

LOVE LETTER

FEBRUARY 2008

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
515-203-9525
pastornelson@iowatelecom.net

Muriel Johannessen, AIM
641-791-1044

WORSHIP

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

SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:45 a.m. Sunday

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
8 a.m. to noon
At other times, leave a message
at the office, 236-4946, or call Jo
Olson, 641-990-0618

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Dale Lamb, president
Bob Falck, vice president
Bev Cook, secretary
Gary Cook, treasurer
Dan Huebner, Properties
Carolyn Bosse,
Donna Beck, Stewardship
Stephanie Nelson, Education
Margaret Amo, Worship,
Music, Arts
Jo Olson, Fellowship
Mike Schaeffer, Service
Sue McDonough, Evangelism
Amy Anderson, Youth

St. John's Lenten Journey

Many Christians have referred to the 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter as the "journey" of the Lenten season. This year at St. John's, the Lenten season quite possibly takes on an added meaning and urgency. I say this because the church's Call Committee recently completed its work and the congregation has extended a call to a new pastor.

St. John's has taken many steps since Pastor Jasch's death a year ago. The congregation has continued to work, pray, worship and serve its neighbors through the interim or transitional period as a congregation (January 2007 to the present).

Quite literally, this congregation has moved from "death" and toward "new life" in its pastoral leadership. And, it is my prayer that St. John's has fully and inwardly embraced this new life as a congregation that is being experienced, in a very real way, as the "death of the old" and the "appearing of the new." There is energy and anticipation for new pastoral and lay leadership here at St. John's.

It seems appropriate then, that St. John's enters this "appearing of the new" during Lent; the period when we move from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday; from symbols of mortality and death of the old, and on to those of new life and hope.

As your interim pastor, it has been my privilege to accompany St. John's during this transitional period. There have been "bumpy spots" of encountering uncomfortable and anxiety-producing (but necessary?) realities of conflict, experiencing disagreement, and then achieving at least some measure of resolution of the conflict. Hopefully, congregational leaders have been sensitized to conflict as a fact of every congregation's life and have had a healthy "coming together" in the aftermath of the conflict. There has also

been a movement of the Spirit in initiating some relatively new ministry efforts and empowering some members who may not have been as active in

the past years of St. John's congregational life. Many of us have discussed and learned and prayed together. Still others have begun to dream and even act on those dreams of what St. John's might be. In addition, Muriel Johannessen and I have planned and coordinated our leadership efforts and hopefully have left behind a model for cooperative, mutual leadership.

I believe St. John's has embarked on its "Lenten Journey" from its past and on into its future. Has new life taken hold? By God's grace, I think it has. Thanks be to God!

*In God's Peace,
Pastor Paul Nelson*



Lent begins



A call has been extended

At a special congregational meeting on January 27, members voted to extend a call to [name withheld on web site edition] to become full-time pastor at St. John's. Under synod guidelines for the call process, she has 30 days to respond to our call.

At the semiannual congregational meeting that followed the special meeting, treasurer Gary Cook reviewed 2007 spending and presented the 2008 general fund budget as well as a proposal to add an additional \$27,000 for tuckpointing to the church building. The final budget of \$255,135 was approved. The amount includes salary, benefits and relocation expenses for a new pastor. It does not include money for a youth director. The total is 2.8 percent higher than a year ago. In other financial-related matters, congregation members at the meeting approved using memorial money to pay for improvements to the organ.

Nancy Locker was named as one of our two delegates to the Synod Assembly, to be held May 16-18 at the Marriott Hotel and Convention Center in Coralville. A male delegate is still needed.

Midweek services set



Midweek Lenten worship will be held at St. John's at 7 p.m. starting with Ash Wednesday, February 6, and continuing for the next five Wednesdays. The liturgy for the services will be based on Marty Haugen's beautiful "That You May Have Life." Each service will be preceded by a soup supper starting at 6 p.m. Easter this year is March 23.

Rescheduled

The WELCA luncheon planned for January will be held at 11:30 a.m. Saturday, February 23, in the Fellowship Hall. Lunch will be provided and white elephants (including unclaimed items left

in the kitchen) will be auctioned. Signup sheets will be posted.

Keys, more or less

Additional keys to the church building will be made soon. If your family does not have a key, contact the church office before February 15. Also, if you have a key to the church office and are no longer on the council, please return it to the church office.

Prayer chain update

If you would like to be added to the phone and/or email Prayer Chain at St. John's, please call the church office. (Contact the church, too, if you want your name removed from the list.) Call the office also if you have a message for the Prayer Chain.

Another copier

A copier is in the Sunday School office for use by the Sunday School and other church groups. If you use it, please remember to turn it off!

Workshop planned

Congregations Together in Mission, a day-long synod resource workshop on faith and congregational life, will be held Saturday, March 1, at First Lutheran Church in Cedar Rapids. For more information, contact the church office. Registrations are due by February 15.

Worship, lunch in Lent

The Grinnell Ministerial Association annually sponsors midweek Lenten worship and luncheons at various Grinnell churches. The brief service begins at 12:10 p.m. and is followed by a luncheon. Dates, locations and speakers for February include:

February 13

at United Church of Christ
Rev. John Saxton

February 20

at St. Mary's Catholic Church
Deacon Diane Eberhart

February 27

at First Presbyterian Church
Rev. George Edgerly

Church finances through end of the year, December 2007

	2007	2006
Offerings	\$179,785	\$191,368
Budget	\$211,270	\$243,605*
Expenses	\$172,404	\$183,682

*The 2006 budget included money for a youth director. The 2007 budget figure listed here does not include that position.

St. John's Youth Ministry

**Our mission: To
Inspire, Connect, and Enrich
Youth in Living a Christ-
Centered Life**

On Ash Wednesday

Youth of the church in grades 4-12 will be serving the supper on Ash Wednesday, February 6. We will serve chili, chicken noodle soup, dinner rolls, corn muffins, carrots, celery, dessert, and beverages. Families have been notified about what to bring. All soups need to be at the church by 4:30 p.m., other food items by 5:30. All youth need to arrive by 5:30 to help with setup and serving, which begins at 6. Clean up will be done before church begins at 7.

Please call Amy Anderson (236-5792) if you will **not** be able to provide the food item. Thanks in advance for helping!

Serving in February

Youth members of St. John's provide refreshments and serve at the coffee hour on the third Sunday of every month. Donations are used to pay for youth activities and projects during the year. Serving on February 17 will be Katelyn Ditzler, Laura Weigel, Danielle Nowasell, Kyle Irland and Curtis Smith. Parent helpers that day are Rick and Luann Weigel and Doug and Judy Smith.



Reaching out to the congregation

As part of our responsibility to share the Gospel with others, the Evangelism Committee will soon begin calling on members who we have missed seeing in church in recent weeks or months. Eight members of the committee have volunteered to help with the calling: Fred England, Robert and Sandy Falck, Lamoyne Gaard, Nancy Locker, Sue McDonough, Brenda Mikel and Molly Urfer (when she is available).

Because we realize this is a big, important job, we're looking for more congregation members to help out by going along on the visits. It is our prayer that you will consider this invitation, knowing that God will work with you to witness for Him. At our next Evangelism Committee meeting on Tuesday, February 12 (7 p.m.), I hope to have someone come and speak to us about these visits – what to say, how to say it, etc. Please contact any of the members listed above if you are willing to accompany someone as a helper. We hope to be ready to begin the visiting by the time a new pastor accepts our call to come to St. John's.

While we have a committed and enthusiastic committee, it's important to remember that we are **all** called to reach out to the congregation and the community. If any of you know of someone new in Grinnell or someone within our church who is ill or otherwise in need, please inform the committee. We depend on your help.

*Sue McDonough
Evangelism Committee*

Think about donating altar flowers

Donating fresh flowers for the altar is a thoughtful, meaningful way to mark special occasions in our lives – anniversaries, birthdays, births – and to honor or remember someone who has been important to us. There was a time when members frequently donated altar flowers, but in recent years the practice has dwindled. We'd like to restore the custom and so are encouraging members to consider furnishing flowers as they are able. In addition to the personal satisfaction of highlighting something or someone in your life, donations also help the church financially, because the cost of flowers, when there are no donations, is taken out of the general fund of the church budget. (In most cases, flowers are refrigerated during the week and used again the following weekend.)

To donate flowers, sign your name on the Flower Chart located inside the front door of the church, indicating which Saturday/Sunday you wish the donation to be used. You can either purchase the flowers yourself or have them ordered for you. Jo in the church office will contact you to get the wording of the donation for the worship bulletin.

NOTES OF THANKS

Dear Members of Autumn Leaves,
Thank you for the Christmas greetings and for remembering Anna and me in your prayers. We both miss our life and friends at St. John's. I continue to pray that God will be with you and guide you as you call a new pastor.

Yes, my cousin Heidi and I went to the Republic of Georgia to see Anna for Christmas. It is a fascinating place with very strong independent people. It's a shame they ever got involved with the Soviet Union, but since their independence, life has been very different. When the government crumbled, the people were without the systems of transportation, communication, electricity, postal service, police, etc. The hardships and poverty are a real challenge. Of course, with a weak government there are lots of internal power struggles and lots of corruption, but it appears that the majority of the people want democracy and are grateful for the support the United States is providing in rebuilding their country.

May God bless you all in 2008.

*In Christ's love,
Rebecca (Jasch)*

I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all involved in my wonderful "recognition day" on December 23. Special thanks go to Sue McDonough for organizing the event, to Jo Olson for all her help, and for the many lovely cards and kind words, good wishes, generous gifts (including the beautiful picture from the congregation), and to all the members who were able to attend despite the inclement weather. Again, thank you for allowing me to do what I have enjoyed for all these years.

*Sincerely,
Margaret Amo*

Wishing you a Happy Birthday!

Birthdays of St. John's members are now included in the Love Letter. The information is taken from our membership rolls. If you see errors or omissions, please call the church office. (Apparently we have no Leap-Year babies at St. John's!).

February 1

Helen Clausen
Nancy Heineman

February 2

Amanda Osland

February 4

Mike Baker
David Buren

February 6

Ashlee Staerk

February 8

Bradley Ditzler
David Koch
Erika Olson

February 9

Briana VandeStouwe

February 10

Nicole Dunne
Kade Hatcher
Howard McDonough
Todd Nelson
Gage Sanders
Nicholas Stepanek

February 12

Elizabeth Ashing
David Beck
John Heineman

February 14

Scott Bosse
Mitzi Dufoe
Ralph Lubben



February 15

Sarah Ashing
Lynn Cline
Shirley Jensen

February 16

Delores Kinseth
Wilford Mikel

February 17

Jeff Longman
Ruth Mithelman

February 18

Jim Dunn

February 19

Robin Broders
Addy Hanson
Christopher Weir

February 20

Emma Luttmann
Chance Winburn

February 21

Angela Jensen
Lana Rasumssen

February 23

Rebecca Dufoe
Brent Smith
Craig Weir

February 24

Vicki Dillon
Natalie Pavey

February 28

Irene Edgeton

STEWARDSHIP OF SERVICE IN FEBRUARY

MONEY COUNTERS: Pat and Steve Gustafson, Lamoyne Gaard

USHERS FOR SATURDAY WORSHIP: Feb. 2 — Shirle and Dave Huth; Feb. 9 — Donna Beck, Bobbie Kahler; Feb. 16 — Charlene and Albert Knight; Feb. 23 — Sue McDonough and Kathy Kriegel

USHERS FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP Ted Urfer and Paul Nowasell (*head ushers*), Russ and Nicole Behrens

ALTAR GUILD: January 8-February 12 — Bev Cook; Month of February — Nancy Urfer; February 12-March 11 — Nancy Beck

STEWARDSHIP OF SERVICE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Acolyte: Jarren Ford
Greeter: Shirle Huth
Reader: Sue McDonough

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Acolyte: Caprise Honsbruch
Greeters: John and Dorothy Martinek
Reader: Dorothy Buchmeier
Communion Assistants: Pam and Bob Ashing
Coffee Servers: T.,A.,N. Ford, Natalie Pavey
Nursery: Laura Weigel

ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

\ **Acolyte:** Ashley Mikel

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Acolyte: Joe Nowasell
Greeter: Bobbie Kahler
Reader: Gary Cook

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10

Acolyte: Zach Osland
Greeters: Dale and Doris Selix
Reader: Pam Ashing
Coffee Servers: Jean, Vic Frana, Nancy Urfer
Nursery: AJ Baker

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Acolyte: Breanna Sanders

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16

Acolyte: Troy Smith
Greeters: Charlene and Albert Knight
Reader: Donna Beck

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Acolyte: Ollie VandeStouwe
Greeters: Becky Wilson, Addy Hanson
Reader: Nicole Behrens
Communion Assistants: Jim and Sara Dunne
Coffee Servers: Senior Youth
Nursery: Renee Beach

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Acolyte: Zach Boehmer

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23

Acolyte: Scott Bosse
Greeters: Kathy Kriegel
Reader: Nancy Heineman
Communion: Nancy Urfer

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Acolyte: Katelin Dunn
Greeters: Lance and Deb Longman
Reader: Ashley Mikel
Coffee Servers: S.,F. Hagemeister, Addy Hanson
Nursery: Pam Ashing

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Acolyte: Joe Reitz

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sat	2	5:30 pm	Worship
Sun	3	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		8:30 am	Senior Choir rehearsal, Music Room
		9:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to Adult
Mon	4	11 am	Bible Study with Muriel, Meeting Room
		6:30 pm	Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall
Tue	5	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	LWR Quilters, Room 9
Wed	6	6 pm	Supper served by youth of the church
		6:30 pm	Senior Choir rehearsal, Music Room
		7 pm	Ash Wednesday worship service
Fri	8	4 pm	Scrapbooking, Fellowship Hall
Sat	9	8 am	Scrapbooking, Fellowship Hall
		5:30 pm	Worship
Sun	10	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		9:30 am	Worship
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to Adult
Mon	11	11 am	Bible Study with Muriel, Meeting Room
		6:30 pm	Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall
Tue	12	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	LWR Quilters, Room 9
		7 pm	Evangelism Committee, Meeting Room
Wed	13	1:30 pm	Mary Martha Circle, Doris Sundell, hostess
		6 pm	Soup supper
		6:20 pm	Celebration Singers rehearsal
		7 pm	Midweek Lenten worship service
Sat	16	5:30 pm	Worship
Sun	17	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		8:30 am	Senior Choir rehearsal, Music Room
		9:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to Adult
Mon	18	11 am	Bible Study with Muriel, Meeting Room
		6:30 pm	Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall
Tue	19	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	LWR Quilters, Room 9
		7 pm	Sarah Circle
Wed	20	Noon	Autumn Leaves, Fellowship Hall
		6 pm	Soup supper
		7 pm	Midweek Lenten worship service
Thurs	21	9:30 am	Lydia Circle, Sandy Falck, hostess
Sat	23	11:30 am	WELCA luncheon, Fellowship Hall
		5:30 pm	Worship, special WELCA service
Sun	24	7:30 am	Grace Matters, KGRN 1410 AM
		8:30 am	Senior Choir rehearsal, Music Room
		9:30 am	Worship, special WELCA service
Mon	25	11 am	Bible Study with Muriel, Meeting Room
		6:30 pm	Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall
Tue	26	7 am	Men's Breakfast, Westside Diner
		1 pm	LWR Quilters, Room 9
		7 pm	Sarah Circle
Wed	27	6 pm	Soup supper
		6:20 pm	Celebration Singers rehearsal
		7 pm	Midweek Lenten worship service

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

Return Service Requested



GRACE MATTERS

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

FEBRUARY 3

Eugene Peterson – Part I – Alphabet of Faith

Luke 2:19

It can be a joy to hear someone who writes extensively and well actually talk about the words that comprise his or her writing. That is the privilege of this edition of *Grace Matters*. [Eugene Peterson](#), who translated the entire Bible into the contemporary translation, *The Message*, speaks to different words in the Christian vocabulary. He talks candidly about the power and gift of some words, and the detriment and misuse of others.

FEBRUARY 10

Eugene Peterson – Part II – The Perils of Ownership

Luke 14:25-33

[Eugene Peterson](#) returns for the second part of a two-part series. Here he discusses the Bible and our use of it. Nobody would seem better poised and more suited to converse about the place of Scripture in our lives than this prolific author and Bible translator. Peterson unwraps the drawbacks to our owning of Bibles, our over-study of Scripture, and our reading (instead of speaking) the Word. He speaks, however, with nothing less than a passionate love for Scripture and the difference it makes in our lives.

FEBRUARY 17

Peter Gomes – Be Transformed

Romans 12:1-2

[Peter Gomes](#), professor of Christian morals at Harvard University and pastor of the Memorial Church there, is often referred to as one of America's great preachers. In part, this acclaim is due to Gomes' witty use of words, his clever cultural insights, and his deep belief that Christians need transformation in Christ, not conformity to the world. If you have not thought about the transformation of your own spiritual life in a while, this program will get your creative juices flowing.

FEBRUARY 24

Carmen Richards – Stretched to the Limit

Psalms 90:1-12

Have you ever felt over-committed, over-scheduled, over-ambitious, over-eager or over-programmed? We "try to do it all" and find that strategy to come up short. In this program, host Peter W. Marty speaks to the limits that God puts upon our lives, not as drawbacks or defects, but as reminders of our mortality and finitude. These limits also happen to afford us an opportunity to draw closer to God. His conversation partner is [Carmen Richards](#), national president of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.