

# The Vine

*March 2009*

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

***The mission of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is to lovingly proclaim the Gospel among all people in order to form and nurture loving communities which confess by word and deed that Jesus is Lord and Savior***





## **Our Partnership March 2009**

### **“Vision”**

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)

“Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.”

John 4:35

“Vision for ministry is a clear mental image of a preferable future imparted by God to His chosen servants and is based upon an accurate understanding of God, self, and circumstances.”  
George Barna in The Power of Vision

Dear members of St. John’s Lutheran Church and School,

In the February issue of *The Lutheran Witness* – a magazine published by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod – there is a wonderful story of how having a God directed “vision” and with God’s blessings can result in something beyond one’s wildest dreams. The story is written by Dr. Paul Meier, second vice president of our church body and professor of ancient history at Western Michigan University. The title of the article is *ULBRA the UNBELIEVABLE* – the Lutheran University of Brazil.

In the story, Dr. Meier describes the largest Lutheran university in the world, which at 36 years old is also the youngest Lutheran University, and is located in southern Brazil. The enrollment at this Lutheran University is 140,000 students. This large school is owned by one local church, St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Canoas.

The founder and rector of the university and pastor of this congregation is the Rev. Ruben Eugen Becker. The story noted that in 1966 when he accepted the call to St. Paul, the congregation was struggling with fiscal difficulties, and was considering closing its small parochial school. Pastor Becker, however, refused to close the school and soon founded five more in the area. Today in addition to the large university, there are 17 elementary and secondary schools all owned by this single congregation.

I share just a small portion of this remarkable story (Please try and read the entire story in *The Lutheran Witness*) as a contemporary Lutheran example of what can happen when a congregation develops a “vision” statement and plans for the future. Nothing of course happens without God’s blessing and that’s why it’s so very important to make sure the “vision” is

wrapped and born out of lots of prayer. Christian, God pleasing “visions” are not just dreams or grand ideas, but rather a Christian “vision” is God directed seeking to fulfill God’s will for the Christian community for which the “vision statement” is developed.

At the last Voter’s Meeting, approval was granted for the leadership of St. John’s Lutheran to move forward towards developing a “vision statement” and to develop a ministry plan. This is exciting news and something much needed for our parish, if we are going to be a dynamic parish which is impacting our community in the future. I am thankful for the leadership’s approval as well as the voters at the February meeting. I thank you for your support.

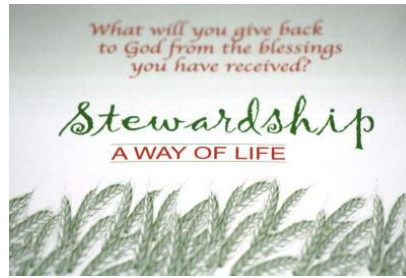
I do believe that we must first of all spend some time praying and doing some soul searching, before we embark on this exciting process. We want to put aside all preconceived notions and ideas and open our hearts and minds to what God has to say to us. Only when we do this, will our “vision” be something which is God pleasing and beneficial for our parish and community.

We are (as I write this) preparing to enter the season of Lent. Lent provides an opportunity for soul searching and for taking an honest look at ourselves as individuals and as a congregation. I am asking you to join me in meditation and prayer during the season of Lent. I invite you to join me during Lent in attending special meditation and prayer services, including after Midweek Lenten services, where together we will open our hearts to the Lord’s direction. Other opportunities will be announced in the weekend service bulletin, and will include day time opportunities as well. Please make every effort to participate in this process. Unless you participate, you can’t own the “vision.

Once we complete the soul searching period of Lent, and enter the Resurrection period of the Church Year, we can then with renewed hope and the living Christ living within us begin the exciting adventure of developing St. John’s Lutheran’s “Vision Statement. May God bless the coming forty-day period of Lent as we use this holy season for soul searching and repentance, seeking to do our Lord’s holy will.

In Christ,

Rev. Dr. Richard Lohmeyer, Pastor



## **March 2009**

Once again we are in the season of Lent. In reading about it, one of the root definitions of Lent is “spring”. Nature awakening from the death of winter. So that we find newness of life in Christ, where God will forgive us and renew our zeal in faith and in life. A time of sober repentance where we are reminded of the following:

- Regularly hearing God’s Word
- Partaking of the Lord’s Supper
- Daily reading the bible
- Participating in a weekly bible study
- Increasing our prayer, devotions and spiritual life
- Especially praying for our Pastor and Principals and our Council’s leadership
- Giving our time and talents to help spread the Good news
- Actively witnessing to others of Jesus’ resurrection
- Giving proportionately of our treasures as God has prospered us

It is time to practice integrity, as a stewardship response, and prepare ourselves to make the right decisions in all that we do and say. The idea helps us to move beyond the societal temptation of doing the right thing merely to stay on the right side of “the law”. Our relationship with our Creator requires us to move to a higher level. People of integrity will live up to the faith response of doing the right thing even when no one is looking. They do this because they are challenged not only to be good Christians but to Emulate Christ, as well.

The 40 days of Lent to repent, pray without ceasing, giving up something, cleansing our hearts, etc. is a wonderful discipline to help some people to get started and others to be further strengthened in their faith.

May He grant it from Jesus’ sake. Amen.

The Stewardship Committee

*From Our Church Fathers-* **Charles Haddon Spurgeon**, commonly **C.H. Spurgeon**, ([June 19, 1834](#) – [January 31, 1892](#)) was a Baptist preacher who remains highly influential among [Christians](#) of different [denominations](#), among whom he is still known as the "Prince of Preachers." He also founded the charity organization now known as [Spurgeon's](#), that works worldwide with families and children, as well as a famous theological college which after his death was called after him: [Spurgeon's College](#).

Spurgeon was a prolific author of many types of works including sermons, an autobiography, a commentary, books on prayer, a devotional, a magazine, and more. Many sermons were transcribed as he spoke and were translated into many languages during his lifetime. Arguably, no other author, Christian or otherwise, has more material in print than C.H. Spurgeon.

...With all his amiability, the minister should be firm for his principles, and hold to avow and defend them in all companies. When a fair opportunity occurs, or he has managed to create one, let him not be slow to make use of it. Strong in his principles, earnest in his tone, and affectionate in heart, let him speak out like a man and thank God for the privilege. There need be no reticence-there should be none. The maddest romances of Spiritualists, the wildest dreams of Utopian reformers, the silliest chitchat of the town, and the vainest nonsense of the frivolous world, demand a hearing and get it. And shall not Christ be heard? Shall his message of love remain untold, for fear we should be charged with intrusion or accused of cant? Is religion to be tabooed-the best and noblest of all themes forbidden? If this be the rule of any society, we will not comply with it. If we cannot break it down, we will leave the society to itself, as men desert a house smitten with leprosy. We cannot consent to be gagged. There is no reason why we should be. We will go to no place where we cannot take our Master with us. While others take liberty to sin, we shall not renounce our liberty to rebuke and warn them. Wisely used, our common conversation may be a potent means for good. Trains of thought may be started by a single sentence which may lead to the conversion of persons whom our sermons have never reached...Be it ours to sow not only on the honest and good soil, but on the rock and on the highway, and at the least great day to reap a glad harvest. May the bread which we cast upon the waters in odd times and strange occasion be found again after many days.

### ***Atlantic District-The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod***

*The Atlantic District cordially invites you to visit our website at [ad\\_lcms.org](#) to view a video and read a write up by President David Benke on the exciting work of the Nehemiah Project in Brooklyn. This housing project is a successful mission endeavor of the Atlantic District and we would like to share it with you. Please log on and read it today.*

## Facts about March

According to the Georgian calendar, March is the third month of the year. According to the early Roman calendar, it was the first month and was called *Martius*. The ancient Romans later made January 1 the beginning of the year, and March became the third month on the calendar. March has always had 31 days. Its name honors Mars, the Roman God of war.

The winter ends with March, and end comes Spring. Spring in the northern half of the world begins with March 19, 20, or 21. It's the day when the sun is directly over the equator. March can either fill wintry or springy, with as many blustery, windy days as there are mild, sunny days.

In the northern hemisphere, the animals end their hibernation and many plants come to life again in March. The sap flows in the trees again, and the buds begin to show up. Bears, woodchucks, and chipmunks leave their hibernating spots. People begin to start looking for the first robin, for the beginning of Spring arrival.

There are no national holidays in March, but there are important state and religious holidays celebrated.

- [Nebraskans](#) celebrate the admission of their state to the [Union](#) on March 1.
- Texas celebrates March 2 as the anniversary of its independence from Mexico.
- On March 4, the people of Pennsylvania commemorate the granting of the state's charter to William Penn in 1681.
- The Irish celebrate March 17 as the feast day of St. Patrick.

[St. Patrick's Festival-The Saint](#)

- The **bloodstone** and **aquamarine** are the birthstones for March.
- The **violet** is the flower for the month of March.

## Principal's Corner

We enjoyed many activities in February - Valentine crafts and dance and even got a visit from the Staten Island Yankees!

March brings us "National Lutheran Schools Week" March 2nd to the 6th with surprises along the way. An Art Fair is scheduled for Friday, March 6th, at school, 6 to 8 PM.

Math Night is March 12th and Father/Daughter Game Night is March 20th.

Daylight Savings Time begins March 8; this will bring us expanded daylight to chase away the winter blues.

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### ***St. John's Lutheran Ladies Guild***

Thursday, March 5, 2009  
7:30 PM in the church basement

**Program:** Following in the foot steps of LCMS Women  
Please join us

Joan Mohlenhoff  
Secretary

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### **EASTER FOOD DISTRIBUTION**

St. John's will be giving food to households in need at Easter. Your contributions of food, time and money will be greatly appreciated. Please bring nonperishable items to the church or to the school by Wednesday, April 1. In particular, we need things such as canned vegetables, yams potatoes, rice, canned fruit, cranberry sauce, soups, tuna, pasta, and tomato sauce. There is also a need for low salt or no salt items. At the church, food may be placed in baskets in the narthex and in the basement. At the school, food may be placed in designated boxes in the breezeway. Donations of money may be placed in the Hunger Box at the church or sent to the church office. Checks should be made payable to St. John's Lutheran Church and designated for Hunger. If anyone would like to help with sorting, packing, or delivering the food, please call Daniel Wuerdeman at 718-816-6461

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### Vision Meditation and Prayer Preparation Opportunities

During the Season of Lent

Each Wednesday after Midweek worship (including Ash Wednesday)

Wednesday Morning - 10:00 A.M. - Pastor's Office

Thursday Morning - 8:30 A. M. - Church Basement

Saturday Afternoon - 4:00 P. M. - Church Basement

These special meditation and prayer times will focus on the "visioning" process and planning for ministry. You may attend the one which fits your plans for the week. Each opportunity will take about 15 to 30 minutes depending upon the leading of the Holy Spirit.

# Journey of Stones

Begins

Ash Wednesday – February 25<sup>th</sup>

Lent Begins with Special Service at 7:00 P.M.

Imposition of Ashes – Celebration of Holy Communion

Soup Supper at 6:00 P.M.

Special Lenten Midweek Services Each Wednesday

Soup Supper at 6:00 P.M. Each Wednesday Evening During  
Lent

“O Lord, throughout these forty days

You prayed and kept the fast;

Inspire repentance for our sin,

And free us from our past.

Be with us through this season Lord,

And all our earthly days,

That when the final Easter dawns,

We join in heavenly praise.”

LSB #418





### **PLANT ORDER FORM**

To place lilies and/or plants at the altar for Easter Sunday, please fill out the following form and return it to the Church Office together with your check payable to St. John's Lutheran Church.

***Order must be in the church office no later than April 5, 2009***

# of Lilies: \_\_\_\_\_ at \$7.00 per plant= \_\_\_\_\_

# of Plants: \_\_\_\_\_ at \$7.00 per plant= \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of:

Given by:

In honor of:

Given by:

Check one:

\_\_\_\_ I will pick up my plant after the 10:45 service

or

\_\_\_\_ Please deliver my plant to a St. John's "shut-in"

***Total amount enclosed for Easter plants: \_\_\_\_\_***

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## *Lutheran Schools Week*

This schedule subject to change;

Monday, March 3 - Alumni speak 9 AM; Alumni can visit , cake & coffee after 2 pm

Tuesday, Author Robert Kimmel Smith will visits at 9 AM.

Wednesday, Students off; Teachers have Staff Development

Thursday, Dottie Ettlinger will be here at 1 PM. She is an alumni and illustrator.

Friday, Nikki Anasike, 9 AM and maybe a volleyball game.



Dearest Friends in Christ Jesus,

It seems like we just put the Christmas decorations away, and now we are preparing for Lent. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 25, 2009. The adult choir will be singing at the 7 p.m. worship service at the church, preceded by a 6 p.m. soup supper. The church's children's choir, along with some students of the school chorus will sing at the remaining five Wednesday services at the church in Lent beginning March 4 and concluding on April 1, 2009. All are invited to join us for the soup supper at 6 p.m.. For those children who are singing on Wednesdays, please note you will meet me in the church balcony, no later than 6:45 p.m. for rehearsal.

Both the adult and children's choir are scheduled to sing during Holy week which begins on April 5 (Palm Sunday), and concludes on April 12 (Easter Sunday). During this somber time of Lent, I encourage everyone to attend worship. Too many times we are trying to figure out what to give up for Lent, maybe what we really need to do is to add something. If you're a member of the church, bring a friend, if you do not belong or attend a church at this time, we invite you to be our guest and worship with us. Let us journey together during this Lenten season to find our Lord Victorious on Easter morning.

Anyone interested in joining any of our choirs may call me at 917 696 5227.

In Christ  
Tommy Sax



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St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church  
663 Manor Road  
Staten Island, NY 10314



God Bless the Family of:

*The March Vine 2009*

The Newsletter of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran church & School

**Divine Service:**

Saturday: 5:00 PM at the Church  
Sunday: 8:00 AM & 10:45 AM at the church  
Family Education Hour: 9:15 AM at the church  
**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

**Church:**

216 Jewett Avenue (Corner of Jewett & Post)  
Staten Island, NY 10302 **(no mail)**  
Email: [stjohnslutheranchurchoffice@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnslutheranchurchoffice@gmail.com)



**School & Church Office**

663 Manor Road, Staten Island, NY 10314

Sermon Themes for Lent - Midweek



☘☘☘ March 2009 ☘☘☘

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1 8:00A Divine Worship 9:15A Bible Study &amp; SS 10:45A Divine Worship</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent Lutheran Schools Week</p>	<p>2 Interim Report Cards 4<sup>th</sup> Gr. Starts NYS Math Test</p> <p>Lutheran Schools Week</p>	<p>3 10A Mary/Martha 8P Adult Choir <b>Applebee's Dining to Donate</b> 7:15P Bd. Of Christian Ed</p> <p>Lutheran Schools Week</p>	<p>4 Professional Development Day NO SCHOOL 6:00P Soup Supper 7:00P Lenten Worship</p> <p>Lutheran Schools Week</p>	<p>5 9:30A Breakfast Bible Study</p> <p>7:30P Ladies Guild</p> <p>Lutheran Schools Week</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Lutheran Schools Week</p>	<p>7 4:00P Children's Choir 5:00P Divine Worship 12P-4P Educational School Planning @ School</p> <p>Lutheran Schools Week</p>
<p>8 8:00A Divine Worship 9:15A Bible Study &amp; SS 10:45A Divine Worship</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent Daylight Savings Time</p>	<p>9 8<sup>th</sup> Gr. Starts NYS Math Test</p>	<p>10 10A Mary/Martha 8P Adult Choir</p>	<p>11 9A Chapel 3:15P Early Communion Class 6:00P Soup Supper 7:00P Lenten Worship</p>	<p>12 9:30A Breakfast Bible Study</p> <p>Family Math Night 6:30P-8:30P</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 4:00P Children's Choir 5:00P Divine Worship 12P -4P Educational School Planning @ School</p>
<p>15 8:00A Divine Worship 9:15A Bible Study &amp; SS 10:45A Divine Worship</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent</p>	<p>16 <b>VINE DEADLINE</b></p>	<p>17 10A Mary/Martha 8P Adult Choir</p>	<p>18 9A Chapel 3:15P Early Communion Class 6:00P Soup Supper 7:00P Lenten Worship</p>	<p>19 9:30A Breakfast Bible Study 7:30P Church Council Meeting</p>	<p>20 Father/Daughter Game Night 7:30P Adult Game night @ church</p>	<p>21 4:00P Children's Choir 5:00P Divine Worship 12P-4P Educational School Planning @ School</p>
<p>22 8:00A Divine Worship 9:15A Bible Study &amp; SS 10:45A Divine Worship</p> <p>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 10A Mary/Martha 8P Adult Choir</p>	<p>25 9A Chapel 3:15P Early Communion Class 6:00P Soup Supper 7:00P Lenten Worship</p>	<p>26 9:30A Breakfast Bible Study</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 4:00P Children's Choir 5:00P Divine Worship</p>
<p>28 8:00A Divine Worship 9:15A Bible Study &amp; SS 10:45A Divine Worship</p> <p>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30 End of marking period</p>	<p>31 3:15P Early Communion Class 6:00P Soup Supper 7:00P Lenten Worship</p>			<p>The year's at the spring And day's at the morn; ... God's in His heaven-- All's right with the world!</p>