

“Who Would Have Thought...”

by Pastor Keith Reich



Have these words ever crossed your mind? Or better yet, have they ever come out of your mouth? I’m sure that most of us have experienced a time in our lives where we have set out to do something or had a brainstorm and never anticipated that the response or the result would have been so great. This is what has happened to me over the past few weeks.

Anytime you try something different, I think it is safe to say that there is a little apprehension. This is what I experienced when deciding to embark on *The Story* series. I just wasn’t for sure what the response would be and worse yet, was it going to be something that would feed us spiritually and grow us in the faith.

From what I can tell, it has captured our attention. Who would have thought that we would have 70 of *The Story* books in hands of our adults not to mention the fact that our Sunday School department gave an age appropriate *The Story* book to each child in Sunday School? Who would have that this series would spark an interest that put our Sunday School and Bible Class at an all-time high? Who would have thought that I would be receiving the positive comments about the series that I get each Sunday? Not I, but it has been incredible so far.

It is my prayer that *The Story* continues to foster excitement in us. Who would have thought that man placed in a perfect garden would choose imperfection? Who would have thought that God would want man back so bad that He would send His Son to die for us? Not I, but it is incredible that we have forgiveness and life because of His pursuit of mankind.

Pastor Reich



May we continue to be used by God as we carry *The Story* with A Heart for Hamilton County and the World!

February

WEEKLY

At a glance

Sunday Morning

- 8:30 Breakfast/Opening
Choir Practice
- 9:00 Children’s Sunday School
Youth Bible Study
Young Adult Bible Study
(Meeting Room)
Pastor’s Bible Study
(Family Life Center)
- 10:00 Worship
(With Lord’s Supper on 1st and 3rd)

Wednesday

- 8:30 Preschool Chapel 4 year class
- 4:00 Children’s Choir
- 5:30 Choir Practice

Thursday

- 6:30 Men’s Bible Study
- 8:30 Preschool Chapel 3 year class
- 12:00 Women’s Bible Study in Meeting Room

Special Dates

- 10-12 JR High Youth In Austin
- 19- JOY (Just Older Youth) 2:00pm

1st Sunday– Nursing Home

Devotions 1:30pm

1st Monday-Ruth Guild 5:30pm

2nd Sunday– 2nd Super Youth

Sundays after Church

2nd Week– Board Meetings

(see times on calendar)

3rd Saturday—Men’s Club 7:15am



Choose Life for Your Children

by Kay L. Meyer
Director of Development

“And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

As I reviewed Bible verses for LFL’s 2012 Life Sunday theme of **Trust God –Choose Life** I was reminded of a writing workshop that I took in the late 1980’s at Concordia College in Seward, Nebraska. One of the things the teachers encouraged us to do is to spend lots of time writing. So I did.

One was a devotion that I began after walking into my youngest son’s bedroom. Jeff was nine years old. I looked at the toys and clothes spread all over his room and began writing a devotion about the fact that someday our home would be clean and silent. Why? Because Jeff would have grown up. While I certainly wanted a cleaner home, I was not really interested in seeing my youngest grow up too quickly. His brother was leaving for college and his sister was in high school already. I wanted to keep Jeff near us for a long time. So, I put the devotion aside.

The years flew by quickly! After college, Jeff stayed and worked in the Chicago area. Then early in 2007 he decided he wanted a new career. While working on a new degree, he moved back home with my husband and me for awhile. We enjoyed it! Those years flew by too! We are thankful God gave them to us.

In November of 2009 Jeff began running a low-grade fever that wouldn’t go away. Then on December 8, an MRI showed he had a mass on his upper thigh. We found out it was a sarcoma, a rare soft tissue cancer—and it was malignant. (This mass had

been looked at in July of that year, but the doctor had told him it was not cancer. Of course, Jeff believed him. Thirty-one year old, 6 foot 3 inch healthy men don’t get cancer, do they?)

A later test showed the sarcoma on his thigh had spread to his lungs. Surgery was no longer an option, but chemotherapy and radiation treatments began. We asked hundreds (maybe thousands) of people to pray with us for complete healing and that Jeff’s faith would grow stronger.

In June of 2010 things started happening quickly. Jeff began having more problems moving around and said he felt really strange. After a trip to the emergency room, and a hospital stay, tests indicated the tumors on his lungs had grown and were pressing on the main valve to his heart. They told us to bring him back to the hospital immediately. At 2:30 a.m. the next morning we received a call to come to the hospital immediately. The doctors had told Jeff that he was terminal and wasn’t going to survive. It was the first time he had been told this. He was upset and wanted us to be with him. Up until that time we all had thought he would get better—but now we were being told Jeff probably had only two weeks to live.

The hospital staff encouraged him to go into hospice. He wanted to do this so he could say goodbye to everyone. If he had stayed in the hospital only immediate family members would have been able to visit him.

Jeff informed his friends about his situation through Facebook. Some of his Chicago friends traveled to St. Louis to see him. They had pizza and shared great stories of their college years together. Our extended family and many of Jeff’s friends from the local area also came to visit. He was tired, in pain, on oxygen, but wanted to see everyone.

He got worse quickly. He came home on Friday and passed away on Tuesday of the next week (June 22, 2010). He was 32 years old. The day he passed away my husband and I were trying to help him get comfortable. We both told him we loved him. He said, “I love you both so much.” Then he said, “But, I’m ready to go home now.” I knew he meant heaven. We all fell back asleep. Two and a half hours later he went to be with the Lord.

God’s Word says, **“I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days...”** (Deuteronomy 30: 19b-20a).

My husband and I chose life years ago for our children as we took them to be baptized. Through baptism, God made them His children. We committed them to the Lord and knew He had given them to us as a gift. We chose life for our children as we brought them up to know the Savior, to trust Him, and to rely upon Him.

But, we can’t believe for our children. Jeff knew Jesus as his Savior and Lord all his life and he grew in his faith during his illness. He chose life, held fast to Jesus, listened to His word, and now lives eternally with the Father in heaven.

We hold close to our hearts what Jesus said in John 5:24:

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”



Jeff loved spending time with family. Here he is with his sister, Coreen, his niece Elizabeth, and nephews Luke and Seth.



HAMILTON UNITED CARE

Submitted by Mary Jeffers

The Hamilton United Care Board met Monday, January 2nd. Present were John Galindo, Linda LeDuc, Virginia Lovell, Sandy Shockley, Suzy Thames, Bill Massingill, Barry Thompson, Ray Riley, Otis Fisher, Hoyt S. Morgan, and Mary Jeffers.

John Galindo opened the meeting with prayer for guidance for the coming year. Minutes of the last meeting, and the treasurer's report were read and accepted.

Families helped in December were (Hamilton) 135, which included 326 individuals; and (Hico) 72 families, which included 200 individuals. There is an immediate need for donations of cereal.

December donations included the following: Anonymous, Jess Brumbalow, Marvin Behnke, Connie Barnes, Lee and Bev Clauser, Connie Cox, Don Connor, Chuck and Cheryl Clutter, Gene Clary, Calvary Baptist Church, Sara and Jeff Ensor, Katherine Finley, Laurel Friedrich, First United

Methodist Church/Hico, First Baptist Church/Hamilton, Otis Fisher, Mavis Finch, Chris and Tom English, Extraco Banks, Evergreen Baptist Church, Fairy Baptist Church, Les and Tommie Griffin, Grace Bible Fellowship/Hico, Matt Barnett, Will and Shelley Hale, Boyd Holley, Mickey Hill, Hico Dollar General, S. Hamby, Horse Barn Ministries, and Ramon Haile.

Also, Donald and Cheri Jordan, Indian Gap Baptist Church, Kathy Kensing, Pat and Lynn Kelly, Littleville Baptist Church, Gracie M. Kneschke, Norman Kneschke, Lengefeld Insurance Agency, the Newton Marwitz Family, Judy MacKay, O. Nelson, Alice Pietzsch, Pottsville EE Club, Mrs. John David Poole, Pleasant Valley Baptist Church, Providence Piecemakers, Will and Misty Richey, Brenda Rickert, Tootie and Gary Schoen, Mary Sealy, Estate of Father Stan Sullivan, St. Thomas Catholic

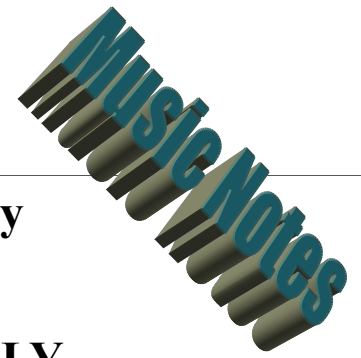
Church, Bobby and Grace Stephen, St. John Lutheran Church, Hilda Tatum, Victory Christian Fellowship, Robert Witzsche, and Evelyn Williams.

Volunteers working in December were Ashley Ames, Tray Blackburn, Earlene Blansit, Micky Bell, Cheyenne Beaty, Edwin Black, Jeremy Barnette, Trina Barnette, C. Best, James Cantwell, Gene Clary, Lee and Bev Clauser, Kenny Dolson, R. D. Dolson, Otis Fisher, Abigail Ernestes, Amy Eden, John Galindo, Alandia G., Earl Goforth, Panky Goforth, Jackson Hill, Hailey Holden, Linda LeDuc, Richard Leach, Virginia Lovell, Bill Massingill, Caleb Marwitz, Hoyt S. Morgan, Monica Mathes, Shelby Moore, Chaz Moncada, Athleene Prazak, Logan Osborne, Carlos Olalde, Brittany Pettit, Josephine Rogers, Ray Riley, Bobby Thompson, Les Sitz, Tootie and Gary Schoen, Suzy and Reigh Thames, Sandy Shockley, Barry

Thompson, Matthew Watson, Dalton Wylough, Cole White, and Brittany Wiley.



Hamilton United Care is open the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month from 9 a.m. until noon to serve Hamilton County residents with food, clothing, household goods and toys. Each and every donation is needed and appreciated.

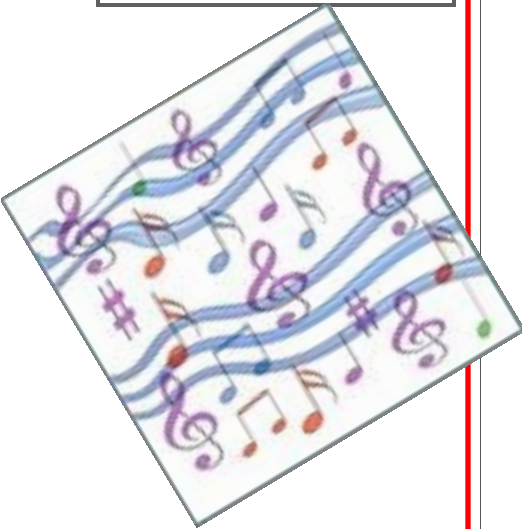


Music Notes by Gary K. Gromatzky

The choir is starting to practice some more choral arrangements.

It is our hope and prayer to enhance the worship of our Lord for the whole church. If you would like to be a part, please consider joining us.

Practice is Wednesday at 5:30 and Sunday at 8:30. We would love to have you join us!



***“Come home, come home, ye who are weary, come home.”
The invitation still stands.***

SOFTLY AND TENDERLY JESUS IS CALLING

William Lamartine Thompson 1880

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,

Calling for you and for me;

See, on the portals He's waiting and watching,

Watching for you and for me.

Come home, come home,

Ye who are weary, come home;

Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,

Calling, O sinners, come home!

Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,

Pleading for you and for me?

Why should we linger and heed not His mercies,

Mercies for you and for me?

Come home, come home,

Ye who are weary, come home;

Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,

Calling, O sinners, come home!

Time is now fleeting, the moments are passing,

Passing from you and from me;

Shadows are gathering, death's night is coming,

Coming for you and for me.

Come home, come home,

Ye who are weary, come home;

Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,

Calling O sinner, come home!

O for the wonderful love He has promised,
 Promised for you and for me!
 Though we have sinned, He has mercy and pardon,
 Pardon for you and for me.
 Come home, come home,
 Ye who are weary, come home;
 Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
 Calling, O sinner, come home!

Will Thompson was called the “Bard of Ohio.” Leaving his home in East Liverpool, Ohio, He went to New York City to sell some of the secular songs he had written. Music dealers picked them up, and soon people across the country were singing “My home on the Old Ohio” and “Gathering Shells from the Seashore.” He made so much money from his compositions that newspapers called him “the millionaire songwriter.”

But Thompson was a Christian, and he soon began concentrating on hymn writing. After he set up his own firm for publishing hymnals, he sold two million copies of his gospel-quartet books. Sometime around 1880, when Thompson was thirty-three years old, he wrote this invitation hymn, “Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling.”

Recognizing that many people in the smaller towns of America would never hear evangelists like Moody or singers like Sanky, “the millionaire songwriter” loaded an upright piano on a two-horse wagon and drove into the Ohio countryside to sing his gospel songs in the hamlets and villages of his state.

“Come home, come home, ye who are weary, come home.”

The invitation still stands.

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JOY

(J U S T O L D E R Y O U T H)

The Joy group will begin having an afternoon of games and fellowship!

Sunday, February 19th at 2:00p.m.

Bring a snack and join in on the fun!



JANUARY NEWS 2012



“Each day before snack we pray. The children love to take turns standing in front of the class and leading the other children in prayer. Each week we select two volunteers to say our daily prayer and our table prayer. The children’s prayers are so precious.”



The children have made so much progress this year! I am so proud of the four year olds. They have learned their sounds and letters. They are blending letters together to make words and they are so proud of themselves. Graduation for the four/five year old class is just around the corner! The three year old class is also doing just fabulous. The children are so attentive and learning so fast.

We have read several Bible stories this month. We have learned about Daniel and the Lion’s Den; how Jesus healed the Nobleman’s Son and the Man at the pool in Bethesda. In chapel Pastor Reich has been teaching the children the Max Lucado series starting with *Genesis In the Beginning* as well as *Abraham Follows God*. In class we talked about what is sin and how we should obey God. Our Bible verse this month was “Love the Lord your God with all you heart.” Matthew 22:37.

Each day before snack we pray. The children love to take turns standing in front of the class and leading the other children in prayer. Each week we select two

volunteers to say our daily prayer and our table prayer. The children’s prayers are so precious.

In crafts this month, Martha and Tootie made some beautiful snowman, mittens, and hand print snowflakes with the children. We also made some lion masks from our Bible story of Daniel and the lion’s den.

We would like to welcome our new student Carson Jones, who is in our four year old class. Carson and his family Wendy, Chad and little brother Connor moved to Star from College Station. We are excited to have Carson join our class!

We have had so many great donations this month. I would like to thank Cameron McGilvray for the chocolate treats; to Case Koether for the books and Ranch dressing; to Henlee Wagner for the Lego’s, tractor and chalk board; to Ashlynn Cozby for the chocolate chip cookies; to Kade McKandless for the donut holes; to Bryce Bankston for the treasure chest toys; to Destiny Weido for the treasure chest items; to Laney Lane for the birthday cup cakes; and to Maya Felton for the

Support

SUP- PORT FOR ERIK CHRISTEN- SEN

Those interested in contributing funds to help support Erik can do so in two ways:

—Send a check directly to him

His address:

801 Seminary Place

St. Louis, MO 63105

Email address: Christensen.erik11@gmail.com

—Write a check to the church. The money will then be sent to Concordia Seminary to go toward his expenses. If you have any questions, please ask Pastor Reich.

treasure chest items. We are so thankful to have such loving families at St. John and our preschool! We appreciate all of your donations.

Our treasure box is really running low. We are in need of any small toys, balls, books, games, party favors, etc. The toys from McDonald's Happy Meals and Sonic toys are also great. Please keep us in mind if you are cleaning out your toy box!

At the end of January our preschool teachers will be attending the 2012 Early Childhood Conference in Houston, which is conducted by the LCMS Texas District. We are so fortunate to be able to attend this confer-

ence. It has always been very educational as well as inspirational.

In His Service,

Lisa Schrank



*Join us for chapel
every Wednesday and
Thursday
at
8:30 am*



For God so lo **V** ed the world **†**
 that He g **A** ve
 His on **L** y
 begott **E** n
 So **N**
T hat whosoever
 believeth **I** n Him
 should **N** ot perish
 but have **E** verlasting life.

Jenneaux.com



St. John (LLL) Mens

Club came together Saturday morning at 7:15 am for our meeting and breakfast. Pastor reichled us in a morning prayer and thanksgiving to God for our food. We had 10 men in attendance. Treasurer report given --\$842.16.

Business meeting: a motion was made to elect Forest Jensen to serve as Treasurer. A second motion was made and carried to send \$100.00 to Lutheran Hour in memory of former treasurer deceased, Charles Elkins. Ash Wednesday comes in late February. We discussed serving a meal. A fish dinner was considered however due to cost we gave up on that plan. And decided to serve beef stew and corn bread. We also discussed a new chicken and sausage hi-way sign. However cost would be about \$270.00. We plan to use old sign again. Mr. Dittmer, our member, gave us information about a over seas trip to Germany and Switzerland. His story was interesting. A motion was made to adjourn about 8:15am. We closed with the Lord's prayer.

Submitted by
Ollie Zschiesche



Dear St. Johns Lutheran ,

Thank you so much for celebrating the National Sanctity of Human Life Sunday with Care Net, and for advertising our annual Donation only BBQ & Bake Sale! We had 67 churches bring over 900 people to eat 850 pounds of BBQ-"and they shared their meals with great joy and generosity" Acts 2:46. We made !13, 3590 for the ministry!

Next time to get involved is the April 14th Walk for life--- Looking for sponsors and Team Captains!

Thanks,
DeBorah



St. John Lutheran Church,

All of us at Hamilton County Untied Care would like to take this opportunity to Thank You for your support and help this past year.

Without help from people like you we would not be able to care for all of the needy and less fortunate. Our numbers have climbed this past year to the most we have ever served. And along with the increase of people the Food Banks prices for fold has climbed also. So you can see why we appreciate your help.

To keep up with supplying food to those that are in need we count heavily on people like you. So at this time we want to say a heartfelt "Thank You" for your kind support.

We wish you a prosperous and happy new year.

Hamilton County United Care
John Galindo, President



St. John

Youth News

Jr high Dates to Remember

Youth Quake

in Austin

Leaving the Church

On Friday

February 10 at 4pm

Returning on

Sunday around 3pm



2nd Super

Sunday

High School Youth

February 12th

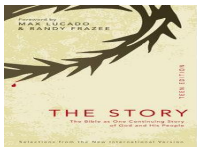
Food And Fun at the

Wagners

THE STORY Continues,

Your attendance has been great.

Keep it up!



Youth Sponsored Lenten Meal

Wednesday, February 29th

Loaded Baked Potatoes

You will be notified

WELCOME

Don't forget your
SPIRITUAL food every
Sunday
Sunday School 9am
and
Sunday morning
worship time 10am

We want to welcome our new board members!

Brenda Armstrong

Kasey Kunkel

&

Kristi Wagner



Contact Information

St. John Lutheran Church and Preschool

122 Cheyenne Mesa, Hamilton, Texas 76531

Ph. (254)386-3158 Fax (254)386-3159 Preschool (254)386-3332

pastorreich@gmail.com secretary@stjohn-lcms.com www.stjohn-lcms.com



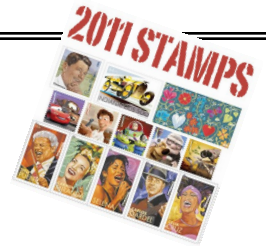
THOSE WHO SERVE IN

February February

The list for those who serve this month can be found on the back of the monthly calendar. Thank you for serving!!



Stamps for Missions An LWML Project



Join Us!



Ladies' Quilting

Tuesdays

9:00am

In the Family Life Center

The ladies are in need of an

Thank you again for your support with the mite box collection, the stamps project, and the Christmas gift collection for our seminary family.

Dear People of St. John's,

What a wonderful surprise to receive so many gifts at Christmas!

Thank you so much for your thoughtfulness and kindness towards our family! Our daughters were so excited to open their presents; they danced with delight!

You really touched our hearts and encouraged us with your support.

Thank you for blessing us this year!

In Him

Andy, Stephanie, Anna, Rachel, Roettjer



The full size pictures and original thank note will be on the back bulletin board

February 2012

Address Service Requested

St. John Lutheran Church
122 Cheyenne Mesa
Hamilton, TX 76531

www.stjohn-lcms.com

WE ARE ON THE
WEB!

Non Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 10

THE STORY continues

LENT BEGINS

FEBRUARY 22ND

Lenten Meal @ 6
ASH Wednesday Service
with imposition of ashes @ 7



Sunday, February 5

Week 6-New Commands and a
New Covenant

Sunday, February 12

Guest Speaker

(Pastor, Sponsors, and Jr Youth At Youth Quake)

Sunday, February 19

Week 7-Wandering

Sunday, February 26

Week 8-The Battle Begins

Breakfast in FLC @ 8:30 am
Sunday School & Adult Bible 9am
Sunday Morning Worship 10am

**Invite a friend or
couple to join us!**