you need to grow, don't hesitate too long. Reach out to someone you trust and they will support you as the pieces fall into place. Thank you for all the support you have given me in the past. I look forward to writing to you in the future.

May God Bless You,
Tammy Koenecke, RN, MASL
Spiritual Care Coordinator, RAMC



**Make me walk along the path
of your commands,
for that is where my happiness
is found.**

Psalm 119:35