



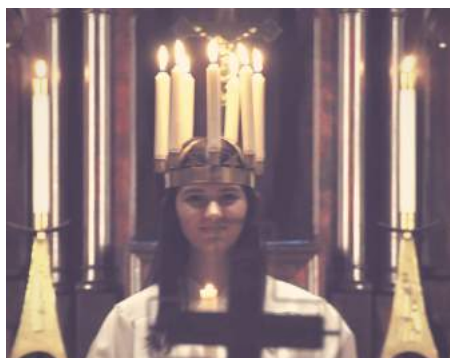
Visiting your First Home

Associate Pastor Jon Haug recently went back to New Jersey and reflects on the importance and significance one's First Home. Read more to see how we will be celebrating our 2019 Home Theme at St. John's (Page 2).



Home at St. John's

Our Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator Sarah Street Jessop tells us why she feels at Home at St. John's (Page 8).



Santa Lucia

Our Santa Lucia(s) have been selected! Turn to Page 5 to find out who will be leading our Annual Santa Lucia Festival December 16th!



Save the Date

Mark your calendars for our Annual Crab Feed! This year, we are raising funds for the senior high youth trip to Montana next summer (Page 11).



A Message from St. John's Lutheran Church

FIRST HOME



FIRST HOME SEASON OF ADVENT

Home. It is one of the most nostalgic words in the human language. In English it even sounds like the word “Mom” or the chanted “Om” of meditation and yoga classes. It evokes powerful emotion in us, sometimes for the good, sometimes for the bad, and everything in between. It’s where we first learn about love and hurt. It’s where we get our first impressions of what God is like. And it is not, when we are born, a place we choose, but a place we enter in.

Very recently I went back to NJ, the state of my birth, to preside at the funeral of a beloved uncle, Richard Broadhead. He was just in his sixties and died from complications with

pneumonia. Uncle Rich was at all my childhood events growing up. I loved him deeply, even more than I realized as I found myself in the mysterious and deep work of grieving his death. My beloved Aunt Lori asked me to preside at his funeral and after some debate I consented. Pastor Frank, without question blessed me to go. I’m so glad I did, in spite of never wanting to and always wishing I didn’t have to, because it was one of the greatest and most profound honors and experiences of my life.

On the trip to north Jersey for the funeral from south Jersey where my parents and my sister's family live, I found myself traveling in the back seat of the car with my sister with my parents in the front seats. That arrangement hadn’t happened in decades since my childhood. I thought about annoying my sister just for old times sake but resisted.

We ended up with extra time before the funeral and since it was taking place in the town next to the town I grew up in we took a little nostalgic tour. My parents laughed as my sister and I recalled friends and families homes: “The Rinaldi’s lived there. That’s where the Penta’s lived and the Wilson’s. And there the Scarillo’s (there’s a good NJ last name for you just in case you forgot the context for a minute).

Then we drove to where my home used to be. I say used to be because when we sold it the new

owners knocked it down and rebuilt a mammoth house on top of it.

I hadn't been back to see it since.

Home lifts in us indescribable emotions and memories as it did for me those recent days in NJ.

What does home mean to you?

At St. John's, we'll be exploring the nuances of home from now through the summer:

We began with the idea of Home Improvement as we kicked off the Capital Campaign for the roof here in November.

- In December for Advent and Christmas, we'll explore the theme of First Home.
- In Epiphany on January 6 and the time after into February, we'll have some look at what Coming Home means.
- In Lent, we'll all have some Homework as we deconstruct and reconstruct home.
- And at Pentecost through this summer, get ready for some Open House experiences.

The leadership here is excited and invested in this theme and we hope that we provide for you a place of powerful spiritual experiences and deep commitments.

May God bless your family and wherever, and whoever you call home,

Pastor Jon Haug



On his trip to New Jersey, Pastor Jon Haug returned to the location of his childhood home. The new homeowners demolished the previous home, and replaced it with a bigger house but the tree that Pastor Jon grew up with remains in the front yard - a wonderful reminder of his childhood decades later.

CONGREGATION MATTERS

RECAP

By Gwynnae Byrd
Council President



During our final Congregation Matters meeting of the year, the Constitution and Bylaws Revision Committee presented proposed changes to our governing documents. I convened the committee to review both documents, which hadn't been amended in over 10 years. The key changes, which were approved at this meeting, are:

- Adds an Endowment Fund, to be ready to accept gifts from estates and other sources
- Changes the percentage of the budget that the cumulative expenditures and obligations incurred by the council in any given year may not exceed the projected receipts in that year by, from 5 to 10%, without prior approval of the congregation
- Authorizes the Immediate Past President to serve on the Executive Committee
- Updates our Constitution to conform with the national ELCA Constitution

The other items discussed at the meeting included updates on the roof and parking lot projects, and on the Capital Campaign to fund them; an update on the Call Committee (awaiting action from the synod); and a review of the initiatives that came out of the council retreat/strategic planning session in late summer. Those initiatives include establishing 2 new committees - one to address homelessness and the other to take a long-term view of campus planning. If anyone is interested in either of those issues, please contact me and I will make sure you are plugged in!

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns you may have – (916) 202-1297.

I wish you all a blessed Advent and Christmas season!

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

The Lutheran Disaster Response team has committed dollars for initial relief response. They are working with both Lutheran Social Services of Northern and Southern California and California synods to respond to these fires.

Currently, the Lutheran Disaster Response is providing gift cards to support the immediate needs of families impacted by the multiple fires.

To double the impact, Thrivent is now matching gifts given to Lutheran Disaster Response through InFaith Community Foundation.

To give and support communities devastated by the fires, please go to our website at www.stjohnslc.org.



By Barbara Winter
Santa Lucia Festival Committee

It's happened before and this year there were two well-deserving candidates. We will have two young ladies represent Santa Lucia, both with busy lives, but both with the essence of Santa Lucia.

Keilani Aldrete and Kathryn Mercer will both represent Santa Lucia this December 16th, 5:00pm at St. John's for the Santa Lucia Festival.

Keilani (daughter of James and Caroline Aldrete) is a senior at Pleasant Grove High School where she is active in school activities and extra-curricular sports. At St John's, she is a loved and hugged volunteer with the younger children and several youth programs. She is an Acolyte and gave a thoughtful sermon on Youth Sunday. She has applied to Cal Lutheran, CSU Sacramento and CSU Chico for career studies. Her parents are James and Caroline Aldrete.

Kathryn (daughter of Steven and Heather Mercer) is a senior at McClatchy High School where she is also very active in school and extra-curricular activities, including theater. At St John's she is very busy with several groups, a loved and hugged volunteer, including Acolyte Program. She is in the process of applying to several state and out of state universities.

Everyone is invited to the Scandinavian Festival of Santa Lucia, hosted by St John's Lutheran Church! Candlelight service begins at 5pm. Light appetizers, traditional cookies and Scandinavian festivities to follow with music, dancing around the tree and more!

To contribute to the evening:

**Homemade cookies are welcomed by 3pm December 16th.
Any remaining cookies will be donated to St. John's
Coffee Hour and Food Pantry.**



RETIREMENT CELEBRATION HONORING **MARK CARLSON**

Come and celebrate the retirement of Mark Carlson, Director of Lutheran Office of Public Policy - California, on **December 8th 10:30am - 2pm at St. John's Lutheran Church**. The event will include a luncheon and a presentation by Bishop Guy Erwin. RSVP by filling out a Reservation & Donation form to indicate if you will be in attendance and if you wish to make a donation in honor of Mark Carlson and his many years of faithful service. Make reservations at: Issnorcal.org/carlson.html

Contact: Jo Ann Anderson • (530) 668-8836 • jbanderson92048@att.net.





Photo credit: The Sacramento Bee

By Maryann Hanner

Advent Gift *to the* Christ Child

Go to stjohnslc.org to watch
an in-depth story on Joshua's House.

In my role as a Spiritual Care Volunteer at Kaiser, I visited recently with a young woman in the hospital. She told me she was dying, and had about four months to live. I asked her if she could share how she felt.

After a long pause, and a sigh, she said, "Being with God will be good." She sighed again. "But the dying, the dying will be the hard part."

This woman was homeless. Her pain was so excruciating that she had gone to the emergency room. She was admitted not only for the pain, but other complications of her illness.

As we chatted, I learned what the "hard part" of dying really meant. She had been temporarily staying with friends, but she explained that accompanying a dying person is difficult for the best of people. Her pain and complications were worsening, and she couldn't get effective pain medication or care for herself.

Imagine if she were alone on the streets, in so much pain that she couldn't walk, trying to find a bathroom, food, water and a place to safely lie down.

A place for such people, Joshua's House, is opening in the Sacramento area. During education hour on Sunday, December 16, Marlene Fitzwater, founder and CEO, will be sharing her vision and why she is so passionate about this center. This year's Gift to the Christ Child will go to Joshua's House. If we are able to raise \$25,000, St. John's will serve as a sponsor for the chapel.

God heard all the prayers for this young woman. Two weeks later, her "hard part" was over.

**Join us Sunday,
December 16 at
10:15am to hear
more about
Joshua's House.**



The "Grape-ful" jelly crew was at it again recently making jars of our delicious grape jelly. What we love about this so much is that it is made from the leftover grapes from our communion crush - grapes that might normally be discarded (Special thanks to the The Kirchhoff family for generously donating a corner of their vineyard). The jelly is sold and the proceeds go to the Sacramento Central Food Basket.

We think this is most appropriate: the potentially discarded grapes get a second chance and the proceeds give families dealing with hunger a hand up for their food insecurity. What a wonderful ministry and a wonderful and faithful crew of jammers!





I'm HOME *at St. John's*



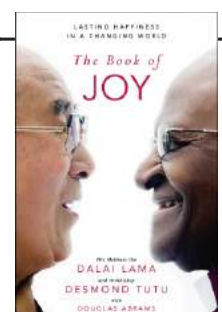
By Sarah Jessop Street
Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator

Our family feels at home at St John's because all are welcome here. This was mostly recently demonstrated as we planned our daughter, Cora's, baptism. Having been a part of Celebration Singers for several years, I knew I wanted to have a sung baptism and also knew just how special and Spirit-filled they can be. Music is so important to me and Steven's baptismal setting adds something to the sacrament that I didn't know was missing until I felt the fullness that it brings. We were excited to share this day with our family and friends, which meant that invitations were extended to people of many backgrounds: Lutheran and Mormon, Baptist and Buddhist, Catholic and Agnostic, church and unchurched, we knew that all people would feel welcomed and loved at St John's.

It is that love and welcome that keeps us connected to this church. It is what gives us certainty that it is the right place to raise our daughter. And it is what reaffirms my choice to live and work in this place. The people of St John's have been able to truly "Live God's Love in the World" and that's what makes it home for us.

Make your Christmas season an even more JOYOUS one by joining the **LLL Book Club on Friday, December 14th at 11AM** for a lively discussion of **THE BOOK OF JOY** by the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. Facilitator will be our own Bishop David Mullen.

Questions? Contact Donna Shadle at donna123aqui@hotmail.com.



Self-Care for the Holidays

By Cindy Carroll, RN
Parish Nurse

December is a month filled with family gatherings, eager anticipation, special services and programs, and extra fellowship. Despite our best intentions, we can find ourselves hurried, harried, and exhausted. There are several things we can do to minimize stress so that we can enjoy the holidays and our families.



Make a list of all the things you and your family like - and dislike - about the holidays. Build your own traditions around the highest-scoring "likes."

Take care of your body.

- ☐ Get at least 30 minutes of brisk exercise every day - even brisk walking is great.
- ☐ Stop eating when you are full - but don't skip meals, either.
- ☐ Allow yourself a few holiday treats, but don't overdo.
- ☐ Get plenty of sleep.
- ☐ Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- ☐ Limit alcoholic drinks to one or two a day.
- ☐ Of course, do not drink and drive, and fasten your seat belt.

Take time out to take care of your spirit. Do at least one thing each day to unplug and get away from holiday preparations. Read a book, watch a holiday movie, listen to holiday music, enjoy a cup of tea, but most importantly, spend time with those you love each day.

Realize that you are not solely responsible for making the holidays special for everyone else. Stop comparing yourself to others. Do the holidays your way!

Don't accept every invitation you receive, or you'll run yourself ragged. It's OK to send your regrets.

Give time and friendship rather than presents. Share yourself with family, friends and the community by volunteering.

Keep your sense of humor. Remember a cheerful heart is good medicine.

Gratitude! Count your blessings each and every day.

Peace and Joy to all this Christmas season!

DEC ADVENT 2 FESTIVAL

It's almost that time of year again! Advent season is fast approaching and soon we will all be celebrating the miraculous birth of our Savior. We will kick off the season with a St. John's tradition- the Advent Festival!

Please join us **Sunday, December 2nd** in Goethe Hall to enjoy some fellowship, have some holiday treats, and make a Yule log!

DEC BLUE 6 CHRISTMAS

The holiday season can be hard for those whose hearts are hurting. For many this time of year that we call the holiday season is no holiday at all. When others are going "merrily along" many of us would rather the season just go away. You are not alone.

For these reasons, you are cordially invited to attend our **Blue Christmas Service Thursday, December 6 at 6pm.**

Blue Christmas is a gentle, contemplative service for those who are carrying pain or loss during this season of celebration. We will gather to carve out a time of quiet reflection, to shed tears if they come, to hold hands if they are available, and to know that we are not alone and that our feelings are honored.

DEC MARK CARLSON 8 RETIREMENT

More information on Page 5.

DEC CAFE 9 RWANDA SALE

Find the perfect Christmas gift and help a Rwandan child attend the Rwamagana Lutheran School. Baskets, jewelry and so many unique and interesting items will be available for purchase. This is a win/win situation for the St. John's youth who run Cafe Rwanda and the students they support in Rwanda with scholarships to attend this high quality secondary school.

Our own Christina Espegren and her husband Joel Barkel worked in the Peace Corps in Rwanda the past two years and picked up many of these items on their travels. **Join us Sunday, December 9th at 10:15am at St. John's!**

DEC CANDLES & 15 CAROLS CONCERT

Please join us the evening of **Saturday, December 15th at 7pm**, for an evening of fun and beautiful music celebrating the Christmas season! Our Candles and Carols concert will be held in the Sanctuary, and will be featuring the choirs of St. John's, the Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus, and lots of other fun surprises from the amazingly talented musicians in our church community. Come prepared to sing along to some favorite carols and to hear many beautiful holiday selections be performed. We can't wait to see you there!

== SAVE THE DATES ==

DEC SANTA LUCIA
16 FESTIVAL

POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS



DEC CHRISTMAS EVE
19 FOR TRAVELERS

If you can't worship with us on Christmas Eve, join us for Christmas Eve for Travelers. Our first Christmas Eve worship service will be on December 17 at 7pm. We will have a candlelight service with carols, choirs & our traveling members in our pews worshipping the coming of the baby Jesus.

Every Christmas Eve we decorate our beautiful Sanctuary with gorgeous poinsettias to enhance our worship experience. You may purchase a poinsettia and dedicate it to a loved one, living or passed, or to the Glory of God, and have your dedication printed in the Christmas Eve bulletin; to do so, please fill out the tear-out in the announcement page of the bulletin during the season of Advent and place it in the offering plate. If you'd like to purchase online, go to the "giving" section of our website, and notate your dedication in the notes section. **All dedications must be received by Tuesday, December 18th in order to be published in the bulletin.**

If you have any questions about poinsettias, please email Heather at heather.frick@stjohnslc.org.

SAVE THE DATE!



St. John's Crab Feed 2019 is on **Saturday, January 26 that 5pm**, and it's a fundraiser for the senior high youth trip to Montana next summer. Come with a big appetite to help the kids get to Big Sky Country! More details to come - we look forward to seeing everyone there!





Thank you to Steven Johnson for creating this memorable experience for St. John's! We were honored to host the first ever Unity Concert to kick off #BuildforUnity 2019, presented by Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sacramento.

Special thanks to keynote speaker Mayor Darrell Steinberg, as well as our Celebration Singers, the Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus, Sacramento Children's Chorus, and all of our faith representatives from across the Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, and Christian community who lent their passion and voices to help us come together in unity and song.

Sincerely,

ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

ST. JOHN'S ART FESTIVAL | RELIGIOUS & SPIRITUAL ART

WITH JUROR **SCOTT SHIELDS**, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR & CHIEF CURATOR, CROCKER ART MUSEUM

PEACE

BE STILL.

MARCH 14-24, 2019

VOLUNTEERS and ARTISTS NEEDED

SUBMISSION DATES

Saturday, March 9, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Sunday, March 10, 11:00 am - 4:00 pm

Mailed pieces must be received by Friday, March 8

For submission information go to www.stjohnslc.org/artfestival

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
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| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 8:00 / 9:00 / 11:30am Worship Services 10:15am Coffee Hour 10:15am Luminaria 10:15am Advent Festival Childcare Avail. 8:00am - 1:00pm | 9:30pm Library Committee 2:30pm Stephen Ministry Peer Support Group | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 5:30pm Safety Committee 6:00pm Hospitality Committee | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 12:15pm Healing Prayer & Communion 4:30pm Luminaria Leader Meeting | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 4:00pm SJLC Writer's Group 5:00pm Assisting Ministers Meeting 6:00pm Blue Christmas Worship Service 6:30pm Call Committee | | 10:00am Retirement Celebration for Mark Carlson 9:30am SJLC Ukelele Group |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 8:00 / 9:00 / 11:30am Worship Services (Healing Ministry Sunday) 10:15am Coffee Hour 10:15am Luminaria 1:00pm Santa Lucia Cookie Baking Childcare Avail. 8:00am - 1:00pm | 9:30am Library Committee 10:00am Deborah Circle | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 12:00pm Racial Justice Group 2:30pm Senior Concerns Taskforce 6:00pm Communications Committee | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 12:15pm Healing Prayer & Communion 4:30pm Luminaria Leader Meeting | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 6:30pm Social Ministry Team 7:00pm Finance Committee 6:30pm Call Committee | 11:00am LLL Book Club | 7:00pm Candles & Carols Concert |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 8:00 / 9:00 / 11:30am Worship Services 10:15am Coffee Hour 10:15am Joshua House Presentation 10:15am Luminaria 5:00pm Santa Lucia Festival Childcare Avail. 8:00am - 1:00pm | 9:30am Library Committee 2:30pm Stephen Ministry Peer Support Group | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 5:30pm Property Committee 5:30pm Safety Committee 7:00pm Church Council Meeting | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 12:15pm Healing Prayer & Communion 4:30pm Luminaria Leader Meeting 7:00pm Traveler's Christmas Worship Service | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 4:00pm SJLC Writer's Group 5:00pm Assisting Ministers Meeting 6:00pm Craft Night 6:30pm Call Committee | | |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 8:00 / 9:00 / 11:30am Worship Services 10:15am Coffee Hour Childcare Avail. 8:00am - 1:00pm | OFFICE CLOSING AT 12:00PM 3:00 / 5:00 / 7:00 / 11:00pm Christmas Eve Worship Services | OFFICE CLOSED ALL DAY 10:00am Christmas Day Worship Service | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 12:15pm Healing Prayer & Communion 4:30pm Luminaria Leader Meeting | 9:00am Parish Nurse in Office 5:00pm Assisting Ministers Meeting 6:30pm Call Committee | | |
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| 8:00 / 9:00 / 11:30am Worship Services 10:15am Coffee Hour Childcare Avail. 8:00am - 1:00pm | 9:30am Library Committee | | | | | |

Return Service Requested

POSTMASTER: Dated Material

Mailed on: December 1, 2018

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Email: info@stjohnslc.org

Web: www.stjohnslc.org

Want to get The Spokesman by email?

Send a request to info@stjohnslc.org

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