

LOVE LETTER

FEBRUARY 2009

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

The Rev. Kathryn Roys, pastor
pastorkathy@iowatelecom.net

Muriel Johannessen,
Associate in Ministry
muriel@iowatelecom.net

WORSHIP

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

SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:45 a.m. Sunday, preschool
through Adult Forum

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
8 a.m. to noon. At other times,
leave a message at the office,
236-4946

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Bob Falck, president
Nancy Heineman, vice president
Bev Cook, secretary
Gary Cook, treasurer
Dan Huebner, Properties
Donna Beck, Stewardship
Kelly Rose, Education
Lisa Henderson, Worship,
Music, Arts
Bobbie Kahler, Fellowship
Mike Schaeffer, Service
Sue McDonough, Evangelism
Amy Anderson, Youth

Behind the scenes at St. John's

St John's is filled with servant leaders — dedicated people who quietly apply their talents to be the Body of Christ at St John's. Countless people each month give innumerable hours in serving our Lord here and beyond our walls. Look below for clues to a few of the many people who help. How many you can name? (You can find the answers within the articles on the succeeding pages of the Love Letter.) Thank them the next time you see them. I thank my God for the opportunity to serve beside you and them here at St John's Lutheran Church.

- 1 Coordinates meal ministry hospitality for our congregation and is our next congregation's president.
- 2 Able to entertain 10 children at a time on early release days, with smiles and compassion that know no bounds.
- 3 Completing his term of service this year as our congregation's president and serves as a Faith Friend to a confirmand.
- 4 A new member who will be one of our Synod Assembly delegates.
- 5 Actually understands the mechanics of our elevator, and helps restore it to running when temperamental.
- 6 Works at Storks Nest monthly, assisting young mommas to give their babies a healthy start.
- 7 Leads a new group at St. John's dedicated to making prayer shawls for those in need of comfort and support.
- 8 Has figured out the intricacies of bulk mailings, saving St John's much moola each year.
- 9 Provides funding for *Grace Matters* radio ministry to the entire community (7:30 am Sunday morning).
- 10 Co-lead the gathering music for Sunday School and directed the Christmas program.
- 11 Reminds us to add a couple of extra food items to our carts for the MICA food pantry and writes a pretty humorous skit.
- 12 Climbs a 20-foot ladder to change light bulbs in the sanctuary— rivaling any fear factor challenge.
- 13 Absolutely essential for St John's to reach its full potential.

Your partner on the journey,
Pastor Kathy



AROUND the CONGREGATION

Working toward accessibility, hospitality

A task force is being formed to look at possibilities for the chairs that will be installed in the sanc-



tuary. In an effort to make the sanctuary more accessible and comfortable to wor-

shippers who use wheelchairs or walkers, chairs will replace two pews on either side of the center aisle.

The chairs will be padded, with upholstery that matches or complements the existing pew cushions, with space alongside or underneath for hymnals and other worship materials.

If you would like to serve on the task force, please contact Pastor Kathy or Muriel.

(1 **NANCY HEINEMAN**)

Add to your shopping list: Soups and cereals for MICA

The needs at the MICA food pantry are great. During February we encourage you to bring canned soups and boxed cereals of any kind. A collection basket in the narthex.

'Last Lecture' discussion

The best-selling book, "The Last Lecture," by Randy Pausch will be discussed at two different times in February. Muriel will lead discussions on Tuesday, February 10 – one at 9 a.m. at the Westside Family Restaurant and the other at 5 p.m. at the church. The short

book is based on the life lessons that Pausch, a computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh, taught to his students soon after he was diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer.

Slowly going green

St. John's is taking small steps toward environmental conservation. Reusable bowls have been purchased and will be used instead of disposable bowls for soup suppers and other meals. Planners of the Saturday worship service are experimenting with different ways to save paper in the worship folders.

Looking ahead to Lent

Lent begins this year on February 26. (Easter is April 12.) St. John's will offer a variety of ways to help you reflect and find meaning in the Lenten season..

Midweek worship

Midweek Lenten worship on Wednesdays will feature dramatic readings of conversations that may have taken place between people who were witnesses to the last days of Jesus in Jerusalem. Plan to join us as we reflect on the events of those days, so momentous for all of us. The services at 7 p.m. will follow a simple soup supper at 6 p.m. (2 **MURIEL JOHANNESSEN**)

Lenten study on Thursday mornings

Pastor Kathy will lead a Lenten study based on Henri Nouwen's book, "Here and Now: Living in the Spirit." The class will meet at 6:30 a.m. Thursdays starting February 27, at Saints Rest downtown. The book contains spiritual reflections from Nouwen's near-death experience in a car crash that can teach us

how to be more aware of the spiritual world in our daily life. If you would like to be part of the class, please contact the church office by February 12 so that the books can be ordered. (3 **BOB FALCK**)

Resources for devotions

A booklet of daily devotions for families called "Coming Home to the Lord" will be given to children in the congregation. The booklet is meant to help families remember and celebrate what God has done for us in Christ. It is written so that both young children and adults can learn from it

Available for adults will be a booklet titled "Holy Habits." Author Rich Bimler says Holy Habits are actions, the routines we use to keep focused and attached to Christ - such things as worship, prayer, laughter, meditation, Bible reading and more. "We choose them at first, but after a while they become a strategic part of who we are, in Christ Jesus, as the Spirit empowers us to serve and to act," Bimler says.

Budget approved at semiannual meeting

Members attending the semiannual congregational meeting on January 25 approved a 2009 general fund budget of \$254,821.

The budget is slightly less than the 2009 budget of \$255,135. That amount included \$27,000 for tuck-pointing to the church building. That work has been completed and the total bill of \$26,500 has been paid for. **(4 AUSTIN ELLING)**

Treasurer Gary Cook reviewed the 2008 budget and presented the budget for the coming year. In comments about the 2008 budget, he

noted that offerings for the year did not cover expenses but that giving was up significantly in November and December compared to a year ago. In November, for example, offerings totaled \$12,009 in 2007 and \$18,979 in 2008. In December, offerings were \$29,208 in 2007 and \$37,635 in 2008. **(5 BOB ASHING)**

Total offerings were \$181,421 in 2007 and \$206,027 in 2008.

“We’re heading in the right direction,” Gary said.

Don Sundell expressed thanks for Gary’s work as treasurer. “And

you’ll notice there’s no line item for a salary for Gary,” Bob Falck, congregation president, quipped.

In the statistical report, St. John’s in 2008 had three baptisms and five funerals. Four young people were confirmed and 11 new members joined St. John’s. We have a total of 489 confirmed members

In other business, Nancy Locker and Austin Elling will represent St. John’s at the 2009 Synod Assembly, to be held June 12-14 at Wartburg College, Waverly.

(6 BOBBIE KAHLER)

New program taking hold

First Wednesdays at St. John’s — the once-a-month afternoon program for elementary-age students — is developing into an important outreach to our young children and, we hope, the base for a vital youth program in the congregation.

What happens on a typical Wednesday afternoon? Worship is always included, but, beyond that, it’s never the same. We have gone to the park, played games, made cards for others. Last month we had an Epiphany parade, where we marched all over our church building and offered prayers, asking God to bless the sanctuary, kitchen, classrooms, offices and even the front and back doors. (We left foam stars in each room as a reminder of our blessing walk.) A part of each time together is spent making our own snacks, which gets pretty creative.

Children of elementary age in the congregation are invited to join us. Friends are welcome as well. To provide or help with snacks, please contact Natalie Pavey. To help supervise or plan, contact Muriel.



Enjoying a craft time at a First Wednesday program at St. John’s are (left to right) Hannah Behrens, Tiffany Olson and Mariah Mikel.

Words of thanks

THANK YOU for remembering me with Christmas caroling and treats. I enjoyed both very much. And thanks for the many cards sent to me.

Matilda Bauman

THE First Wednesday program could not function without the willing and able help of volunteers. Among those who have contributed their time and talents are Pam Ashing, Nicole Behrens, Keith Osland and Natalie Pavey. Thank you all!

THANK YOU to everyone who contributed a symbolic gift at our first Epiphany worship service in January. As part of the service, worshippers brought forth “gifts” for the Baby Jesus that represented their talents and interests.

TO the church mice who quietly (and sometimes not so quietly!) help keep our parking lots and entryways clear of snow and ice—a big thank you! Your work is very much appreciated. (7 JUDY LEBECK)

Wish List

We wish we had at the church....

- Lateral, locking file cabinet
- Red and yellow construction paper for use in the First Wednesday program
- Video camera and tripod

Can you help? (New or used for the file cabinet, video camera and tripod.) Contact the church office. (8 JO OLSON)

Wishing you a Happy Birthday!

February 1
Helen Clausen
Nancy Heineman

February 2
Amanda Osland

February 4
Mike Baker

February 8
Bradley Ditzler
Irene Edgeton
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
Chance Winburn

February 21
Reggie Fuller
Lana Guthrie
Angela Jensen

February 23
Laura Deppe
Rebecca Dufoe
Brent Smith
Craig Weir

February 24
Vicki Dillon
Natalie Pavey

(9 RUSS AND BRENDA CRAWFORD)

CHURCH NEWS AROUND the CONGREGATION

Directory update

Proofs for our new church directory have been reviewed, corrected and submitted to Lifetouch, the directory publisher. All families in the congregation will receive a copy when it is completed.

Synod event planned

A variety of workshops and training sessions for both lay members and clergy will be offered at the annual synod Congregations Together in Mission, to be held Saturday, March 14, at First Lutheran Church in Cedar Rapids. (Our Pastor Kathy will lead a ses-

sion titled “Simpler Living: A Study of Choice and Simplicity.”) Registration deadline is February 28. A booklet describing the courses is in the church office.

Number. please

Help keep the church financial records in order. If you use an offering envelope from the pew and not from your box, please indicate your number as well as your name,

Missing

Pam Ashing is looking for three metal baking pans with covers that she left in the church kitchen in early January.

STEWARDSHIP OF SERVICE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Acolyte: Jarren Ford
Greeters: Deb and Lance Longman
Reader: Scott Bosse
Communion Servers: Gladys Booth, Dianne Fuller
Coffee Servers: Bob and Pam Ashing
Nursery: Scott Bosse

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Acolyte: Oliver VandeStouwe
Welcome Team: The Behrens Family
Reader: Dave Huth

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Acolyte: Jacob Lamb
Greeters: The Mikel Family
Reader: Austin Elling
Coffee Servers: Cindy and Steve Dudley
Nursery: Laura Weigel

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Acolyte: Eli Dunne
Welcome Team: Dave and Shirle Huth
Reader: Karen Ashby
Communion Assistant: Karen Ashby

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Acolyte: Eli Dunne
Greeters: Addy Hanson and Irene Morrison
Reader: Sara Dunne
Communion Assistants: Jim and Sara Dunne
Coffee Servers: Junior Youth
Nursery: Tammie Van Hamme

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Acolyte: Chance Winburn
Welcome Team: Albert and Charlene Knight
Reader: Donna Beck
Communion Assistant: Nancy Beck

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Acolyte: Joe Nowasell
Greeters: Steve and Cindy Dudley
Reader: Nicole Behrens
Communion Servers: Vic and Jean Frana
Coffee Servers: K. and R. Osland, I. Morrison
Nursery: Nicole Behrens

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Acolyte: Caprisse Honsbruch
Communion Servers: Gaylen, Kathy Johnson

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Acolyte: Ashley Mikel
Welcome Team: Norm Erickson, Sue McDonough
Reader: Sue McDonough
Communion Assistant: Nancy Beck

(10 RYAN AND SARAH DAHLBY ALBRIGHT)

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Weekly meetings and activities

Staff meeting — Tuesdays at 10 am
 Bible Study with Muriel — Mondays at 11 am, Meeting Room
 Men's Breakfast — Tuesdays at 7 am, Westside Family Restaurant
 LWR Quilters — Tuesdays at 1:30 pm, Room 9

Sun	1	8:30 am	Choir rehearsal, Music Room
		9:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to/Adult Forum
Wed	4	Noon-5 pm	First Wednesday after-school program
		12:45 pm	Confirmation (11 MIKE SCHAEFFER)
		7 pm	Celebration Singers rehearsal, Sanctuary
Thurs	5	10 am	Common Thread, Church Library
Sat	7	5:30 pm	Worship
Sun	8	9:30 am	Worship
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to Adult Forum
Tue	10	9 am	Discussion of "The Last lecture" Westside
		5 pm	Discussion of "The Last Lecture" Meeting Room
		6:30 pm	Church Council, Meeting Room
Wed	11	11 am	WELCA board meeting, Meeting Room
		1:30 pm	Mary Martha Circle
		7 pm	Celebration Singers rehearsal, Sanctuary
		7 pm	Confirmation (12 GAYLEN JOHNSON)
Sat	14	5:30 pm	Worship with Holy Communion
		6:30 pm	Second Saturday fellowship, at the McDonoughs
Sun	15	8:30 am	Choir rehearsal, Music Room
		9:30 am	Worship with Holy Communion
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to Adult Forum
Tue	17	6:30 pm	Discussion of "The Shack"
Wed	18	Noon	Autumn Leaves, Fellowship Hall
		7 pm	Confirmation
		7 pm	Celebration Singers rehearsal, Sanctuary
Thurs	19	9:30 am	Lydia Circle, Jean Frana, hostess
		10 am	Common Thread, Church Library
Fri-Sat	20-21		WELCA Women's Retreat, Montour
Sat	21	5:30 pm	Worship
Sun	22	8:30 pm	Choir rehearsal, Music Room
		9:30 am	Worship
		10:30 am	Coffee Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
		10:45 am	Sunday School, Preschool to Adult Forum
Tue	24	7 pm	Sarah Circle
Wed	25	6 pm	Ash Wednesday Supper
		6:30 pm	Choir rehearsal, Music Room
		7 pm	Ash Wednesday worship service
Thurs	26	6:30 am	Lenten Study Group, Saints Rest
Sat	28	5:30 pm	Worship with Holy Communion

SUNDAY USHERS: Ted Urfer, Paul Nowasell, Russ Behrens, Nicole Behrens, Laura Weigel

MONEY COUNTERS: Ted Urfer and Mitzi Dufoe

ALTAR GUILD

February 13-February 10 — Bev Cook
 Month of February — Nancy Urfer
 February 10-March — Nancy Beck

(13 YOU!)



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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 1

Elizabeth Marquardt – Children and the Painful Consequences of Divorce

Mark 10:2-12 It is not uncommon to hear divorced couples speaking admirably of their children's resilience in coping with their own separate lives. Whether it is over confidence, guilt, or a desire to believe that one's own kids are exceptional in this regard, we cannot know the different forces that guide parents to speak like this, but author [Elizabeth Marquardt](#) calls much of it "happy talk" – talk that denies the very painful consequences that go with every divorce. Host Peter Marty reflects on the spiritual side of this pain.

FEBRUARY 8

Tom Stoner – Sacred Green Spaces
Revelation 4:11

[Tom Stoner](#) and his wife Kitty do interesting work. They head up a foundation that commits dollars and energy to creating sacred green spaces. Many of these spaces take shape in urban landscapes where vacant lots get reclaimed, drug addicts get moved along, and plants, trees, and water replace concrete rubble. They are spiritually driven people who feel a priority in helping others center their lives in God. It's quite a story of peace, hope, and civic commitment.

FEBRUARY 15

Terence Fretheim – God's Forever Promises to Abraham
Genesis 12:1-9

In a world fractured by religious wars, Abraham could be something of a unifying figure. He is central to the world's three major religions, a defining player in Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. Twelve million Jews, at least 1 billion Muslims, and 2 billion Christians position the roots of their faith around his name. So who was Abraham?



What exactly constituted his relationship with God? What were God's promises to Abraham all about? Old Testament scholar [Terry Fretheim](#) is special guest on this edition of Grace Matters.

FEBRUARY 22

Christine Grumm – A Hard Look at Poverty for Women
The Book of Ruth

[Christine Grumm](#) is president and CEO of the Women's Funding Network, more than 130 organizations devoted to assisting women around the globe. She is a change agent who goes after critical areas of need from combating poverty to achieving advances in health care, education and human rights. Host Peter Marty talks with Christine about the state of women in the world today, and why women bear the brunt of poverty in most nations.