



The Palestine Press

January 2012

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Monthly newsletter of

Palestine Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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Pastor Jamie Gallagher

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Reaching Out in Christian Love to All

Our Vision:

Palestine Lutheran Church will be a haven for all generations, a people worshipping and growing continually in relationship with Jesus, inspired by God's Word; a living example of stewardship, a loving and caring fellowship that reaches out in Christ-centered faith and love to the world.

Mission Statement:

"Palestine Lutheran Church exists to proclaim and live God's Holy Word, to nurture and support our membership, and to enable us to live our faith in our daily lives. As we are nourished, we are called to reach out to our communities, our spheres of influence, and to the wider world through the church-at-large."

Living a Generous Life

"We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give." Sir Winston Churchill, English Statesman, mid-20th Century

What shall I return to the Lord for all his bounty to me?

Psalm 116:12



Happy New Year. Welcome to 2012. As we begin a new year at Palestine Lutheran Church, I want to introduce our theme for developing a vision and mission plan.

"Gather in Christ. Grow in Christ. Go in Christ."

This theme is a three year adventure as we explore the ways our congregation gathers in worship and fellowship, grows as Jesus' disciples, and goes out in Christ's name to serve the world. We will be talking more about this theme and how we will engage this plan at our annual meeting. This theme has been evolving over the past 6 months as Pastor Katie and I have begun our ministry here. It is our hope that this theme will allow us to celebrate the strengths of our ministries, listen as God leads us in his ways, and invite others to join us in being God's people in mission.

To get us started with this theme, we will use our first sermon series of 2012 to explore a conversation of stewardship. The series, titled "Living a Generous Life", will engage us in conversation about how God has richly blessed us, how we respond to God's blessings, and how we are partners in all of God's ministries here at Palestine.

God has richly blessed us. It is one of the primary reasons why we gather in the name of his son. We have received forgiveness and the promise of new life from God. We receive all our earthly possessions as a gift from God. When we gather and worship God, we are called to respond to God with our giving, returning a portion of what God has first given us, a faith act that says we are completely dependent on God, and not independent from God.

We respond differently to God's blessings as we grow into discipleship. When we first believe in Jesus we hear we are supposed to give, so we start by giving a little. As we grow in our faith, and realize how much we depend on Christ for everything, and how much Christ has blessed us to help others, then our giving grows. When I was first giving, I would give just the change in my pocket. Of course, I was a

young teenager then. Now I give to my church, I sponsor a child through an agency, I support zoos and give to the Salvation Army and give to other charities. And I know when I get even older, I will have even more ability to give, because I will be growing as a disciple.

Finally, we are all partners in ministry here at Palestine. When our congregation goes to the CROP Walk, we all go to the CROP Walk, when our congregation gives to Riverside Bible Camp, we all give to Riverside Bible Camp. Whatever the ministry is that our congregation engages in, we are all engaged in that ministry. We “GO” in Christ together, as partners in ministry, and I am excited to be partners with you in the many ways our congregation currently impacts the world, and the new ways God is calling us to impact the world.

Why do we start our “Gather, Grow, Go” theme by talking about “Living a Generous Life”? Because we cannot gather, grow, or go, without you being generous in how you worship, how you grow as Jesus’ disciple, and how you partner with us in going. I look forward to Gathering, Growing, and Going with you in Christ’s name.

Pastor Jamie



Palestine Lutheran Church

Worship & Study Opportunities- January 2012

Call in number to listen to worship services: 597-3994

Sunday, January 1 1st Sunday of Christmas, Name of Jesus

9:30 a.m. Worship: led by ROCK

Monday, January 2

2 p.m. Palestine Women of ELCA Bible Study

Wednesday, January 4 6:30 a.m. Men’s Bible study

6:30 p.m. Confirmation

Saturday, January 7

7 a.m. Tri County Men’s Bible study @ Palestine

Sunday, January 8 *The Baptism of Our Lord*

9:30 a.m. Worship: Holy Communion

10:45 a.m. Sunday School,

Wednesday, January 11 6:30 a.m. Men’s Bible study

6:30 p.m. Confirmation

6:30 p.m. Women’s Fellowship

Saturday, January 14

7 a.m. Tri County Men’s Bible study

Sun., Jan. 15 2nd Sun. after Epiphany

9:30 a.m. Worship:

Holy Communion

10:45 a.m. Sunday School

Wednesday, January 18

6:30 a.m. Men’s Bible study

6:30 p.m. Confirmation

Saturday, January 21

7 a.m. Tri County Men’s Bible

study

2 p.m. Pre-Wedding class

Sun, Jan. 22 3rd Sun after Epiphany

9:30 a.m. Worship

10:45 a.m. Sunday School

Tuesday, January 24

6-7:30 p.m. Raising a Healthy

Baby

Wednesday, January 25

6:30 a.m. Men’s Bible study

6:30 p.m. Confirmation

Saturday, January 28

7 a.m. Tri County Men’s Bible

study @ Palestine

Sunday, January 29 4th Sunday after Epiphany

9:30 a.m. Worship

10:45 a.m. Sunday School

7 p.m. Faithful Parenting (for parents of pre-teens & teens)

Tuesday, January 31

6-7:30 pm Raising a Healthy Baby

Daily Discipleship themes which will be used for Wednesday morning

Men’s Bible study (uses text for the following Sunday).

January 1, First Sunday of Christmas

An Attitude of Discipleship: Peace-filled

Primary Text: Luke 2:22–40

January 8, Baptism of Our Lord

An Attitude of Discipleship: Connected

Primary Text: Mark 1:4-11

January 15, 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

An Attitude of Discipleship: Inviting

Primary Text: John 1:43–51

January 22, 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

An Attitude of Discipleship: Responsive

Primary Text: Mark 1:14–20

January 29, 4th Sunday after Epiphany

An Attitude of Discipleship: Openness

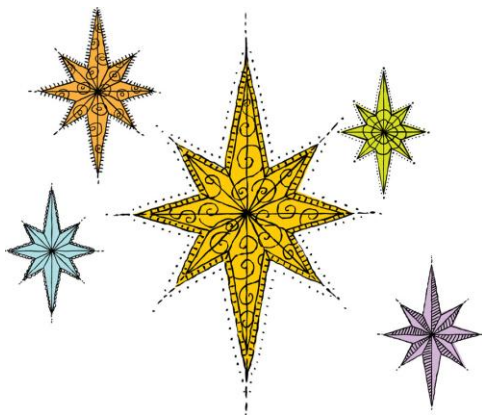
Primary Text: Mark 1:21–28

📧 Mailboxes 📧

Just a note to remind everyone they have a mailbox in the church fellowship hall. Please notify Oriett if you need a mailbox or to request that your mailbox be moved. Every week you will get a weekly worship bulletin in your mailbox, and occasional other church communications will be placed there as well.

Every four to six weeks, Pastor Jamie reviews the mailboxes for worship bulletin build-up. If your box has more than four weeks of bulletins in the box, the old bulletins will be placed in the recycle bin, any other church related mail you should have received will be mailed to you, and you will receive a note or a phone call from Pastor Jamie touching base with how you are doing.

We hope this helps everyone feel more connected with their church family. If you have questions about your church mailbox, feel free to call Pastor Jamie 515-597-2620.



New Beginnings!!!

January...the beginning of a new year. It is a time to start over, to begin things anew. The new year is a blank slate just waiting for us to put our mark on it. And how are you going to make your mark in 2012? Where do you need to find a new beginning? Will you be doing anything differently than before?

How is your faith life? Does it need a new beginning as well? Perhaps you will make a commitment to worship more often. Maybe you will decide to increase in your giving? Perhaps you will stretch yourself and volunteer to do something you have never done before.

January is the perfect time to revitalize your faith. But to be perfectly honest, your faith life can be revitalized at anytime. We don't have to wait for a new year to begin something new or reconnect ourselves with God. Everyday we have that opportunity. We can begin each day brand new.

God calls to us in many and various ways. How is God calling you and what are you going to do about it? Take time this month to think about the vision God has for your life and about the vision God has for this congregation. What would God have us do and be in 2012...and then let's act on it! Amen.

Go Make Your Mark,
Pastor Katie

Faithful Parenting (for parents of pre-teens & teens)

Introducing a new opportunity for parents. On Sunday, January 29th at 7 PM Pastor Jamie invites parents of pre-teens and teens to gather for conversation on what it means to parent faithfully during the *wonderful* pre-teen and teenage years. This will be the first of a series of opportunities to grow in our faith as parents, and learn from one another how to parent faithfully.

The idea for this conversation came after the fall 9th-grade confirmation class in which a discussion of the 10 Commandments went off on a tangent from the "No Adultery" commandment into sex, premarital sex, marriage, and what the Bible says about it all. After the class, the other adult leader with me and I had conversation about how difficult it is for parents to talk about these topics with their children. There is no manual for parenting, we agreed, and if we don't provide an opportunity at the church for parents to support one another and grow in faith and parenting with one another, where then are parents to go for help?

The Faithful Parenting series is intended to provide that place where parents can come together, learn together what the Bible really says about the big topics we face as parents today, and to learn from each other how best to talk with our children and raise them faithfully too. Using the Ten Commandments as our guide, we will enter modern issues that face parents, and hear what the scriptures and our faith has to say to us as parents, so when we are talking with our children, we can be more prepared in our conversations with them. If you are raising pre-teens/teens or are just interested in the topics, please join us starting January 29th at 7PM for this great opportunity to grow with others as Faithful Parents!

Pre-Wedding Class

Pastor Jamie has scheduled a class for couples who will be getting married in 2012 at Palestine Lutheran Church. This class is Saturday, January 21st at 2:00 PM. If you have already talked with Pastor Jamie about getting married in 2012 at Palestine, you should already have received an invite for this class.

If you are considering getting married at Palestine in 2012 and have not yet spoken with Pastor Jamie or Pastor Katie, now is your chance to get in on this class. Though, if you do miss the class other opportunities will be available throughout the year.

Pastors Jamie and Katie typically use a three-session format for preparing for a wedding. Session 1 is about getting to know the couples and the couples getting to know the pastor and for the couples to take the Prepare/Enrich couple relationship inventory. Session 2 follows up on the inventory and identifies relationship strengths and provides tools for relationship growth areas. Session 3 is actually planning the ceremony. Additional sessions may be scheduled as needed.

Currently Palestine has five (5) weddings scheduled for 2012. If you are considering getting married in 2012, please do contact the pastors soon to get your wedding scheduled.

Confirmation Corner

Our Wednesday evening classes, January 4th, 11th, and 18th, will cover the topics of Stewardship of Time, Talents, and Treasure. Everyone is invited to join us for this class. See the article on "Living a Generous Life".

During our Sunday morning classes, we will engage the New Testament, from Jesus giving the Great Commission we jump into the book of Acts and start learning the early history of the Church. Does Confirmation get more exciting than that?

Keep our Confirmation Students in your prayers:
7th Grade: Olivia Ewing, Taylor Larson, Max Shelton,
Madison Knutson, Taylor Ness
8th Grade: Mackenzie Davis, Cheyenne Hilton, Jennie Huxford, Alison Teig

Keep our Confirmation Leaders and Guides in your prayers:
Pastor Jamie, Roger Moore, Julie Huxford

Living a Generous Life

I invite you to crash our Confirmation Classes in the month of January. Our Wednesday lessons are about Stewardship. By pure Holy Co-incidence, our Sunday Sermon series is about Stewardship. Now I know January seems like an odd month to be discussing stewardship. After all, we have already collected pledge cards, and the budget for the year is already set. Why should we still talk about this?

Well, for starters – to be faithful people means we engage faithful topics. Stewardship is a faith topic. Being stewards of the gifts God has given us is inseparable from our identity as Jesus' disciples. And since being stewards is a growing journey, just as discipleship is, we are having this conversation with our kids so they can begin growing as stewards.

Having you as a part of the conversation will help the class hear multiple voices talk about God's influence as you have grown in your own stewardship. Having you as part of the class will help you hear where our newest disciples are at in their journey. So come, you are not just invited, you are expected. Class starts at 6:30 PM. We engage a short game-show to open into the topic, there is sometimes a skit, and always a great lesson by the Pastor. When the confirmation class goes into small group time, I will lead more conversation with the adults.

I look forward to you crashing the Confirmation Class Wednesdays January 4, 11 and 18th, 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM.

Pastor Jamie

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Church Council 2011

Pastors: Jamie Gallagher
 Katie Gallagher
 President: Todd Schmidt
 Vice President: Bob Davis
 Secretary: Brent Emerson
 Treasurer: Nancy Fausch
 Financial Sec'y: Dick Kepler
 Council: Dick Cast
 Craig Fausch Lyle Martin
 Bill Harleen Lisa Sheldahl
 Tyler Johnson Robyn Stephens
 Brad Lewis Doug Schonhorst

Treasurer's Report

Balance on hand December 20, 2011

General Fund	\$ 500.84
Designated Funds	\$ 14,302.03
Improvement	4,789.45
Building	5,969.58
Roof	2,793.00
Seminary	750.00

Sharing the good news of what is happen-ing in & around the SE Iowa Synod is available as a weekly communication to share the ways that "God's Work. Our Hands." is coming to expression in congregations, in partnerships around the synod, and in the whole ELCA.

www.seiasynod.org

Annual Reports due January 2, 2012



Reports can be placed in the secretary's mailbox in Fellowship Hall or in the slot by her office door. Reports can be submitted at any time and you can take that off of your 'to do' list during the busy holiday season. Your cooperation in this is appreciated so that reports can be copied and assembled in a timely fashion. We want to have them available to be picked up Sunday prior to the Annual Meeting so members can review them.

Please be sure that your committee, group or organization submits a report as stated in the By-laws: "C14.01.01 Each organization of this congregation shall submit a report of its activities, including a financial report at the end of the calendar year. This report shall be included in the congregation's annual report.

**Annual Meeting –
 Palestine Lutheran Church
 Sunday January 22, 2012**

Notice is hereby officially given that the 2012 Annual Meeting of Palestine Lutheran Church will be held **Sunday, January 22, 2012** in Fellowship Hall. It will be a great day to celebrate the ministry of Palestine Lutheran Church.

Details will follow regarding schedule.

The Property Committee is asking for volunteers for removing snow *around the church.*



❄ There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall for clearing sidewalks.

❄ Michael & Andrew Rasmussen have volunteered to clear drives and parking lots.

We have a sign up for reserves to fill in for Michael & Andrew if needed.

Special thanks to the many of you that have helped in the past several years.

Severe Weather Policy: When school is canceled



because of the weather, all church functions will also be canceled. If weather hits when school is not in session, a message regarding

cancellations will be put on the church answering machine (515/597-2620). We will notify the following radio/TV stations if worship or other events are to be canceled WHO, KCCI, KRNT, & WOI. For smaller functions phone trees will also be utilized.

Special NOTE: Please use your own judgment regarding traveling in severe weather conditions.

March 10, 2012

CTIM: Called Together in Mission

@ First Lutheran Church, 1000 Third Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids IA

A resource event developed by the Southeastern Iowa Synod. The event is open to all. It would especially helpful for pastors, lay staff, church council, and committee members.

We will receive registration materials and workshop descriptions after the first of the year. Registration and additional information will also be posted online at the synod website

www.seiasynod.org

Poverty too often a reality for many Iowa families

There are people in poverty across Iowa. These people are in your community struggling to get by day-to-day. You may not know who they are, but they are our brothers and sisters in Christ. Nearly 12 percent of Iowans are living in poverty, and as the economic downturn and job growth struggles continue, this will undoubtedly continue to rise.

January is National Poverty Awareness Month: a time to remember families and children affected by poverty. Throughout Iowa communities, Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) assists people through services that provide education and set goals that can lead to a more self-sufficient life. By bringing hope to families, LSI can help break the cycle of poverty, leading to healthier, happier families and stronger communities.

For more information on LSI, visit www.LSIowa.org. Join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

“We came a long way. A very long way.”

A single mother, Roycene juggles parenting, work and night classes so that someday she can help women and children affected by substance abuse issues.

“If there hadn’t been people helping me along the way, I wouldn’t be where I am today,” she said.

Sober for over two years now, Roycene recalls when her then five-year-old son Lucas finally returned home after being placed in foster care.

“Lucas came home with a lot of behaviors,” she said. “It was almost unmanageable. I went from not having a child with me for a year and half to this. It was a transition for him and for me.”

For two years through LSI’s behavioral health intervention services, LSI caseworker Heidi has helped Lucas learn anger management, communication skills and coping skills. Heidi is also helping Lucas improve his social skills to make friends at school and helping Roycene find ways to talk to Lucas about his father’s incarceration.

“She has helped me through that,” Roycene said. “It’s hard to know how to explain that his father isn’t in the picture and what to tell him. It’s not like he’s going to be in his life.”

They still have tough days, but ask Roycene if she’s proud of how far they’ve come and she grows quiet.

“Yes, I am,” she said softly. “We came a long way. A very long way.”

Lutheran Day on the Hill – Your Voice Can Change Lives

Lutheran Services in Iowa’s Lutheran Day on the Hill is taking place on March 12, 2012. This day is essential in giving a voice to those who are not heard, for seeking social justice and for empowering people to exercise their right and responsibility to be part of the legislative process.

People working together and speaking out can make social change happen.

Lutheran Day on the Hill 2012 will begin at Elim Christian Fellowship in Des Moines at 9:30 a.m. The morning will include brief advocacy training and stories of hope told by LSI clients. After lunch, the group of passionate advocates assembled will make its way to the Capitol to speak with legislators.

Enjoy fellowship on the Lutheran Day on the Hill bus to the Capitol.

Thanks to a grant from ELCA World Hunger, a charter bus will be leaving from Davenport and stopping in Iowa City and Newton on its way to Des Moines. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to get a ride to the event and enjoy fellowship with other advocates along the way. Space is limited so register today!

Strengthening our partnership in advocacy.

Lutheran Services in Iowa and the three Iowa Synods of the ELCA are working closely together to make Lutheran Day on the Hill bigger and better than ever. This event is a great example of the strength of this partnership, and how together we can have an even greater impact on the lives of the most vulnerable people in our state through our advocacy.

Register for Lutheran Day on the Hill online today at

www.LSIowa.org/advocate

LSI’s People Place ABC (After Baby Comes) group meets regularly during the week (Thursday mornings from 9:30-11:30). Designed for parents of infants to preschoolers, this group features occasional presenters on age-appropriate topics.

2012 ABC Program Schedule

LSI’s People Place – 219 6th St., Ames

(Group meets 9:30-11:30am with presenter from 10-11am)

For more details about classes and services? Please contact us at 515.232.1677 or peopleplace@LSIowa.org. 219 6th Street, Ames, IA 50010

- ❖ **January 12: Family Nutrition Program with Bambi Robinson**
- ❖ *January 19: Open Discussion*
- ❖ **January 26: Esscentula Alchemy with Amanda Feeley**
- ❖ *February 2: Open Discussion*
- ❖ **February 9: Hy Vee Dietitian Amy Clark**
- ❖ *February 16: Open discussion*
- ❖ **February 23: ISU Family Finance Program: Financial Mgmt. with Barb Wollan**
- ❖ *March 1: Open Discussion*
- ❖ **March 8: ISU Family Finance Program: Banking with Barb Wollan**
- ❖ *March 15: Open Discussion*
- ❖ **March 22: ISU Family Finance Program: Credit with Barb Wollan**
- ❖ *March 29 Open Discussion*
- ❖ **April 5: Raising Readers - “Move with Me”: Mona Berkey**

January Birthdays



- 1 - Clark, Haylie
Nelson, Lucas
- 2 - Christiansen, Evelyn
- 3 - Engles, Ryan
Halverson, Ashley
Knutson, Madison
- 4 - Schonhorst, Lori
- 5 - Sheldahl, Tracy
- 6 - Hartman, Sarah
- 7 - Nielson, Colleen
- 9 - Burlage, Dave
- 11 - Harmon, Jay
Rhoads, Tracy
- 12 - Elliott, Lowell
Friedrichsen, Tom
- 13 - Dixon, Julie
Larson, Missy
- 14 - Lindsey, Tucker
Sheldahl, Mollie
- 15 - Cast, Richard
- 17 - Braafhart, Kristi
Stowe, Deb
- 18 - Hartman, Bruce
Williams, Kevin
- 20 - Egeland, Betty
Huxford, Casey
- 22 - Johnson, Cynthia
- 25 - Anderson, David
Hilton, Daelynn
- 28 - Hilton, Cheyenne
- 29 - Sukut, Jonathan
- 30 - Brendeland, Callie
Davis, Ashley
Johnson, Tyler
Lewis, Lesa
McKinney, Judy
- 31 - Knutson, Madison

If your birthday or anniversary was not included or was incorrect, please contact the church office so we can update our records. Thank you.

Celebrating Their ANNIVERSARY

JANUARY

- 8—Marvin & Lorraine Sorensen
- 14—Omar & Elizabeth Tesdell
- 27—Tom & Cindy Friedrichsen
- 31 — Randy & Monica Bowers

Remember in Prayer

The following were included in the Prayers of the Church during December... Betty Egeland; Bob Egeland; Carolyn Frederick; Jackie Greene; Kevin Greene; Wanda Halverson; Wayne Halverson; Orville Hauge; Roger Ihle; Dorothy Larson; Osmond Larson; Javerna Maland; Roger Moore; Keith & Arlene Wee; Garry Wirtz

- Naga Gopi Kokkligadda & his family of India, child sponsored by Palestine's Sunday School students.
- Those impacted by earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, tornadoes, flooding & drought.
- Those who have lost their jobs.

We extend our prayers and sincerest Christian sympathy...
...to family and friends of **Ted Minear** (father of Deb Ness)
...family & friends of **Rich Gibson** (father of Jen Dovre)
May the risen Lord give his strength and comfort to their families in their time of loss.

A Note of Thanks

Thank you for all the different ways you have remembered me during my stay at Mary Greeley, the Madrid Home and now at Ballard Creek, especially all the greetings I received for my 95th birthday. Thanks to Pastor Jamie for his visits. I have been richly blessed. I do wish all of you a blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with peace and happiness.

Thanks! Javerna Maland

Community Events - Check bulletin board & counter in Fellowship Hall for additional announcements & information.

Family Literacy Program

Sunday evenings

January 22-February 26, 2012

(No meeting on February 5)

5:00 to 7:30 p.m. (including meal)

Trinity United Methodist Church

102 Lynwood Drive, Huxley

Trinity is sponsoring a Family Literacy Program which will start January 22. The program is aimed at families with pre-readers (ages 3-5) and includes a meal for whoever comes, childcare for siblings and a children's book each week, all at no cost. The aim is to help get kids off to a good start in school by fostering some early reading skills and encouraging an interest in it. Flyer is posted on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

Space is limited, so call today!

CALLING ALL PARENTS WITH INFANTS (AND THOSE EXPECTING)

Please join us for Faith Stepping Stone #1: Raising A Healthy Baby

A three-session course for young parents (and those expecting) in the church and community.

THIS IS A FREE EVENT!!!

Tuesdays January 24, 31 and February 7th from 6:00p-7:30p

Dinner is included!

Group Blessing of the Babies will be on Sunday February 12th during worship.

What is the purpose of this Stone?

- To teach parents to care for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of their baby
 - To teach parents to nurture their own physical, emotional, and spiritual needs during this stressful period.
 - To spawn the formation of a supportive small group network for young parents
 - To call parents to add the practice of blessing babies and putting them to sleep with music featuring God's Word to their nightly bedtime ritual
-

What Sessions are included with this Stone?

Session 1: *Infant Physical Development*

Parents learn about the physical and developmental needs of an infant in a "Basic Baby" course.

Session 2: *Infant Emotional Development*

The emotional needs of both baby and parent are explored and discussed.

Session 3: *Infant Spiritual Development*

A short Bible study explores the concept of blessing.

Additional Details on Stone #1:

For most parents, during the first few hours after birth as they hold that precious new baby in their arms, even the harshest critics of the church are often touched with wonder and mystery at such a miracle. It is said the hardest day in an atheist's life is when she finds herself profoundly thankful and has no one to thank.

With Stepping Stone 1: Raising a Healthy Baby, young parents spend three weeks together sharing, laughing and growing as they learn about their babies' physical, emotional and spiritual health...as well as their own, and finishing the course with a group blessing of the babies at the altar in worship. At that time, our congregation will also invite them into a new parents' small group fellowship with the people they've met through this course.

PLEASE LET PASTOR KATIE KNOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE PART OF THE STONE #1 PLANNING TEAM!

Faith Stepping Stones is not intended to be led by one person, but by a team of individuals passionate about incubating faith for the next generation.

To sign up please e-mail Pastor Katie at pastorkatie2002@yahoo.com or call her at (630)200-3288

Monday, January 2, 2:00 p.m. Bible Study.
September 2011—May 2012 To Follow and to Serve:
The Gospel of Mark

The 2011–2012 Bible study challenges us—it's an invitation to discipleship in the 21st century. The study emphasizes what it means to follow Jesus Christ today. We are called to a living faith, a deeper and more courageous understanding of what it means to follow the one we first meet in Mark's Gospel at his baptism at the River Jordan.

Session 5: **Confessing Christ** found in the January/February edition of *Gather*. "I believe, help my unbelief." Mark 9:24

In this session, Mark presents a number of stories that have shaped the lives of the Christian community for 20 centuries. Not a one of us living today was there on the road to Caesarea Philippi, or up on the Mount of the Transfiguration, or present when the father of the boy with seizures cried out to Jesus, "I believe; help my unbelief" (9:24), yet these accounts shape how we now relate to the one we know as Jesus Christ.

In this session, we reach the mid-point in our reading of Mark's Gospel. If it feels like you are being drawn deeply into the heart of the text, you are experiencing Mark's gift as a narrator.

The story is no longer just about others; it is a narrative directed at us, too. "But who do you say that I am?" Jesus asks Peter and we hear that "you" as a question Jesus poses for us today. In this session we explore what it means to make our own confession of faith as disciples.

The theme for the January/February edition of *Gather* is **You Must Consider This**— "Who do you say that I am?" Jesus asks Peter and we hear that "you" as a question Jesus poses to us today.

Piecemakers' News



Our Piecemakers will resume quilt making at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 4, after our holiday break. To date we've completed about 75 quilts and have shipped 33 of them to LWR.

Thanks to a generous donation, we've recently purchased batting, thread, and sheets for quilt backs. We can still use donations of sheets – either new, or good, clean used sheets – for backs.

New workers are welcome to join us at the church from 1-4 p.m. on most Wednesdays for designing, putting together, tying, pinning and sewing quilts for Lutheran World Relief and local use.

gather FOR FAITH AND ACTION

Gather, the magazine of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, offers a mix of articles, theological reflections, devotions, and stories of comfort and challenge that lift up the mission of Women of the ELCA: to mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. The magazine is published 10 times a year with combined issues in January/February and July/August. Cost is \$12 per year. You may subscribe online or contact the *Gather* Subscription Order Center, Box 1553, Minneapolis, MN 55440-8730

In addition to the feature articles centered on each issue's theme, you'll also enjoy our regular columns and features, including Grace Notes, thoughts from the executive director of Women of the ELCA; Amen!, prayerful reflections on the theme or season; Let Us Pray, ideas and resources to enhance your prayer life, and Health Wise, articles about health issues that affect women profoundly.

Coming up - 2012-2013 "Gather" Bible Studies Summer 2012: Along the Way

In this study, we'll meet some biblical travelers, enter in conversation with them, and explore our own journeys of faith. We'll walk with Jacob, who after wrestling a stranger throughout the night, discovers God. We'll wander in the wilderness with people who complain to Moses about their aching feet and ask: "Are we there yet?" We'll spend time with Jesus' companions and reflect on our faith. The writer, the Rev. Julie A. Kanarr, an ELCA pastor from Port Townsend, Wash., is a pilgrim-student of the Bible who has journeyed extensively by car, bicycle, kayak, foot, boat, and airplane.

September 2012-May 2013: Gathered by God

"Gathered by God" is a word study on *gather*, and will cover session topics such as: *gather to learn*, *gather for fellowship*, *gather for support*, *gather to be empowered*, *gather to be sent*. The study will look at all the ways God calls us to *gather* and will support the new magazine name, as well as the purpose statement of Women of the ELCA. The writer Audrey West is author of the award-winning 2004 (Lutheran Woman Today, now *Gather*) Bible study, "Everyday Surprises: The Parables of Jesus." She lives in Bethlehem, Pa., and served most recently as visiting associate professor of Lutheran studies at Yale Divinity School.

Connecting global and local

January 12–14

Glocal Musician Training
Chicago, Illinois

January 27–28

Christ the King Luth Church
Cary, North Carolina

January 12–14

Glocal Musician Training
Chicago, Illinois

January 27–28

Christ the King Lutheran Church Luth School of Theology
Cary, North Carolina

March 3

Boston, Massachusetts

April 27–29

Northern Texas —
Northern Louisiana Mission
Assembly
Sheraton Grand Hotel
DFW Airport
Irving, Texas

May 8–11 - Canadian Forum

God's work in mission always propels us to encounter the neighbor, particularly in the stranger. ELCA Glocal Mission Gatherings equip us for God's work in today's global and local realities as well as their "glocal" intersections.

What is mission? Who is the neighbor? Let's consider these questions together as they relate to our migrating and immigrating world. Come, join us for mission conversations around the realities of the world we live in today.

"Then the Lord said to Cain, 'where is your brother Abel?' He said, 'I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?'" — Genesis 4.9

The Glocal Mission Gathering (GMG) brings together congregational leaders for a day and a half of worship, workshops and sharing around global and local mission.

Glocal Mission Gathering Workshops may include:

- Cross-Generational Engagement
- Growing a Missional Congregation
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
- Mission 101
- Mission Interpretation: Growing Your Mission Interpretation Ministry
- Stewardship: Embracing the Gifts of Diversity
- Music and Mission
- On the Move: Conversation on Faith & Migration
- Radical Hospitality
- Short Term Mission
- Social Action

<http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Global-Mission/Engage-in-Global-Mission/Global-Events/Glocal-Mission-Gatherings.aspx>

June 6–7

Cincinnati, Ohio

June 22–23

Our Savior's Luth Church
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

July 1–31

International Companion
Program to the 2012 Youth
Gathering

September 14–15

Luth School of Theology
at Chicago

September 21–22

Portland, Oregon

October 5–6

St. Paul Lutheran Church
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

November 2–3

Faith Lutheran Church
Clive, Iowa

The Lutheran – The current issue of the Lutheran is available on the table in Fellowship Hall. Coming up in *The Lutheran*:

Here's a look at the January 2012 issue of *The Lutheran*.

LET'S STUDY. Make a New Year's resolution to use *The Lutheran* as a study resource in 2012. The January issue has plenty of topics for individual and group study. Think of a different kind of resolution by reading "Be it resolved ..."—getting spiritual on the brink of a new year (a study guide is available for this article at www.thelutheran.org; click on "study guides" — it's free to print and Web subscribers). Go deeper into "Salvation," a conversation between — and for — Lutherans led by ELCA teaching theologians. Contemplate empathy and how it will change your life. Or ponder "A face that shines" with Lutheran pastor Peter W. Marty. He recommends Exodus 34:29-35 as a Bible story that breathes life.

NEW ECONOMY. The *Lutheran*'s January issue focuses on "Economic disruption and an evolving church." An ELCA pastor writes about the economic impact of her layoff on the ELCA. She suggests that hard times — job losses, housing insecurity, and decreases in investment and retirement income — are pulling the church to look at new ways to consider its work. A study guide is available for this article (and for more than 300 others) at www.thelutheran.org; click on "study guides." It's free to print and Web subscribers.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE. The *Lutheran* is a resource for your congregation and members. In the January issue: **learn** how to have fun in worship with a Dr. Seuss liturgy ... **go** green with Lutheran social service agencies ... **get** some parental advice on saying sorry to your kids ... **find** out how parents can keep things quiet during worship ... read a review of *Happy Feet Two* and the children's book *One Love* ... **meet** the kids who bought a boat for Juan, a fisherman in El Salvador ... and **learn** about a study that says sabbaticals score big for pastors.

STAY CONNECTED to the ELCA — locally and globally. In *The Lutheran*'s January issue: **get** a report on the ELCA Church Council's November meeting ... **travel** to the Middle East, where a Palestinian Lutheran is bringing in tourists ... **visit** Washington, where pastors urge believers out of their homes and into two new churches ... **find** a "common word" in Virginia, where a dialogue involves Lutherans and Muslims ... **see** what the ELCA Board of Pensions is calling itself now ... and **get** news from the ELCA's colleges, universities and seminaries.

Coming up in future issues of *The Lutheran*:

- February cover story: Lent as a time of inner work.
- Learn about 10 things your family can add this Lent.
- Ask, "What is sin?"
- Find out what faith and FROGS have to do with Costa Rica.
- See what you can learn from visiting a monastery.
- Stretch your understanding of welcoming people with God's hospitality.
- Go to Texas, where three worshipping communities were born out of congregations leaving the ELCA.

Riverside Marriage Retreat

March 2-4, 2012, Friday evening through Sunday noon

"Seasons of Marriage"

"To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven." -Ecclesiastes 3:1

The Riverside Marriage Retreat hopes to offer husbands and wives a refreshing opportunity to slow down... To re-group... To re-claim... To re-reflect... To re-commit... To re-charge... To re-discover...

Our weekend together is designed for you to have some time... You will be provided some space to focus on Biblical principles that can nurture increasingly joy-filled and sturdy marriages... You will be offered moments to reflect individually - and as couples... You will learn new things as we discuss in small and large groups... You will be challenged spiritually... You will make new friends... You will be invited to laugh and to sing... You will experience fellowship and community... You and your spouse will be encouraged to "stay in it" - for the long haul... You will be invited to heal and forgive... You will be reminded that marriage exists not for selfish reasons - but for the glory of God...

Speakers: Ryan and Jenn Alexander



Ryan and Jenn Alexander have served side-by-side in ministry since the day they met, 15 years ago.

Authenticity and humor are the marks of this couple's teaching style, and their

individual personalities and gifts create a beautiful harmony of opposites.

Ryan is the Pastor of Spiritual Formation at Hosanna Lutheran Church in Lakeville, MN. Jenn is a singer-songwriter, worship leader and retreat speaker.

This retreat is for people of ALL ages!

Housing Options & Fee

\$130 - Riverside housing - couples stay in individual cabins or rooms.

\$210 - Viking Hotel (3miles from camp in Story City)

\$100 Commute - sleep at home, attend all the programming at camp

*Fee includes all meals and programming

Online Registration available after January 1.

The Riverside Gala - February 25, 2012

Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp is planning to hold the fifth Heavenly Night Gala on February 25, 2012.

Diane Schwartz and volunteers are planning this fun and elegant evening celebrating all God is doing at Riverside. Highlights include fellowship, wonderful food and music and of course an exciting auction with several one-of-a-kind items.

The attendance grows each year and so do the requests to do it again. Invitations will be sent in early 2012, so plan now to come and enjoy a heavenly night at Riverside. Volunteers are welcome to help plan the 2012 Heavenly Night Gala; please call John Foster at 515-733-5271 if you want to be involved. See you at Riverside February 25th.



The Blast! is a fantastic one day event here at Riverside this spring. This event is perfect for the busy youth group and student as we pack as much fun and excitement as possible into one fun-filled day!

Blast! 2012 Dates : Juniors (Grades 3-6) March 31 For Junior & Senior High (Grades 7-12) April 14

Take one day, mix in all the fun of camp and what do you get? The BLAST! This is a great opportunity for you to come and see what camp is all about. We start at 9:30 and go until 5:30. In the middle are games, chapel time, group building, lots of laughs, quiet time with God, great skits, carpetball, and lots of new friends to meet. So come check out the BLAST! here at Riverside each and every spring.

Men's Retreat 2012: April 27-28, 2012

The first ever Riverside Spring Men's retreat is this April! It is open to all men 18 and over or 13 and over if accompanied by a father, guardian, or grandfather.

During this weekend you can look forward to: faith building in an open environment, fellowship with other men, interesting and applicable teaching, authentic worship, powerful prayer time, service time, great food, s'mores at the campfire and a steak fry!

Why? To get away for time with each other and time with God, to have a good time together, and to let our souls be revived. And, because men don't get to do stuff like this very often! Let's take advantage of it!

More information will become available as the event approaches, including our speaker and registration information. Stay tuned!

Fee: \$50

Register by April 20th to ensure your spot!!