

St. John's Lutheran Church, Grinnell, IA

LOVE LETTER

FEBRUARY 2007

FEBRUARY
AT St. JOHN'S

FEBRUARY 21
Ash Wednesday

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

Paul Nelson
Interim pastor
515-233-6937

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

SUNDAY SCHOOL
Preschool through adult
Sunday at 10:45 a.m.

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

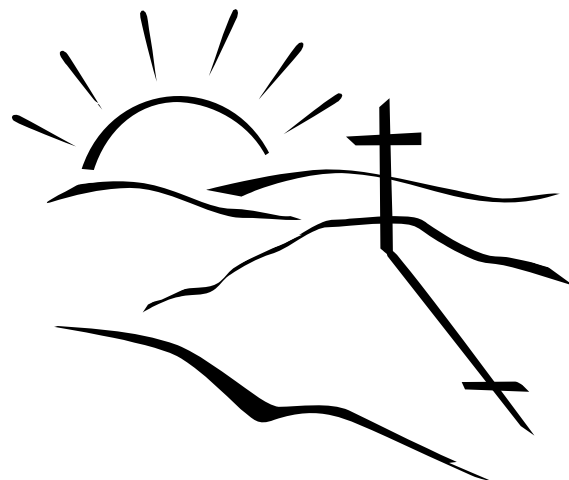
Todd Nelson, president
Dale Lamb, vice president
Barb Baker, secretary
Gary Cook, treasurer
Steve Dudley, Properties
Carolyn Bosse, Donna
Beck, Stewardship
Anita Ford, Rose Osland,
Education
Margaret Amo, Worship, Music,
Arts
Jo Olson, Fellowship
Mike Schaeffer, Service
Mary Schuchmann, Evangelism
VACANT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

IN MEMORIUM

Stephen Jasch

1952-2007

Our Pastor and Friend



*Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life.
Those who believe in me, even though they die,
will live, and everyone who lives and believes in
me will never die."*

John 11:25-26



Ash Wednesday, Lenten services planned

Lent at St. John's will be observed with an Ash Wednesday service on February 21 and midweek services on Wednesdays in Lent.

The services, which will start at 7 p.m., will be preceded by soup suppers starting at 6 p.m. On Ash Wednesday, the youth of the church will be preparing and serving a spaghetti dinner prior to the service.

Easter this year is April 8.



and bad jokes. The food is still good and, with computers and email, the jokes aren't bad either.

At the next meeting, on Wednesday, February 21, Doris and Don Sundell will show photos and talk about their recent trip to South Africa.

If you need or want more information about Autumn Leaves, please call Norm or Marilyn Erickson at 236-6902.

Church workshop to be held March 10

Congregations Together in Mission, a day-long workshop on faith and congregational life, will be held Saturday, March 10, at First Lutheran Church in Cedar Rapids. The annual event includes a variety of workshops and training sessions. A booklet giving details is available in the church office.

Food pantry in need

During the winter months when heating bills can jump dramatically, MICA sees a greater use of its food pantry.

A collection box at St. John's is located in the church narthex.

In sympathy

Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to Rebecca and Anna Jasch, on the death of their husband and father, and our pastor, Stephen Jasch. He died Jan. 22 at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City. His funeral service was held January 26 at St. John's, with Bishop Philip Hougen and Pastor Walter May officiating. Another service and the burial took place January 30 in Fargo, N.D. *In Christ is the Resurrection and the Life.*

Helps available

If you have difficulty reading the worship bulletin and would like a large-print copy, please contact the church office.

Also, audio tapes of the Sunday service are also available and can be delivered to homebound members. Contact the church office to make the arrangements..

Sing out at home!

With the introduction of our new hymnal, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, the old hymn books are no longer needed. Congregation members are welcome to take a copy of the old books — *Lutheran Book of Worship* (green book) and *With One Voice* (blue book). They're free!

Autumn Leaves welcomes all ages

Autumn Leaves, the organization at church for senior citizens, was started in 1980 when Pastor Reitz was here. Autumn Leaves still meets every third Wednesday at noon for a potluck meal followed by a short program.

Although most of us are senior citizens, we invite anyone who has the third Wednesday free, to come and join us.

Pastor Dixon used to say that Autumn Leaves involved good food

Church finances through December 2006

	2006	2005
Offerings	\$191,368	\$188,704
Budget	\$243,605*	\$225,668
Expenses	\$183,682	\$184,571

**Note: The 2006 budget includes money for a youth director, a position that has not been filled to date. For a more accurate comparison, the 2006 budget minus the youth position would be \$189,329.*

Interim pastor begins work

A warm welcome to the Rev. Paul Nelson, who will be serving as our part-time interim pastor until we call and hire a full-time pastor.

Pastor Nelson will lead worship on Sundays every week and on one Saturday evening a month. (Muriel Johannessen from Newton will lead the service on the other Saturdays.) Pastor Nelson also will be the worship leader at the Ash Wednesday and midweek Lenten services.

He will have office hours at St. John's on Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Wednesdays from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. He will teach the confirmation class on Wednesday evenings and plans to lead the adult education class on Sunday mornings.

Pastor Nelson grew up in the Chicago area and lived much of his life on the East Coast. He currently lives in Ames with his wife, the Rev. Sarah Larsen Nelson, and their three children, Elizabeth, 11, Peter, 8, and Timothy, 6. Sarah is a full-time pastor at Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Ames. By choice, Paul has served most recently in interim positions. As a clergy couple, Paul says, he and Sarah decided that while their children are young, one of them would work full-time and the other part-time.

The ministry is a second career for Pastor Nelson. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J., and worked first as a city planner. He entered seminary in 1990, first at Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia and later at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque. He was ordained in 1994. Since that time, he has served churches in Iowa in Ottumwa, Muscatine, Des Moines and Duncombe.

For the last three years, he has also worked as an adjunct instructor at DMACC in Boone in the areas of world religion, ethics and philosophy.

In his leisure time, Pastor Nelson likes to jog, play golf and read (murder mysteries and theology), as well as watch movies with his family.

He wants to be accessible and available to the St. John's congregation whenever needed. He can be reached at his home in Ames by phone (515-233-6937) or by email larnel@peoplepc.com.

The church council approved a contract with Pastor Nelson at its meeting on January 14

Congregation holds semiannual meeting

Here are the highlights of the semiannual meeting held after worship on January 28. Todd Nelson, president of the Council of Ministers, presided.

TREASURER GARY COOK reviewed 2006 spending and presented the 2007 budget. He noted that the church ended the year with a \$32,000 surplus (approximately \$8,000 more than the surplus a year ago). He thanked members for their financial support. "You make my job easy," he said. A 2007 budget of \$248,334 was proposed and approved. The amount is 2 percent over the 2006 budget.



IN RESPONSE to a question about hiring a youth director, Bev Huebner, a member of the Youth and Family Ministry Board, said the search continues to be difficult, mainly because there are few available candidates. Pastor Nelson agreed, saying that his wife's church in Ames has not been able to fill a similar position. It was noted that the 2007 budget contains approximately \$36,000 (salary and benefits) for a youth director but that the money will not be spent unless someone is hired. The church is no longer contracting with the Tentmakers organization and so will pay for recruiting and training only as needed.

IT WAS NOTED that the handicapped-accessible bathroom could benefit from grab bars and railings.

CONGREGATION MEMBERS present at the meeting voted to give a gift of \$12,000 to Rebecca Jasch in memory and honor of Pastor Jasch and his dedication to St. John's. The amount represents \$1,000 for each year of service to our church. The money will come from the bequest received last year from the Irene Broders' estate.

VOLUNTEERS are needed to attend the Synod Assembly on June 8-9 at Augustana College, Rock Island, Ill.

NOTES OF THANKS

Thank you to everyone who sent condolences at the time of my sister Sarah Burk's death.

Sue McDonough

Many thanks to all who helped prepare and serve the luncheon following Pastor Jasch's funeral and to those who contributed to the potluck held after the semiannual congregational meeting.



*Donna Beck
Jo Olson*

The Hymn Festival in January that introduced the new *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* book was planned by Cheryl, Irland. Thank you, Cheryl.

Worship Committee

Youth News

Service opportunities

YOUTH in grades 5-12 will be in charge at the soup supper preceding the Ash Wednesday service on February 21. Families will be contacted with details.

JUNIOR YOUTH (grades 5-8) will serve at the coffee hour after worship on Sunday, February 18. The following young people are asked to bring two dozen treats: Eli Dunne, Katelin Dunne, Breanna Sanders, Scott Bosse, Kalen Winburn and Christopher Weir. Parent helpers that day are Jim and Sara Hegg-Dunne and Gordon and Carolyn Bosse.

..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 February 4

Zion Lutheran Church, Muscatine

For all who are hungry, and for all those who strive to alleviate hunger.

Week of February 11

Oregon and Montana Synods

For the World Council of Churches 9th Assembly, that God's kingdom will shine in all corners of the world.

Week of February 18

Memorial Lutheran Church, Nevada

For the global church, as we enter the season of Lent.

Week of February 26

Sierra Pacific Synod

For the women of the Synodical Presidents as they meet.

Church Council highlights

Summary of the Church Council meeting held on January 14. Pastor Walter May of the Southeastern Iowa Synod staff was present.

UPCOMING: St. John's has been asked to consider hosting the Synod Convocation on April 21.

EVANGELISM: Mary Schuchmann is continuing to look into the possibility of an electronic weekly newsletter, in addition to the monthly printed *Love Letter*.

SEWARDSHIP: Updates for the sound system in the sanctuary have been installed. The cost will be covered from memorial funds contributed in memory of Almira McDonough.

PROPERTIES: Council members discussed the ongoing problem of heating the elevator and the south entryway.

NEW BUSINESS: In response to a request to use part of St. John's for day-care purposes, council members said the building does not meet the code requirements for such use.

NEW BUSINESS: Council members voted to contribute \$500 to the Jasch family for out-of-pocket expenses associated with Pastor Jasch's illness and hospitalization.

SERVING THIS MONTH

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Acolyte: Christopher Weir
Reader: Nancy Heineman

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Acolyte: Kalen Winburn
Greeters: John and Dorothy Martinek
Reader: Kay Davoux
Communion Assistants: Paul and Kay Davoux
Nursery: Pam Ashing
Coffee Servers: Shirley Jensen,
Sue McDonough, Lynn and Terry Cline

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10

Acolyte: Scott Bosse
Reader: Sandy Falck
Communion Assistant: Nancy Urfer

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Acolyte: Zach Boehmer
Greeters: Dale and Doris Selix
Reader: Dorothy Buchmeier
Nursery: Sarah Dalby Albright
Coffee Servers: Deb and Lance Longman,
John and Dorothy Martinek,

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Acolyte: Katelin Dunne
Reader: Gladys Booth

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Acolyte: Renee Beach
Greeters: Becky Wilson, Natalie Pavey
Reader: Shirle Huth
Communion Assistants: Jim and Sara Dunne
Nursery: Tammie Van Hamme
Coffee Servers: Junior Youth

ASH WEDNESDAY

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Acolyte: Trent Baker
Communion Assistants: Kathy, Gaylen Johnson

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Acolyte: Renee Beach
Reader: Sue McDonough
Communion Assistant: Sue McDonough

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Acolyte: Nathan Ford
Greeters: Jannell Luebben, Gladys Booth
Reader: Nicole Behrens
Nursery: Shirley Broders
Coffee Servers: Erica and Mike Olson,
Rose and Keith Osland

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Acolyte: Kyle Irland

Sat	3	5:30 pm	Worship
Sun	4	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		9:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to Adult
Mon	5	7 pm	Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall
Tue	6	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	Quilt Making, Quilt Room
		6:15 pm	Confirmation Class
Sat	19	5:30 pm	Worship with Holy Communion
Sun	11	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		8:30 am	Choir rehearsal
		9:30 am	Worship
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to Adult
Mon	12	7 pm	Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall
Tue	13	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	Quilt Making, Quilt Room
Wed	14	1:30 pm	Mary Martha Circle, Doris Sundell, hostess
		6:15 pm	Confirmation Class
Thurs	15	9:30 am	Lydia Circle
Sat	17	5:30 pm	Worship
Sun	18	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		8:30 am	Choir rehearsal
		9:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to Adult
Mon	19	7 pm	Church Council, meeting room
		7 pm	Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall
Tue	20	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	Quilt Making, Quilt Room
Wed	21	Noon	Autumn Leaves, Fellowship Hall
		6 pm	Soup Supper
		6:30 pm	Choir rehearsal
		7 pm	Ash Wednesday worship service
Sat	24	5:30 pm	Worship with Holy Communion
Sun	25	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		8:30 am	Choir rehearsal
		9:30 am	Worship
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to Adult
Mon	26	7 pm	Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall
Tue	27	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	Quilt Making, Quilt Room
		7 pm	Sarah Circle, Donna Beck, hostess
Wed	28	6 pm	Soup Supper
		7 pm	Lenten worship

USHERS FOR FEBRUARY: Ted Urfer, Paul Nowasell (*head ushers*), Kyle Jaeger, Curtis Smith, Russ Behrens, Nicole Behrens

ALTAR GUILD

January 8-February 12 — Bev Cook
Month of February — Nancy Urfer
February 12-March 12 — Vicki Dillon

OFFERING COUNTERS FOR FEBRUARY: Bob and Sandy Falck

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LOVE LETTER is published monthly by St. John's Lutheran Church. Mary Schuchmann, editor. Deadline for each issue is the 20th of the previous month.

Return Service Requested

GRACE MATTERS

Radio Ministry of the ELCA

FEBRUARY 4

The Undivided Life

Luke 3:21-22

Are you living your own life or the fragments of someone else's life? At times we follow the temptation to try and assume a different character than the one God most wants us to be. But digging beneath all external appearances, there is a hidden wholeness in each of our lives, planted there by God. Author, speaker and popular retreat leader [Parker Palmer](#) has spent his life tracking the fingerprints of God on the human soul and retrieving the hidden wholeness we all are after.



FEBRUARY 11

Singing As a Way of Life

Psalms 13:6

Some people run out of creativity in their 80s as their bodies naturally wear down and their spirits fight to keep up. But not [Mary Over](#). This retired professor of music and song leader in the Mennonite Church has a passion for music from around the world, just as she has an undying love for teaching. Put it all together and she will tell you what it adds up to: A fulfilling life.

FEBRUARY 18

Facing the Big Questions in Life

1 Corinthians 13:2

[Dr. Timothy Johnson](#), longtime medical editor for ABC news, is not afraid to ask the big questions of religion and science. As both minister and physician, he is intrigued by the interplay of two worlds that many people find hopelessly at odds. He brings his incisive mind and spiritual vitality to a conversation about the "hows" of science and the "whys" of faith.

FEBRUARY 25

Break Out the Angel Food Cake

Psalms 104:14-15

People may joke frequently about church potluck suppers. But in one congregation, a few shared meals became the testing ground for an entire cookbook of recipes from the Bible. [Anthony Chifolo](#) and [Rayner "Rusty" Hesse](#) put their biblical research and culinary wizardry to work for creating this imaginative resource. They join the program to help uncover the significance of hospitality in ancient times and its place around our tables today. Great food for thought!