



St. John's Eagle

December, 2013 Edition

From the Pastor's Desk

The other day our elders discussed the use of the Friendship Registers. The statistics were quite revealing.

In the first place, there was an average of 53 less people in the register than the number the ushers counted. Please try and remember to use the register each time you attend worship.

But the study revealed a second issue that surprised me. We averaged more than 16 visitors per weekend! While we lament that so many of our regular members are not attending, we celebrate that we have so many visitors!

Who are these visitors. Yes, some are prospects. There are a few who checked a desire to join, and some of them are in Bible Information Class. There are also a good number of school families who attend, even though they are not members. Some belong to other churches and come when their children participate. Others have no other church home, and we welcome them. A large number of our visitors, however, are former members and the extended family of members.

What a joy to see young people back from college or home for a holiday and in church with their parents or grandparents. Well done to those families who believed, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." Prov. 22:6. Thank you also to the congregation for keeping St. Johns and its services a welcoming and enjoyable experience. But the greatest joy is in the work of the Holy Spirit from generation to generation.

We look forward to seeing extended families again this holiday season. What better expression of unity and love than to have the family all together in church. May this become a family tradition even more important than the Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas present opening. And what better way to celebrate the blessings of Thanksgiving and Christmas than to worship our Savior in his house

...See you and yours in church!

Worship Update

This Month: We begin a new Church Year with our preparation for and celebration of our Savior's coming. For the service details this month, we will break them up into sections to try to keep everything straight for you.

Sundays in Advent (Sundays 8:00 & 10:30 am; Mondays 7:00 pm)

Theme: We Prepare for Christ's Coming

December 1/2 – First Sunday in Advent

Focus: Be Ready – He Will Come Unexpectedly

Special Note: Communion service

December 8/9 – Second Sunday in Advent

Focus: Be Repentant – Those Connected to the Branch Bear Fruit

Special Note: WELS Connection video

December 15/16 – Third Sunday in Advent

Focus: Be Patient – Appearances Can Be Deceiving

Special Notes:

- Preschool-Kindergarten Christmas Presentation in the 10:30 service
- Communion in 8:00 & Monday services; not in the 10:30 service

December 22/23 – Fourth Sunday in Advent

Focus: Don't Be Afraid – He Comes as Promised

Special Notes:

- The Youth Bible Study (SS) Christmas Service will be in the 10:30 service
- Regular services at 8:00 and Monday

Midweek Advent Services (Wednesdays 3:15 & 7:00 pm)

Theme: Advent Festivals

December 4 – First Midweek of Advent

Focus: The Annunciation of Our Lord

What This Means: The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will give birth to the Promised One

December 11 – Second Midweek of Advent

Focus: The Visitation

What This Means: Mary visits her relative Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John the Baptist

December 18 – Third Midweek of Advent

Focus: The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

What This Means: We meditate on the events surrounding the birth of John the Baptist

Christmas Season

Theme: Christ the Savior Is Born!

December 24 – The Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LES Christmas Service – 6:30 pm• Candlelight Service – 11:00 pm
December 25 – The Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Festival Service with Communion – 10:30 am
December 29/30 – First Sunday after Christmas <p>Focus: God Cares for His Son and Sons</p> <p>Special Note: Installation of Church Officers in the 10:30 service</p>
December 31 (Tuesday) – New Year's Eve <p>Focus: What's Temporary and What's Eternal</p> <p>Special Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communion service & Roll Call of the Sainted

Altar Committee for December

(No one has signed up)

Greeters for December

December 1/8	8:00 am	Arlene Obermiller, Barbara Tacey Phyllis Farver, Diane Tennant
	10:30 am	M/M Robert Faust Lynn Behrmann, Barb Laubhan
December 15/22	8:00 am	Ruth Lane, Lynn Schwall Chris Schweppe, Helen Peglow
	10:30 am	M/M Arney Schmidt Luanne Kuhl, Dorothy Kriewall
December 29	8:00 am	Nadine Dahlquist, Sherry Sylvester M/M Larry Schwartz
	10:30 am	M/M Tom Obermiller M/M Gary Hammerbacher Vi Ritterscamp

Congregational Acts

Death

November 10, 2013
Minnie (Huntley) Peil

Membership Changes

Transfer Out

Greg Crabtree to St. Paul, Saginaw

News

Thank you The family of Joshua Tennant take this opportunity to thank St. John's for the beautiful memorial service. We would also like to thank everyone who came to his memorial dinner and especially those who brought a dish. The memorials we received will go to Ruth's education fund. Knowing that we have so many friends has been a great help to us.

An Eye on Evangelism Here is an update of what the Evangelism Committee is working on in the month of December.

- We will order a list of names of people who purchased new homes in our area, and we will send them a letter to let them know our Christmas schedule and invite them to worship with us.
- We will be encouraging as many members as we can to help out at the Living Christmas Card at Trinity on December 7th and 8th.
- We will be hosting a reception hour for the families of the Preschool and Kindergarten students on Sunday, December 15th, especially to get to know better those who are not members of our church.

Please note Ladies Aid and Men's Club will not be meeting in December. Watch for future announcements for the next meeting date.

Christmas Gifts This year we are collecting gifts for the Good *Samaritan Rescue Mission*. See the list of their current needs, as well as Christmas gift ideas, on the last page of this newsletter. You may bring your gifts (unwrapped) beginning December 1st through December 16th, and place them under the table in the hall. *Thank you.*

Poinsettias will again be offered for members to purchase to decorate the front of church for Christmas. Look for the sign-up sheet on the table outside the church office.

Advent by Candlelight News It's not too late! Tables/seating are still available for this year's *Advent by Candlelight: Have a Mary Christmas*. Join us for a Christ-centered preparation for the holiday season on Thursday, December 5th, beginning at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Sign-up sheets are on the table in the church hallway. If you have any questions, contact Becky Schwartz or Dianne Merkle.

Living Christmas Card What a neat way to join your fellow believers in the area in proclaiming to our community the good news of the Savior's coming. Times are December 7th & 8th, 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm. Plan on helping out! Use the sign-up sheet outside the church office to see how, and indicate where, you can help out.

Christmas Decorating We will be decorating the church on Saturday, December 7th, at 9:00 am. Please come and lend a hand.

The Saginaw Valley Lutheran Chorale, led by Mr. Phil Eich, will present its annual Christmas concert in the Chapel of Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Sunday, December 8th at 4:00 pm. Come celebrate Christmas as the choir sings the birth of Christ with this special carol-based concert.

Christmas for Kids Saturday, December 21st, 10:00 am - 2:00pm. During this VBS style event, children (ages 3 through grade 6) will share the good news of Jesus' birth in an action-packed afternoon featuring the true meaning of Christmas in story, song, games and crafts. It is designed to give parents a little extra time to get those last minute Christmas chores finished.

We have about 80 openings available on a first-enrolled, first-served basis. Please use the sign-up sheets in the school office or on the table outside the church office. *Invite a friend!* Extra invitations are available; take some to share with your neighbors, coworkers and friends. Posters are also available for anyone who might be able to post one in their workplace or elsewhere. This is a great opportunity to introduce your unchurched friends to our congregation.

Sign up to help! We need 40+ volunteers to put up posters around town, plan games, assist the teachers, make cookies, guide groups of children, man the registration table, and greet our visitors. See the sign-up sheet outside the church office. Please contact Vicky Falk, our *Christmas for Kids* coordinator, with any questions.

Christmas Cards Haven't bought yours for this year yet? A new selection of Christmas Cards is available for sale and is on the table in the church hallway; prices are noted on each box. We also have cards for sale featuring our altar at Christmas. Please put your payment in an envelope marked "Christmas Cards" and put it in the payment box.

Abortion Petition From the beginning it was the desire of the proponents of the Affordable Health Care Act to include abortion-on-demand as a basic benefit. However, in order to pass the measure, a provision was added that would allow individual states to opt out of the mandatory abortion provisions. To date, 23 states have done just that, requiring a separate rider to pay for abortion coverage. Michigan passed an opt-out bill, but Governor Snyder vetoed it. Thankfully, Michigan's constitution allows the people to initiate legislation through signature petition. With 258,088 valid signatures the legislature is required to vote within 40 days. A simple majority in the House and Senate can pass the legislation without the governor's signature. From June to October 315,477 signatures were collected, including 100 from St. Johns! It appears this is the first time so many signatures were collected without paying individuals or groups to gather them. After the signatures are validated, the Abortion Insurance Opt-Out Act goes to the legislature. Encourage your state representatives to vote pro-life.

New Bible Classes

Starting Sunday, December 8th at 9:15 am. Join us in Mr. Falk's classroom as we begin a 3-week series, *When the Time Had Fully Come: A Study of the "Why's" of Jesus' Birth*.

Lesson 1: *Why Do We Call Jesus True God and True Man in One Person?*

- 1) Why we call him true God
- 2) Why we call him true man
- 3) Why that makes a difference

Lesson 2: *Why Do We Make a Big Deal out of Jesus' Virgin Birth?*

- 1) Why Isaiah prophesied it
- 2) Why it could happen
- 3) Why it's a big deal

Lesson 3: *Why Was Jesus Born in Bethlehem?*

- 1) Why Micah prophesied it
- 2) Why it happened
- 3) Why the Bible makes that clear

New BIC We are looking at beginning a new Bible Information Class in January of 2014. This class is a study of the main teachings of the Bible that primarily prepares people for membership in our congregation, though it also serves as a nice review for those who are already members. **We may be looking at having this class on a weeknight.** If you are interested in this, it would help to let Pastor Schaeewe know as soon as possible so that we can quickly make definite plans.

MLS News

MLS is now accepting applications for next year. All applications for new students received by January 15th, 2014 will receive a \$100 discount on their tuition. Visit their website for more information: <http://www.mlsem.org>

Church Council Report, November 12, 2013

Board of Elders' Report

- Transfer out: Greg Crabtree to St. Paul, Saginaw
- Discussed use of Friendship Registers. Need to remind people to use it.
- Will not have communion at the 10:30 am service on December 15th (Pre-K Christmas service).
- Will have communion on Christmas Day.
- Discussed *Reformation Diet*. About 60 attended.
- 21 families were visited by pastors during the month.

Trustees Report

- Moved TV stand in Ms. McFarland's room.
- Church vent fan serviced (fins were sticking open).
- Coaches will have keys and codes.
- Elevator was stuck. Not happy with the service we received.
- Boilers were inspected by our insurance company; passed.
- Are updating custodial job descriptions.

Board of Education Report

- Working on *After School* program. Handbook to be approved by state.
- 16 letters went to families owing school fees.
- Boys basketball tournament to be held here with Vassar hosting.

New Business

- Phil Eich introduced a program that will involve him working with 14 - 29 year-olds, Pastor Schaewe with 30 - 59 year-olds, Pastor Schweppe with 60+ year-olds, and Mike Falk with internet and social media outreach. Details will be brought to the voters on December 15th.



Good Samaritan Rescue Mission



713 9th Street
Bay City MI 48706
989.893.5973
www.gsrmbaycity.org



CURRENT NEEDS & CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS



Food needs too: Whole Hams and Canned Vegetables

CLOTHING NEEDS

- Pajamas (small child thru 3X adult) *
- Men's large work shoes, gloves and boots *
- Women's Shoes *
- Gloves-all sizes/genders *
- New socks—all sizes/genders
- Men's T-shirts – x-large sizes
- New underwear—all sizes/genders
- Men's xx-large coats

PERSONAL NEED ITEMS

- Tampons *
- Paper Towels and Toilet Paper *
- Deodorant for Men and Women *
- Women
- Hand or Body Lotion *
- Pampering Aromatherapy items for Women *
- Bathroom Hand Towels *
- Shampoo for Men and Women
- Anti-Bacterial Hand Soap
- Shaving Cream for Men and
- Lip Balm/chap stick
- Spiral Notebooks
- Dryer Sheets

*Mission residents cannot receive food, candy, or mouthwash containing alcohol.

TOYS ~ GIFTS

- XXX Large Gift Bags *
- Toys/Games boys/girls ages 10 and up *
- Toys-Toddlers ages 2-4 *
- & girls
- Activities/Journals/Books-Teenagers *
- women
- Books for Men & Women *
- McDonald's Gift Certificates for Teens *
- Travel Mugs for Men & Women *
- Children's Drinking Cups *
- Shower Curtains *
- Bath and Body Shower Gift Sets *
- Spoons
- Unwrapped Gifts
- Activities-children under age of 1
- Activities or Books-Pre-teen boys
- Hair Dryers, Curling/Flat Irons for
- Alarm Clocks for Men & Women
- Make up for Teens
- Diary for pre-teen and teen girls
- Dish Towels/Dish Cloths
- Wooden Spoons and Spatulas
- Measuring Cups and Measuring



BABY ITEMS

- Diapers size 3-6
- Baby Wash
- * Baby Wipes
- * Baby Powder
- * Baby Shampoo
- * Baby Oil

+Good Samaritan Rescue Mission provides clean and safe emergency shelter, clothing, personal care items and nutritious meals for men, women and children.

- Check out the website for volunteer application and other information:
www.gsrmbaycity.org

Updated 11/14/13

You may bring your gifts (unwrapped) to church, beginning December 1st through December 16th, and place them under the table in the hall.

Thank you!