

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH (HELEN TWP.)

NEWSLETTER

January
2011

Unchanging Hope for an Ever-changing World

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
Hebrews 13:8



As one year ends and another begins, columnists and commentators look back at the previous year. What changed? What stayed the same? Whose passing did we mourn? Whose new arrival did we celebrate?

At the same time, we make predictions about the coming year. What will the new year hold? What will change? What will stay the same?

As fun and exciting as it may be to reminisce about the past and dream about the future, it can also be a little sad and scary. Things will likely never be what they used to be. Loved ones who have passed away don't come back. Jobs that are lost seldom reappear quickly. Even when broken dreams and broken relationships are

repaired, they rarely return to their former glory. Many times our experiences in an ever-changing world are difficult.

Yet we sometimes look at our lives and see a need for change. Many of us make New Year's resolutions: "I'm going to exercise more and eat less." "I'm going to save more and spend less." "I'm going to love more and hate less." But too often, our good intentions disappear, and only poor excuses remain.

No matter what (or who) changes from one year to the next, there is one who never changes—Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He always exists, from before time, throughout the course of time, and at the end of time for eternity. Jesus loved you before you were born. He loves you today, and he will always love you.

That's what Christmas is all about. Jesus loved you so much that he wanted you to experience his unchanging love forever. So he came into the world to live up to God's perfect demands in your place. He took the punishment for your imperfection and gave you the reward for his perfection. That reward is an eternity far away from this world's sorrows and disappointments—the unchanging peace and joy of a place called heaven.

Jesus—the same yesterday, today, and forever—promises to be with us, to love us, to care for us, and to give perfect peace with God to all who trust in him. Only Jesus offers unchanging hope to an ever-changing world.

CHURCH NEWS

Jesus Cares Bible Class We continue our ministry to people with developmental disabilities. Bible class is scheduled here at church on Thursday, January 6th and 27th at 6:30PM. Members of the congregation are welcome to come and join in this ministry.

Glencoe Expo: Once again it is that time of year to start thinking about the Glencoe Expo. It is February 19th and 20th. Watch the bulletin for news of a planning meeting for this event.

Annual Reports All groups and organizations of St. John's are reminded to complete their annual reports and turn them in to Pastor or leave them in the back office by Monday, January 10th. Thank you for your prompt attention.

Annual Meeting Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 23rd following our morning worship service. All members are encouraged to stay and be involved in the work of our congregation. Items that will be on our agenda include: our support for synod and Minnesota District ministries, sharing information on local ministry programs, the results of our congregational survey, salaries, and others.

The Lutheran Home Association The Annual meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 18th in the Chapel at The Lutheran Home Campus in Belle Plaine. Lunch and registration begins at noon, followed by a worship service at 1pm with the business meeting to follow. We hope to see you there!

Directory Updates: If your address or phone number has changed over the past year, please contact Ruth Lange or Pastor Reichow before the printing of the 2011 directory.

Forward In Christ Magazine Monthly issues are available for congregation members. If you would like to help pay for the cost of this magazine, please contact Jeremy Siers.

Supporting the Synod through Searching Please consider using GoodSearch as your on-line search engine. By using this engine (www.goodsearch.com) and selecting WELS as your charity, one cent per search will be donated to the synod.

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YOUTH NEWS

Thank you to everyone who purchased poinsettias through the Youth Group from The Glencoe Garden Center. We greatly appreciate your support.

We will be going to Grand Slam in Burnsville on Sunday, January 16th at 2pm (there is no school the following Monday). All Youth members are welcome to invite friends to come along. Youth family members are always welcome to join us. **Please sign up on the sheet on the table in the narthex by Sunday, January 9th.** If you are in need of a ride, please indicate this on the sign up sheet and we will make arrangements.

The Youth will be having a lock-in here at church on Friday, February 21st beginning at 8:00pm. All youth in grades 5th -12th are invited to attend. We encourage everyone planning to attend to invite a friend to join us for an evening of fun and games. Please bring a game and snack/beverage to share. We will also be ordering pizza from Pizza Ranch. Don't forget your pj's and sleeping bags! If you have any further questions you may speak with Teresa Ross.

Parents of the Youth members: We need volunteers to help take the lead on some of the different events (such as Lenten Supper, Easter breakfast, etc). Your help and involvement is very important. If you are willing to help out please speak to Gene Roush.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

1 st	Kim Lange and Brett Rund
5 th	Mitchell Dammann
6 th	Jennifer Siewert
7 th	Althea Mathwig
8 th	Maureen Lowden
14 th	Caleb Schuth
17 th	Shem Goette
19 th	Jeremy Siers
20 th	Dennis Reichow
23 rd	John Ross
24 th	Melanie Schmidt
26 th	August Sickmann
28 th	Miranda Litzau
30 th	Owen Schmiegl