St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

February Vine 2012

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

The Newsletter of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church & School
(718) 761-1600

Reverend Randall S. Russell, Pastor
Cell (989) 545- 0029 Home (917) 397- 8774

<u>Sunday Divine Services with Holy Communion:</u>
10:30 AM @ Church
5p.m. school gym

<u>Church located at:</u>
216 Jewett Avenue (Corner of Jewett & Post)
Staten Island, NY 10302 **(no mail)**

Church Email: **sjlchurchoffice@gmail.com**
Church & School Website: www.stjohnslutheransi.org
School & Church Office
663 Manor Road**(Mail Accepted**)
Staten Island, NY 10314

Volume 2012 **Issue #2**

Roster of Officers
St. John's Lutheran
Church & School
2012 Church Committees

President	Frederick Bock
Vice President	Gerald Valles
Secretary	Janis Szoke
Board of Elders	Thomas Sax
Board of Christian Education	Robert Holls
Board of Evangelism	Vacant
Board of Properties	Les Szoke
Board of Social Ministry	Barbara Pfaff

Board of Elders
Thomas Sax
Dave Decker
Walter Francis
Bruce Mohlenhoff

Board of Properties
Les Szoke
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Michael Clandorf

Board of Christian Education
Robert Holls
Arne Abrahamsen
Lori Chierchio
Brigitte Hermann
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Ruth Roscheska
Beverly Heming

Board of Social Ministry
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Joan Mohlenhoff
Nancy Nye

Board of Evangelism
Vacant
Leonor Abugel
Jenifer Moat
Ricardo Salazar
Bonnie Selletti

PASTOR'S PAGE

Dear Family in Christ,

Peace be to you in the name of our Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. First, let me start out by saying congratulations to all the New York Giants fans in the congregation. You did it! You beat my Packers. You beat the San Francisco 49ers. And now you're headed for the Super Bowl. (*Please keep in mind this article was written back in January and the results of Super Bowl XLVI have yet to be seen*.) Yet as I eagerly look forward to watching the big game on February 5, I can't help but think of all the Super Bowls that have already come and gone. I can't help but think of all the football legacies that have been established or destroyed all on account of that one game. Which kind of makes me wonder: what will be our legacy?

Now I'm no longer just talking about football. I'm talking about legacies. I'm talking about those things for which we would like to be remembered; those things of which we would like to give future generations. For some this might mean an antique or a family heirloom; for others this might mean a piece of property or some other kind of inheritance; and still for others this might simply mean money, a memory or a name. Yet whatever might be the case, everyone has something they would like to pass on to the next generation. Everyone has a legacy they would like to establish. My question is: what is your legacy?

Every time I am asked to do a funeral I realize that I am also being asked to help write someone's legacy. Some want to make sure that I mention all of their loved one's hobbies or good deeds. Others might want me to talk about their loved one's personality, strengths, or flaws. Nevertheless, I must admit that as a pastor nothing thrills me more than when someone simply asks me to show them Jesus. In my own opinion, there can be no greater legacy than this.

The Holy Scriptures are filled with the stories of men and women who sacrificed much in order that future generations might have much more. It is through the blood, sweat and tears of the saints and martyrs that future generations would come to know the Lord Jesus Christ and Christianity would continue to grow. Every time I step foot into a church I realize that the only reason I am able

to worship there is because of all the work past generations had done. And that is their legacy!

While some legacies might lead to a person's name being immortalized in the Football Hall of Fame, let us remember that there is only one legacy that can actually give immortality to others. So parents, as you consider what types of things you would like to pass on to your children, might I suggest the Christian faith. And to everyone else, experience has taught me that legacies don't just happen, they are planned. No one likes to talk about this, but (if you haven't already) please make sure your final wishes, your legacy, is written down and made known. "For all flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God stands forever!" [*Isaiah 40:6, 8*]

In His service,
Pastor Russell

Why?

Why does the Divine Service always begin with Confession & Absolution?

Actually, the Divine Service doesn't officially begin until the introit. Its placement in between the invocation and introit is somewhat of an abnormality of our modern age. In fact, the corporate confession and absolution wasn't even a part of Luther's changes to the Roman Mass since many early Lutherans simply went to private confession and absolution in order to prepare for communion. Therefore, confession and absolution should not be understood as a part of the Divine Service, but rather preparation for it. As St. Paul explains in 1st Corinthians 11:27-29: "Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man <u>examine</u> himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body." So in the corporate confession and absolution we <u>examine</u> ourselves in preparation for the reception of Holy Communion.

There will not be a 5:00 p.m. worship service at the school next Sunday, February 5.

A Message from the Elders

The LORD is my strength and my song; and he has become

My salvation. ***Psalm 118:14***

Dearest Members in Christ,

Once again we see Christmas and Epiphany in our rearview mirror, as we prepare for the somber season of Lent. Lent is a time of reflection for me. A time to reflect on all the blessings that God has bestowed upon my life, the church and the school. This time last year I was encouraging everyone to pray that God would send us a shepherd, and He did! God continues to care for His people and continually bestows his abundant blessings upon all of us. It's mind boggling to think that our Lord loves us so much that He would take sin upon His own shoulders and give up His life for us, so that we may have life eternal. Christ sacrificed His very life for us. I pray that during this season of Lent we too may give something to our Savior who is ever giving to us.

In Christ,
Tommy Sax
Elder Chair

News from Social Ministry

Dearest Members,
We will continue to collect non-perishable food items for the New Directions food bank in Port Richmond. Items can be left in the church basement.

In Christ Jesus,

Barbara Pfaff

Social Ministry Chairperson

More on Stewardship

As I sit and write this article on stewardship only a few days after the arrival of 2012, I wonder how many New Year's resolutions have already been broken.
Looking at so many boxes of offering envelopes in the church basement that have not yet been picked up tells me not everyone is as caring a steward as he should be.
Seeing this reminded me of a story told many years ago on the subject of tithing. The writer said that "tithing is a blessing in disguise." Giving God ten percent of one's income is rather strange, one would think.
We know He doesn't need anything that we have: He is the Creator and owner of everything anyway. Why would He need anything from us?
Yet, there it is in the Book of Malachi. God tells the people that they are "robbing Him." And if anyone wants to know how, God spells it out. "In your tithes and offerings" He says. Then He gets more specific: "Bring the full tithe into the store house", He says. (Malachi 3:10). Obviously God has a reason for wanting His people to give generously. It is to prove that we are serious about loving Him, calling Him our heavenly Father, and going about the business that He has for us to do for Him.
Does anyone want to argue the point with GOD? Ten percent means nothing to Him. He can take away all of our blessings any time He wants. What if, in doing God's will as far as giving is concerned we find the windows of heaven

“opened and overflowing blessings” have been showered upon us? Certainly God says this through His servant Malachi. We may be surprised how easy tithing can become and how much better we manage the remaining ninety percent of our income. More than being blessed with sufficient income, we have the joy of doing our part in spreading the GOOD NEWS of Christ and helping others who suffer a great deal.Keeping in mind the words the ProphetMalachi wrote….May God Almighty help us to be better stewards in giving of ourselves to our church at St. John’s with our Time, our Talents and our Treasury. Amen.

The Stewardship committee
Walter Francis

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

4	Nick Gencarello
5	Thomas Sax
6	Charles Hermann III
12	Darlene Hewitt
13	Eleanor Ferenczy
14	Emmy Alvestad
15	Russell Browne, DC
19	Richard Baller
19	Kathy Neos
21	Daniel Hewitt

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

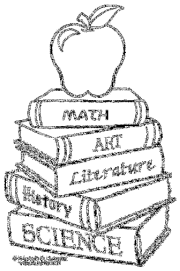
8 Fred & Shirley Bock
12 Eric & Eleanor Hansen

IN OUR PRAYERS

Please remember in your prayers the following who are ill:

Ed Pfaff ~ Don Crisson ~ Heinz Zeller ~ Sue Norton
Christina Assanti ~ John Draper ~ Jaena Mann ~
Ella Ferenczy

Principal's Corner



February brings Family Fun Night. On Feb. 3rd from 7-9 p.m. join with other families for a night of Board Games, Lego construction, arts and crafts and physical competition. Be prepared to work as a family.

A Valentine's Day Dance is scheduled for upper grade students Feb.10th.
President's Week is Feb 20th to 24th -we are off !
March is Lutheran Schools Month. We are celebrating Lutheran Schools Week starting with a Church service on March 4th. More on this next time.

On Jan.22nd we held an Open House for Alumni. We had about 20 alumni. They toured the building, spoke about their St. John's experience, and enjoyed some cake and coffee. We are in the process of scheduling another gathering. Contact any alumni you know.

Education Planning Meeting had parents sharing ideas on improving conditions at school. We discussed grants, clutter, bullying, fundraising, policy, ipads, e text books, and forming a PTA. Next scheduled meeting is March 1st. 7 PM.

Enjoy!
Mrs. Palisay

A special Thank You to everyone who contributed towards our new chapel hymnals for our school. We have met our goal and 224 were ordered. This will supply students from 2-8th grade with chapel books along with our staff and parents/friends who may be visiting. The books should arrive at the beginning of Lent.

In Christ,
Tommy Sax

Once again we will be serving soup, bread and dessert during Lent, beginning February 29 at 6 p.m. and ending at 7 p.m. Worship to follow at 7:30. Each week we will need four (4) soups. (Each soup 4-6 quarts) Eleanor Hansen will provide homemade bread each week. If you are able to provide a soup or dessert, please sign up on the bulletin board in the Narthex. During the Advent Season we served between 28-36 people.

COME JOIN US FOR WORSHIP,

If you have any questions, please see or call
Rhoda Browne (718) 698-3356

Ladies Guild News

The February 2nd. Meeting is 7:30 p.m. at the church. Our guest speakers will be Tom and Lorraine Hickey, outreach coordinators for the Staten Island Project Homefront. They will share the history and the ongoing work of P.H., which sends large monthly mailings of donated goods to our troops. Thank you to our church members who are giving generously. Donations of goods can be brought to the meeting.

Our March 1st. meeting is 7:40 p.m. at the church. We are planning to have Robert Simon as our guest, speaking on the parks of Staten Island.

At every meeting we gather our mites for missions. As we do, our ministry out-reach through the Lutheran Women's Missionary League is extended, and we give God the praise! You are welcome to join us anytime.

In Christ,

Brigitte Hermann
President

Ruth Roscheska
Secretary

- For those interested, Pastor will be conducting a **New Member Class**. Classes will be held at the school starting Sunday, February 12, from 3:30 until 4:30. Worship will follow at 5:00 p.m. Please contact pastor for further details.

- **First Holy Communion classes** will be held each Wednesday from February 29. through March 28 from 6:00 until 6:30 p.m. Classes will take place while soup suppers are in progress, so bring your child to class, come down for supper and stay for Lenten worship following the soup supper at supper at 7:30 p.m. After class, your child can join you for supper in the church basement.

- Each Sunday Adult Bible Study, and the Children's Sunday School at 9 am in the church basement

- Pastor's Bible Study Breakfast every Thursday at 9:30 in the church basement

- Our church is now one of the choices that you can choose with your Thrivent Choice Dollars. You can either go to www.thrivent.com and register or call 1-800 THRIVENT (847-4836) and speak to a live person. When you call the toll free number, you will say "Choice Dollars," at which time you will be transferred and asked for the last 4 digits

of your social security number. You then will speak to a representative who will assist you. Please note that if you use the website, we are listed as St John (without the 's) Lutheran. We thank all those who have inquired, and we thank everyone who has chosen to help further the ministry of our church. May God richly bless you. Please feel free to share this information with anyone who is a part of this program.

- ***There will not be a 5:00 p.m. worship service at the school next Sunday, February 5***

- ***Please note that we will worship at the school for both the 10:30 and the 5 p.m. service on Sunday March 4, to kick off National Lutheran School's Week***

Deadline for the March Vine is February 23

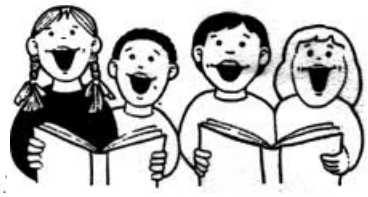
New email for church office – sjlchurchoffice@gmail.com

Evangelical Pamphlets

The Evangelism Committee of St. John's offers for your interest, booklets published by the Lutheran Laymen's League, pertaining to everyday problems and concerns.

The following booklets are available at the display rack in the Narthex of the church. If there is a subject of concern not listed, please contact Rhoda Browne (718) 698-3356

- Alone, Alive, Fulfilled
- Alzheimer's
- Battles with the Bottle
- Coping with Cancer
- Dealing with Depression
- Finding Peace
- Forgiveness Is for Giving
- Has God Abandoned Me?
- How to Know What's Right… And Do It
- No Need to Fear
- Now You're Talking
- Overcoming A Painful Childhood
- Parenting with Purpose
- Prayer and Thoughts for Caregivers
- Setting Priorities
- Raising Your Children with Respect
- So You Prayed for A Miracle…
- Surviving A Loved One's Suicide
- Surviving Breast Cancer
- Take Heart in Your Grief
- Talking with God
- The Purpose of Living, The Purpose of Dying
- The Truth About Angels
- "THHHPPTT!" *And Other Helpful Ways to Manage Anger*
- Too Much to Do, Too Little Time
- Unlocking the Prison of Guilt
- When in Doubt… Read the Book!
- Where's God in All of This?
- Why Should I go to Church?



CHOIR

Psalm 100:1-2
Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness!
Come into His presence with singing!

Dearest Member in Christ Jesus,

Please remember that Lent is quickly approaching. Once again the adult choir will be singing on Ash Wednesday and selected Sundays during Lent. **Please note that adult choir rehearsal during Lent will take place on <u>Wednesdays,</u> immediately following the mid-week service. (Feb. 29 – March 28)**The school chorus will be singing on the remaining midweek Lenten service on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. beginning on 2/29 and ending on 3/28. The church's children's choir is also welcomed to sing on these Wednesday's with the school chorus as well as their own selected Sunday's during Lent. Each year someone asks me what I think they should give up during Lent. I normally reply by saying, "Don't give up something, add something." One suggestion is worship. If you don't worship regularly, or if you don't attend the midweek services, make an effort to join us this year. If you can't join us, then set some time apart for personal devotion. I pray everyone will be in attendance as we journey through this Lenten season together.

In Christ,
Thomas Sax

Adult Choir Tuesday Nights 8 - 9 p.m.
Children's Choir Sunday Mornings Immediately Following the 10:30 a.m. Service