

# LOVE LETTER

AUGUST 2006

## THIS MONTH AT ST. JOHN'S

Confirmation class starts  
August 30

St. John's Lutheran Church  
ELCA  
1224 East Street  
Grinnell, IA 50112  
(641) 236-4946  
stjohngr@iowatelecom.net  
www.stjohngrinnell.org

Stephen Jasch  
Pastor

WORSHIP  
Saturday at 5:30 p.m.  
Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL  
Preschool through adult  
during the school year

### COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Todd Nelson, president  
Dale Lamb, vice president  
Barb Baker, secretary  
Gary Cook, treasurer  
Steve Dudley, Properties  
Carolyn Bosse, Donna Beck,  
Stewardship  
Anita Ford, Rose Osland,  
Education  
Margaret Amo, Worship, Music, Arts  
Jo Olson, Fellowship  
Mike Schaeffer, Service  
Mary Schuchmann, Evangelism  
VACANT: Youth

## Pastor's Pen

*Grace to you and peace from Jesus  
Christ, Our Lord*

The little story is told about a group of children who were gathered around the pastor at a children's talk at church.

"What animal lives in the woods and loves to climb trees?" the pastor asked them. Silence. Not one single response from this group of normally talkative children.

Surprised, the pastor tried again.

"What animal lives in the woods and loves to climb trees and eat nuts?" Still, silence. So the pastor was even more specific. "What animal lives in the woods, loves to climb trees, eats nuts and has a big, bushy tail?"

Finally, a little girl responded with some hesitation. "I know the answer must be 'Jesus,' but it sounds a lot like you are talking about a squirrel."

We smile at how easy it is for those

naïve little children with their simple childlike faith to miss the point of what the pastor might be trying to teach. But remember that Jesus told his disciples, "Truly I say to you, unless you turn and be-

come like little children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven."

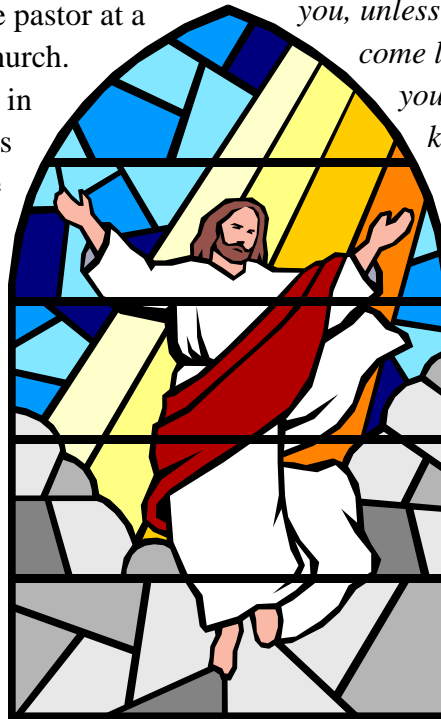
And again, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."

And so, at the end of the day, after we have struggled with the pressures and problems of life with all of its

challenges in dealing with people, finances, school, work and family, maybe then we realize that the little girl in the story has actually been paying attention in Sunday School and has it right. The real and final answer is always, "Jesus."

God's blessings to all.

*In Christ,  
Pastor Jasch*





**Baptism**

Baptized on July 2 at St. John’s was **Allison Joy Hagemeister**, daughter of **Fred** and **Sara Hagemeister**. Her sponsor is **Elizabeth Schroeter**.

**Wedding bells**

Congratulations to **Greg Huebner** and **Cathy Stella**, who were married July 1 at Plymouth Congregational Church in Lawrence, Kan. Greg is the son of **Dan** and **Bev Huebner**.

**Gifts for our graduates**

Send our 2006 high school graduates off to college or work with a reminder of their church family. We will once again collect items — personal care products, towels, snacks, quarters for the laundry — that will be packed in “Care Bags” for our four 2006 high school graduates. Bring the items to the church office by Aug. 13.



**Vacation Bible School**

Approximately 150 children, including 23 from St. John’s, attended a cooperative Vacation Bible School held at the United Methodist Church. Six churches participated. This year’s theme was

“Fiesta!” The children collected \$189 for MICA and tied quilts that will be sent to South America through the Kids to Kids project. A sincere thank you to all who helped.

**College cookie day**

To welcome new students to Grinnell College, local churches are asked to provide cookies for students during registration time on Wednesday, Aug. 23. Donations are needed and should be brought to the church by 9:30 a.m. that day. The Grinnell Ministerial Association is among local organizations that have informational booths in the registration area.

**Be a host family**

You can experience the world when you serve as a host family for an international student at Grinnell College. The Host Family Program matches incoming international students with families from the community who are interested in making friends and providing support to a student from another culture.

The program does not involve a home stay, but rather a friendly, supportive atmosphere (including an occasional home-cooked meal) and assistance with such things as shopping, rides to the airport, etc. This year, students are expected from Russia, Nepal, Pakistan, Japan, Nigeria, Greece, China, India,

Iran, Zimbabwe, France, Ghana, Paraguay, Serbia, among other places.

In our congregation, **Melba Strickler**, **Don** and **Doris Sundell**, **Bob** and **Sandy Falck** and **Mary** and **Russ Schuchmann** are among those who have participated in the program.

For more information, call **Brenda Strong**, program coordinator, at 269-3703.

**Solve the mystery**

Here’s a challenge for longtime members: A confirmation picture, probably from 1962, needs photo identification. If you can help ID the young people in the picture, take a look at the photo, currently on display in the narthex, and give the information to Jo Olson in the church office. The photo is part of the congregational history display in the Fellowship Hall.

**Confirmation class to start**

Confirmation class for all seventh- and eighth-graders will begin Wednesday, Aug. 30, with a meeting in the Fellowship Hall.

**Church finances through June**

	2006	2005
Offerings	\$83,299	\$87,533
Budget	\$121,802	\$112,847
Expenses	\$95,201	\$97,326

**Average weekly attendance in June**

	2006	2005
Saturday	41	42
Sunday	135	136

## MAILBAG

*St. John's received a letter last week from Jack and Norma Griffith, on behalf of the Toeun Family Fund, expressing thanks to all who helped the Toeun family during their efforts to obtain their Permanent Residency cards (so-called Green Cards). The Toeuns, natives of Cambodia, came to the U.S. in 1991 from a displaced person's camp in Thailand. St. John's was one of the groups and individuals that provided financial support to the family during the time they were unable to work.*

*The Toeuns — parents Toi and Chhoeun and sons Thoi and Tea — received their Green Cards in June. Tor, Thoi and Tea are now working at Miraco Inx.; Chhoeun is working in the kitchen at Mayflower Homes. Here is a portion of the letter:*

“First and foremost, the Toeun family wants to send a big ‘thank you’ out to all that have provided assistance to them over the last year and a half. There are too many people to mention individually, but you can have confidence that you’ve really made a difference for this family!

“As we finalize our assistance, [we ask you] **to pray for the family**, that they will very soon have all the personal financial income they need in order to provide for themselves, and **to thank God** that we have been able to realize our final goal for this wonderful family. What a blessing God has given to us.

“We are personally so proud of the people in this community that have remained committed to helping this family. God bless you all.”

*Jack and Norma Griffith  
on behalf of the Toeun Family Fund*

## Giving the first fruits...

Just as the church encourages its members to set aside the “first fruits” of their income as an offering to the Lord and the church, so does our congregation strive to start first with outreach and mission when it comes to budgeting and spending.

The first category in the annual church budget — before staff salaries or building maintenance — is benevolence. That currently includes contributions to world hunger, disaster relief, social services, our Lutheran seminaries and camp. Similarly, when the congregation receives major bequests or estate gifts, a portion is first given to outreach programs. Under current policy, that amount is generally 17 to 20 percent of the bequest/gift - the same percentage that is applied to the annual budget.

The church council at its July meeting voted to contribute to benevolence a total of \$9,861 from the \$49,861 recently received by the church from the estate of the late Irene Broders. The money will be allocated as follows:

**Jennifer Barger**, a member of St. John's who is preparing for the lay ministry, \$2,000

**Luther Seminary**, St. Paul, MN, \$1,000

**Wartburg Seminary**, Dubuque, \$1,000

**Vision 20/20**, creation of mission churches in Iowa, \$1,000

**Riverside Bible Camp**, Story City, \$1,000

**Lutheran Services in Iowa**, \$1,000

**ELCA world hunger appeal**, \$1,000

**Grinnell Ministerial Association**, \$1,000

**Special Needs Retirement Fund**, financial support for retired ELCA pastors in financial need, \$1,000

The remaining \$40,000 has been invested in CDs and will be used for future needs of the congregation as they arise.

## New stewardship resources available

The Southeastern Iowa Synod is working to provide more resources for congregations to use in annual stewardship and capital fund drives. Using an undesignated bequest, the synod has contracted with the James Company, a Christian fund-raising group, to help congregations expand their financial resources.

Two informational meetings have been scheduled—the first on Tuesday, Aug. 8, at the synod office in Iowa City, the second on Wednesday, Aug. 9, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Des Moines. Pastor Jasch will be attending one of the meetings and invites anyone interested to accompany him. Contact him for details.

Stewardship

## Words of thanks

**TO MY FRIENDS** at St. John's Lutheran Church in Grinnell:

I have been truly blessed to have had eight years as a member of the church. You are special people. I always felt welcome. I will never forget you. Thank you and I love you.



My children have me settled in my new home in Albert Lea. It is a beautiful home. I can watch the golfers, trees, green grass, blue sky, birds and once in a while a fox. God has truly blessed me.

I miss all of you and hope you will stop to see me. My telephone is 507-369-0226. My address is 1814 Lake-wood Drive, Albert Lea, MN 56007

*Sincerely,  
Colleen Politz*

**THANK YOU** for the prayers, cards, visits and meals following my recent surgery. God bless.

*Lois Quindt*

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU** to Kathy Barger for providing the miniature bouquets of garden flowers in the sanctuary windows throughout the summer. Members of Autumn Leaves enjoyed a tour of Kathy's lovely garden in June.

**THANKS, TOO**, for the support of the Plant a Row for the Hungry, a local effort to encourage home gardeners to share their surplus produce with those in need through MICA. A donation box is located in the narthex. Produce collected on Saturdays and Sundays is delivered to MICA on Sunday, with distribution on Monday.

## Keep in your prayers this month

*Our Southeastern Iowa Synod encourages each congregation to include in prayers the following churches, groups and ministries*

### **Week of August 6**

St. Mark Lutheran Church, Marion, Iowa  
For Shoulder to Shoulder Latino Family Camp

### **Week of August 13**

Northwestern and Southwestern Pennsylvania Synods  
For students and teachers returning to school

### **Week of August 20**

Elim, Marshalltown  
For newly ordained pastors as they enter their first calls

### **Week of August 27**

Northeastern and Southeastern Pennsylvania Synods  
For Bishop Steve Talmage as he begins his ministry as bishop of our sister synod, the Grand Canyon Synod

## Church Council highlights

*The following is a summary of the Church Council meeting held July 24. The next meeting will be Aug. 21.*

**FINANCIAL:** Council members approved the allocation of \$9,861 from the estate of the late Irene Broders as recommended by council treasurer Gary Cook. More information on page 3.

**PROPERTIES:** Council members approved landscaping the edge of the west side of the church building with pebbles to help with lawn maintenance. The same treatment has been used on the south side of the building.

**MEMORIAL COMMITTEE:** Council members approved a committee recommendation to use memorial money to purchase 10 folding tables to replace existing tables, at an approximate cost of \$1,500 and to purchase additional sound equipment for the sanctuary, at a cost of approximately \$2,500. Committee co-chairman Donna Beck said the group will develop a "wish list" of needed and/or desired items in order to give the congregation an idea of how memorial money could best be used.



**YOUTH:** The Youth and Family Ministry Board is continuing to seek a youth director. A representative of the board will be invited to the August meeting to review the process and discuss possible changes in the job description.

**SERVING THIS MONTH**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 5**

**Acolyte:** Kyle Irland  
**Reader:** Ted Urfer

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 6**

**Acolyte:** Jimmy Pinkerton  
**Greeters:** Fred England, Ray Parker  
**Reader:** Dave Huth  
**Communion Assistants:** Fred England, Lamonye Gaard  
**Coffee Servers:** Lu Ahrens, Verna Gerrish

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 12**

**Acolyte:** Laura Weigel  
**Reader:** Pam Ashing  
**Communion Assistant:** Charlene Knight

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 13**

**Acolyte:** Nathan Ford  
**Greeters:** Jim and Sue Bailey  
**Reader:** Paul Davoux  
**Coffee Servers:** Lynn and Terry Cline

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 19**

**Acolyte:** Kalen Winburn  
**Reader:** Sandy Falck

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 20**

**Acolyte:** Trent Baker  
**Greeters:** Willis and Phyllis Snook  
**Reader:** Gladys Booth  
**Communion Assistants:** F., V. Dillon  
**Coffee Servers:** Junior Youth

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 26**

**Acolyte:** Renee Beach  
**Reader:** Shirle Huth  
**Communion Assistant:** Sue McDonough

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 27**

**Acolyte:** Christopher Weir  
**Greeters:** Everest and Verna Gerrish  
**Reader:** Sue McDonough  
**Coffee Servers:** Steve, Cindy, Danny Dudley, Sara Hagemeister,

**AUGUST CALENDAR**

<b>Tue</b>	<b>1</b>	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	Quilt Making, Fellowship Hall
<b>Sat</b>	<b>5</b>	5:30 pm	Worship
<b>Sun</b>	<b>6</b>	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		9:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship
<b>Tue`</b>	<b>8</b>	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	Quilt Making, Fellowship Hall
<b>Sat</b>	<b>12</b>	5:30 pm	Worship with Holy Communion
<b>Sun</b>	<b>13</b>	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		9:30 am	Worship
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship
<b>Tue</b>	<b>15</b>	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	Quilt Making, Quilt Room
<b>Wed</b>	<b>16</b>	Noon	Autumn Leaves, Fellowship Hall
<b>Thurs</b>	<b>17</b>	9:30 am	Lydia Circle, Margaret Amo, hostess
<b>Sat</b>	<b>19</b>	5:30 pm	Worship
<b>Sun</b>	<b>20</b>	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		9:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship
<b>Mon</b>	<b>21</b>	7 pm	Church Council
<b>Tue</b>	<b>22</b>	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	Quilt Making, Quilt Room
		7 pm	Sarah Circle
<b>Sat</b>	<b>26</b>	5:30 pm	Worship with Holy Communion
<b>Sun</b>	<b>27</b>	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		9:30 am	Worship
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship
<b>Tue</b>	<b>29</b>	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	Quilt Making, Quilt Room
<b>Wed</b>	<b>30</b>	7 pm	Confirmation class, initial meeting Fellowship Hall

**USHERS FOR AUGUST:** Dennis Van Hamme, Dale Lamb (*head ushers*); Travis Smith, Jerry Henschen, Jan Sherlock, Danielle Nowasell

**ALTAR GUILD**

July 10 to August 14 — Mitzi Dufoe  
 Month of August — Mary Schuchmann  
 August 14-September 11 — Julie Beach

**OFFERING COUNTERS:** John and Madge Ruchotzke



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1224 East Street  
Grinnell, Iowa 50112  
(641) 236-4946

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### AUGUST 2006

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### Return Service Requested

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## GRACE MATTERS

Radio Ministry of the ELCA, with host, the Rev. Peter W. Marty  
Heard locally at 7:30 a.m. Sundays on KGRN, AM1410

### AUGUST 6

#### A Life vs. a Lifestyle

*John 6:35-37*

The search for meaning in life is as old as Adam and Eve. Before wasting more time hungering after the wrong things, listen for a word from Jesus that has as much to do with making a life as making a living.

### AUGUST 13

#### My Forever Mom

*Luke 13:34*

Adopting a child requires all kinds of determination and love. Adopting five children, all on the same day, requires amazing grace. [Lynn Pauley](#) is full of such grace. She joins us to describe the privilege she enjoys in being the mother of five adopted kids from inner city Los Angeles.



### AUGUST 20

#### The Rhythm of the Word 2

*Timothy 1:11-14*

Take a rundown city neighborhood infested with crime and drugs and you have a recipe of disaster for young boys. That is unless someone like [Leslie Hunter](#) comes along. Meet this man of enormous faith who reaches inner city Chicago youth through spell-binding poetry, creative group time, and his own supply of God's overflowing grace.

### AUGUST 27

#### Saints Who Go Out in Style

*Psalms 34:1-9*

There's no one way to die. But to be ushered into the kingdom with someone at your bedside playing beautiful music is hard to beat. [Karin Gunderson](#) is a harpist with a heavenly touch. Her concert stage is the nearest hospice center. Explore God's grace in her as she helps others die well.