

WELCOME TO *St. Stephen the Martyr, ELCA*

Service Times: Saturday - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:00 & 9:30 a.m.



the **MARTYR MONTHLY**
JANUARY 2009 NEWSLETTER

St. Stephen the Martyr
Lutheran Church, ELCA

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OFFICE HOURS:
9-2 M-Th
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SSM STAFF

Gail Brodersen-Heins, Pastor
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Bill Bravener, Music Director
bbravener@ststephenthemartyr.com
Kevan Penvose, Discipleship Coach for
Family Ministries
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Bob Brownell, Maintenance
Bob De Frank, Sunday School
Superintendent
Janet Snyder, Organist



As We Start the New Year

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

January 1—New Year's Day

January 8—7th/8th Grade Confirmation
at SSM resumes, 7 pm

January 9 @ 6 pm New Year's Potluck

January 6—Epiphany of our Lord

January 23—6:30 pm 4th Friday at the Movies
—"Young at Heart"

January 25 @ 10:45 am
Annual Congregational Meeting
A brunch will be served afterward by the Youth



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PASTOR GAIL'S COMPUTER NOTES...

Jesus said to them, *"It is not for you to know time or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."* Acts 1:7-8

As we begin a new calendar year, these words of Jesus are a great reminder that we Christians are called by the Holy Spirit to be our Lord's witnesses everywhere we go! His disciples were given power to do this, and so are we! Hurray! So as you put away the Christmas things, take heart! There are things for us to do in January, and all year long!

Our congregation has been visioning and dreaming about who we are and what we would like to be as Christ's witnesses to the world. Our Forward Planning Committee was commissioned to "provide a roadmap for the continued spiritual growth and viability of St. Stephen the Martyr Lutheran Church."

Home meetings in Lent, several Bible studies, the views of the charter members, and the collecting and pouring over a mountain of data has resulted in the "SSM Forward Plan." The church council has been discussing the Plan; it will be formally presented at the Annual Meeting on January 25th.

Before that, however, we will all celebrate and pray for this process, lifting up the vision goals at worship this month. On the weekends of January 10-11, 17-18, and 24-25, the sermons and the prayers will focus on the calling of St. Stephen the Martyr as a community of faith for these 43 years of its life. We will ask God's help to achieve the objectives of our forward plan, based on Acts 1:8 and we will also pray for help in meeting the obstacles that members have said might stand in our way.

We will 'lift up' in prayer the 6 strategic directions of the 'Action Plan', having to do with 'generational opportunities', the enrichment of our worship and music, the use of our facilities, and greater opportunities for faith development through learning and service to others.

Please continue to pray for this process, for the Forward Planning Committee, our council, our committees, and our church. Please be obedient and persistent in your worship life.

I hope to see you all at services these weekends in January as we pledge together to be faithful to God in our communal life together "for the sake of the world".

I have been invited to travel to one of our Synod's partner churches, the Lutheran Church of El Salvador in Central America from Tues., Jan. 13th to Tues., Jan. 20th. Six of us from our Gr. Milw. Synod will visit partner congregations there. But the highlight of the trip will be the invitation to observe local elections.

We will have a day of training and then monitor that all is done correctly in this country that has endured a two-decades long civil war. El Salvador is a fragile democracy, and the churches are helping in that process. Christians there live their faith every day in the face of poverty and injustice.

It was difficult for me to decide to accept this invitation, but I am glad to be able to go, and ask for your prayers for this delegation, for the people of El Salvador, and for the strong witness of courageous Christians there. I look forward to sharing the experience with you.

God's blessings to you this Epiphany season!

See you at worship,

Your partner in the Gospel,

Pastor Gail

Annual Meeting

SAVE THE DATE!

Notice of Annual Meeting

SSM Annual Congregational Meeting

In the Fellowship Hall

Sunday, Jan 25th, 2009

10:45 - 12:15

Followed by a light lunch served by our youth.

Your council needs your input at this meeting. We will be sharing ideas on the ways in which we can build our church, our own Christian lives and how we can better impact our community and the world in which we live. We will also be discussing the next steps of the Forward Planning Committee.

As is our custom, a brunch will be served by our youth at the conclusion of the meeting.

It is important that all confirmed members of St. Stephen the Martyr attend and vote at this annual meeting. It is your opportunity to have a voice in our church. We hope to see you there!

Family Ministry News

Upcoming Events		
Jan 11	6:30 PM	SMASH @ St. Luke's (4 HS Students)
Jan 24	11:30 AM	Family Ministry Meeting
Jan 25	10:45 AM	Annual Meeting Luncheon

Parents: We Need Your Help

It is no secret that the church — including our own congregation — has a grave crisis when it comes to students dropping out of active church participation following confirmation.

BUT neither is the resolution to this crisis a secret: active participation of committed parents collaborating in the leadership of youth and family ministries.

Please save the date **January 24th, 11:30 to 1 p.m.**, for a very important meeting for your Family Ministries at St. Stephen the Martyr.

You are invited, along with all parents with students in grades 4 through 12, to a potluck luncheon and discussion about the direction our ministry together will take in the near future and in the years

to come.

Bring a dish. Bring yourselves. Bring your ideas.
Bring your gifts for serving Jesus.

We need everyone. We need you. You are a blessing to us all.

Baby sitting and activities for kids will be provided.

HURRICANE KATRINA... STILL CLEANING UP AFTER FOUR YEARS

On New Years Day, SSM members Tim Falksen & Melissa Stevens will be traveling to New Orleans, LA with other Greater Milwaukee Synod Young Adults. They will be leaving from Vernon Lutheran Church in Mukwonago, WI on Thursday evening and will arrive in New Orleans on Friday afternoon. While there, they will be working on helping to rebuild homes devastated by Hurricane Katrina, have devotions with others who are helping, as well as seeing some of the sights in the area.

They will be starting the return trip on January 9th and returning mid-day on Saturday the 10th. Please keep them and all going on the trip in your prayers for a safe trip and safe and meaningful work.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

A Blessed and Enjoyable Evening!

The Sunday School Children's Program on December 21st was a joyful success. All in attendance were thrilled by the music and enthusiasm of the children who participated. Thanks go out to director Stephanie Mayer and accompanist Kelly Sachse for their excellent work.

An offering was taken for Heifer International. The children will soon vote to decide where to disburse the funds.

Also, the children brought hats, gloves and mittens—gifts for the Christ child, which will be distributed to the needy. Thanks also to all the Sunday School teachers, helpers and Bob DeFrank, Sunday School Superintendent for all their hard work in putting this program together.

SHEPHERD'S CORNER LIBRARY NEWS

Reading is a great way to pass the cold winter months! Cuddle up with a good book and renew your faith! Make it a point to stop in with your children at the Shepherd's Corner Library. We are a great resource for Christian children's books & videos.

We have some very good books for adults as well for your reading enjoyment. Grow in your faith with a book from your Shepherd's Corner Library.

Contact our Discipleship Coach, Kevan Penvose: 414-258-0858 stillerz7@yahoo.com

Fellowship

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD & OTHERS

I John 1:7"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin."

When we walk as children of God, we have fellowship one with another, and it is a time for rejoicing. The Fellowship Committee is looking for members to join our team. Please contact Shelly Rosenstock at 769-7067 if you have any ideas or questions about the Fellowship Committee.

First Friday Potluck Celebration!

January 9th, 6 p.m.

On Friday, January 9th in the Fellowship Hall join the celebration of the third anniversary of the First Friday Potluck. (Note that we will meet on the 2nd Friday this month, due to the New Year's holiday--makes sense if you think about it!)

The main dish will be lasagna, so please bring yourself, maybe a friend, and a salad, garlic bread or a dessert.

Bring some jokes or funny stories and a desire to laugh! Let's start off the new year with friends, fun and good food. If you can, bring some food for the food pantry, too.

Sign up on the office bulletin board.

The First Friday Potluck is for all, especially those who live alone. Come and enjoy!

Human concerns

Next meeting is January 6th - 6:30 pm Call Shirley Lieske with questions: 761-0734.



MT. MERU COFFEE

The Mt. Meru Coffee Project creates a direct connection between farmers and consumers. It offers justice through a fair price for the farmer.

This partnership between Lutherans of the Milwaukee Synod (ELCA) and the Diocese of Meru (ELCT) in northern Tanzania, helps farmers grow coffee on the slopes of Mt. Meru and is purchased directly from the farmers through their local co-ops. It is shipped to Milwaukee, roasted to order, then distributed to consumers through 60+ congregations and is also shipped to supporters nation wide.

Please consider trying a bag of Mt. Meru Coffee available in our narthex. The cost is \$9.00 per bag.

Asante Sana—Thank you!

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

We will collect food for Central City Food Pantry for the month of January. Look for details about what kinds of foods to buy on the bulletin board outside the office.

Proverbs 22:9 "Anyone who gives generously will be blessed, because they share their food with those who are poor."

RED DOOR CLOTHING STORE

The Red Door, at St. James Episcopal Church, at 833 W. Wisconsin Ave. (271-1340) is in need of gently used:

Men's Clothing, especially large sizes

Hats, coats, mittens or gloves are also needed for this time of year.

Please place your donations in the coat room. Any questions, please call Mary Luedtke @ 414-281-5898.

HUMAN CONCERNS THANK YOU\$

Many thanks for your generous spirits this past Christmas season. You enabled SSM to send many wonderful gifts to Bay View Community Center, and helped give many small gifts to the House of Correction.

Our heartfelt thanks to all! God's peace in the new year!

PICK 'N SAVE HELPS THE COMMUNITY

Please help SSM benefit from 1% of YOUR Pick 'N Save purchases!

Just register at the Customer Service Desk and tell them you would like to have St. Stephen the Martyr as your designated charity.

Our #: 813560.



The next Music & Worship Meeting is January 14 @ 6 p.m.

The new year is upon us, and the Music and Worship Committee would like to extend a warm welcome to the members of SSM to join our Music & Worship Committee. Your service can be long term or short term. If you would like information about our committee and the duties or would like to volunteer to serve, please contact one of the following members of Music & Worship by phone or contacting them at church:

Readers	Bob DeFrank	761-2165
Ushers	Bob Rasmussen	421-5170
Greeters	John Rech	546-1576
Communion Set up or Servers	Cathy Peterson	325-6628
	Sue Jarchow	526-9785

Thanks to all!

A BIG thank you goes to Bill Bravener, Stephanie Mayer, Jan Snyder and all of the wonderful musicians who blessed us on December 13th with "The Promised Messiah" Concert. It was a glorious occasion. Also a big thanks to the Fellowship Committee led by Shelly Rosenstock for the Hors d'oeuvres and dessert reception following the concert.

USHERS NEEDED FOR 2009

Soon it will be time to prepare a new usher schedule for the new year. Due to unexpected illness on the part of about four of our veteran ushers—who retired or are on long-term leave—we have developed a short staff of willing volunteers.

To complete our usher teams for 2009, your church is in need of more men, women and teens to volunteer to serve.

People are needed to usher on Saturdays at the 5 pm service, as well as on Sundays at either the 8 am or 9:30 am services. The frequency of ushering is about one time per month, and if you cannot usher on a given date, substitutes are available.

Ushering is fun- you get to meet more people in your church, and you acquire a good feeling in your soul that you are serving others.

Ushering is easy since written instructions are available, and on-the-job training occurs. If interested, please contact Bob Rasmussen at church or at home: 421-5170.

MUSIC NOTES FROM BILL BRAVENER, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC/ASSOCIATE IN MINISTRY

Thanks to everyone who participated in our Christmas Concert and Christmas worship services. Thanks for sharing your talents. You all made my first Christmas at St. Stephen's very meaningful.

Now the second half of the choir season begins. I am selecting music for the choirs, and you are especially welcome to join us at this time. Have you ever wanted to try Senior Choir or Handbell Choir? Now is the time to give it a try. Regular choir rehearsals will resume on January 14. Please check the church calendar for the details.

Happy New Year! See you at worship.—Bill

PARAMENT COLOR CHANGES

We are now in the time of the twelve days of Christmas from December 25th to January 5th. White is the color symbolizing the light and purity of Christ. The season of Epiphany, the coming of the kings to Bethlehem begins January 6th and continues until Lent, February 25th of this year. The paraments are white on the first and last Sundays of Epiphany and green as a symbol of life and growth.

But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation always say, "Let God be exalted!" Psalm 70:4

Flower chart

Flowers are a beautiful way to adorn our worship. If you would like to provide a bouquet, please write your name on the Flower Chart on the office door and specify the month and week that you will be

providing flowers. Please state whether the offering is in memory of a loved one or to commemorate a special occasion in the family. You can have them delivered bring your flowers in or on the Friday morning before, during office hours, or at 4:30 pm before the Saturday evening service.

Eternal Candle Chart

NOTE This Year's CHANGE:

This year, right next to the Flower Chart you will find a separate chart for the Eternal Candle. We wanted to make the sign up easier to read.

Simply print your name next to the month you would like to sign up for, and please state whether it is in memory of a loved one or to commemorate a special occasion in the family.

Eternal Candle is \$25 for the month.



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY/LOOSE ENDS LUNCHEON

The Women's Bible Study will meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in January, the 14th & 28th at 10:15 a.m. Join us as we study the scripture texts for the following weekend's worship services.

LOOSE ENDS LUNCHEON

Let's fellowship together with a New Year's luncheon!

When: January 14, 2008

Where: Olive Garden on 4760 S. 76th Street in Greenfield

11:45 pm at the restaurant

Or, meet at church at 11:30 a.m. if you wish to carpool

The sign up sheet is on the kiosk in the narthex.

Contact Toni Wilson for more information or with any questions: 421-9496.

THE PIECE MAKERS QUILTING GROUP

Jan. 19th Meeting @ 6:15 pm

Let's make some more quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Join us! Little to no experience necessary!

KNIT WITS KNITTING GROUP

Meets January 4th @ 6:30 p.m. Knitters, crocheters and wanna-bes, join us! All are welcome.

THANK YOU!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the WELCA Craft & Bake Sale, which brought in over \$2500!

OTHER NOTES

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Men's Bible Study is meeting January 7th & 21st @ 8:00 a.m.

The study for January will be on other faiths. All men welcome!

Fourth Friday At the Movies

Come enjoy popcorn and a movie at 6:30 pm January 23rd. "Young At Heart" is a heartwarming story of a real choir of senior citizens who sing "rock-n-roll" and find joy and community together. All are welcome—bring a friend!



Watch for a New Bible Study—COMING SOON!

SSM will offer several opportunities to study the "Bible-- Book of Faith" beginning in February. Watch for times and places where we will use these resources: "Opening the Book of Faith: Lutheran Insights for Bible Study"--which explores four methods of Bible study, then applies each method to four Scripture texts--and "Rediscovering the Book of Faith" Course. Explore with us how the Bible came to be

our Book of Faith.

A Special Thank You

Vic Peterson, Jim Arneson & Bob Rasmussen for hanging the outdoor nativity & wreaths and for bringing down the Christmas boxes.

Bob Rasmussen for recruiting ushers for the special holiday services.

The Eric Sundquist Family for the donation of the sanctuary evergreen trees.

Eric Sundquist, Jim Arneson, Jason Covert, Kurt Koeff & Adam Woerpel for putting up the sanctuary trees.

Robert Brownell Family for the donation of the Chrismon tree, & to the Sundquist's for putting it up.

Lori Salas, Mary Luedtke & Kevan Penvose for decorating the Chrismon tree in the narthex.

Bob DeFrank and helpers for hanging the garland in the narthex.

All members of SSM who contributed aluminum cans whose proceeds paid for many things, including candy for the children at the Church School program, and Bob and Rose Ann Dieck for handling the distribution.

Pam Lukitsch & Cathy Peterson for arranging the poinsettia plants.

Bob Rasmussen for watering the poinsettias & all our green plants, year round.

Mel Winter for the chili supper, & the carolers who visited shut-ins.

Sue Jarchow for the use and set up of her nativity in the narthex.

Sue Jarchow and her helpers for preparing the candles for the candlelight services.

Bob Rasmussen, Cathy Peterson, Sue Jarchow, John Rech & Bob DeFrank for the Greeter, Usher, Communion, & Lay Reader Schedules for the New year. To the ushers & greeters who were recruited for the special services on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve. And to the Counters for all the special services.

Bob & Sue DeFrank for their tireless work with our Sunday School Children and to all our faithful Sunday School teachers. Stephanie Mayer for planning & leading the Children's Christmas Program.

To ALL who donated gifts to Bay View Community Center & the House of Correction.

Bill Bravener for his musical leadership & Jan Snyder for her musical talents on Saturday nights.

Kevan Penvose & Tim Falksen for all their work with the Youth Group.

Bob Brownell for all the extra clean-up so many activities require.

Lynda Shadd for her patience & diligence in performing so many varied tasks for St. Stephen's.

Nancy Hoffman for her office help on Mondays.

Louise Becker, Jean Brownell, Donna Carver, Ellen Chipman, Mary Frieburger, Diana Gastrau, Joanne Hoefl, Ruth Hoppe, Sue Jarchow, Jean Kurowski, Faith O'Connell, Jean Ott, Sandy Peterson, Shirley Rau, Diane Stojanovich, Toni Wilson & Bonnie Zgola for help with bulletins, newsletter and other office work in 2008.

Pastor Gail for shepherding the flock of SSM throughout 2008 into 2009.

Our Council Members, Committee Members & the many Volunteers who work tirelessly to build up the body of Christ at SSM.

To all who have given so generously of time & talent and resources to SSM in 2008! Your service to our Lord will not go unnoticed by Him. You are a blessing to the body of Christ!

We apologize if we have left anyone out—you are all such a blessing to St. Stephen. Thanks to all!

CANS... GREAT MONEY MAKER

Bring in your cans! Please leave donations of cans at the side door of the garage. Remember, we can accept aluminum drinking cans only. If you can crush or flatten the cans, that helps to reduce the volume. MANY THANKS!!!

CONDENSED MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - DECEMBER 9, 2008

(A complete set of Minutes can be found on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex)

President John Muroi called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Council members present were: E. Arneson, J. Arneson, J. Bugajski, S. Lubus, J. Miller, J. Muroi and E. Sanders. Pastor Gail Brodersen-Heins was present. . S. Jarchow, S. Lieske, C. Malinowski, S. Rosenstock, G. Raasch and K. Penvose were absent.

Pastor Gail led the devotion.

Approvals: The Secretary's minutes from the November 11th meeting were reviewed and approved. The Financial Secretary's Report was reviewed.

The Treasurer's Report was discussed. We are currently \$10,052.01 short in weekly offerings. The

Treasurer's Report was approved.

Pastor's Time: Pastor Gail thanked S. Rosenstock and her crew for the November 23rd brunch in honor of B. Bravener's installation. Pastor, S. Larson, S. Mayer, B. DeFrank and T. Falksen attended the Synod Conference, " Milestone Ministry" which focuses on acknowledging special events in a young person's life. Pastor Gail met with E. Sanders, B. Bravener and P. Bauman to plan Bible Studies for 2009. We will be using the ELCA "Opening Book of Faith" materials. Pastor asked that we keep all our musicians and SS children and staff that are preparing for the upcoming "Service of Lessons and Carols" and the SS Christmas program in our prayers.

Pastor Gail and K. Penvose met to discuss "lifting up" in worship the hard work of the Forward Planning Committee. This will take place at services in January.

Pastor presided at two weddings. R. Niese and C. Montoya were married on November 22nd and D. Bugajski and P. Tadeyeske were married on November 29th, 2008.

Old Action Items: 2009 Budget Review - there was a lengthy discussion regarding the proposed budget for 2009. The Council approved a proposed 2009 budget to present to the congregation at the annual meeting for a vote.

New Action Items: 2009 Annual Meeting -

J. Muroi announced that the annual meeting will take place on 1/25/09 and asked that all committee reports be submitted to the church office by 1/5/09.

Due to the length of the meeting and bad weather conditions, the rest of the agenda was tabled.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shellee Lubus,
Council Secretary

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