

### “The Life Changing Story”

by Pastor Keith Reich

Wow! It is extremely hard to believe that we are at the beginning of another year. However, it is also exciting because I believe that God has some exciting opportunities in store for us here at St. John.

I know that as we head into this new year, all of us have our own personal stories that shape who we are, determine how we think and even to some degree control how we behave. Some of our stories may be exciting and all full of fun while others may wonder how and why they got caught up in the story that they find themselves living out. Wherever you find yourself, there is one story that is the same for everyone — the story found in the Bible.

As the new year begins, we are starting a series on the book *The Story*. This series is intended to be an overview of the Bible and to get us, as a church, reading through the Bible together. While it is intriguing and exciting to search for the details, tie various themes from Old to New Testaments and try to figure out some of the unexplainable details, these are not necessary to understand the story that changed our lives and has the power to change the lives of others.

It is my prayer that as we go through this series that we are excited about getting into God’s Word together. I also pray that it strengthens our relationships with each other and that it fosters a desire to read God’s Word daily.



*Pastor Reich*



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

# January

## 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

- 15- JOY (Just Older Youth) 2:00pm
- 15- Hear Alice Klement Faith Stephenville speak about 2:00pm  
Refugee Ministry/mission work
- 16- COUNCIL MEETING 7:00pm
- 23- VOTERS’ MEETING 7:00pm
- 28- Circuit Convocation @ Trinity, Copperas Cove 9-12pm

- 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



## Why I Never Should Have had Eight Children

By Leila Miller

*“Discouragement is not from Christ, as Christ only encourages. Discouragement is from the devil!” I remembered it then, and my fears and anxieties were banished. Only the devil himself, the one who hates human beings to his rotten core, would taunt me with the notion that my lack of gourmet skills should preclude new life in my marriage. I saw the evil of it then, and I called him out.*

A few months back, I told my readers on my blog how to raise eight children without even trying. Today, I’m going to tell you why I never should have had eight children in the first place: had I listened to the devil and modern conventional wisdom, that is.

When I was a happy mother of four, seriously considering and deeply desiring another child, an odd feeling overcame me. Over several days, my excitement at the idea of a new little soul became mixed with feelings of discouragement and fear. It began to dawn on me that I was barely good enough “mommy material” for the four treasures I already had, and that any further parenting would be irresponsible. It came to a head one evening: I remember standing in my kitchen, full of fear and anxiety, telling myself that I had no business—no business!—having another baby. Not now, not ever.

All my shortcomings and sins came to the forefront of my mind, and I stood there reeling from the truth of it:

I can’t cook.  
I can’t grocery shop.  
I can’t bring the kids out alone

without help.  
I have nooooo patience.  
I am not crafty in the least.  
I can’t sew.  
I can’t throw a party.  
I’m not athletic or outdoorsy.  
I don’t know how to make a pretty home.  
I don’t know how to make anything fun.  
I am lazy and a procrastinator.  
I’m used to being served, not serving.  
I am sarcastic and cranky.  
I am a complainer.  
I like to be alone.  
I hate to be interrupted or inconvenienced.  
I am not particularly good with children.

In that moment, I knew all of these things. And I was discouraged. Any one of these reasons could be enough for a woman to convince herself that it’s imprudent to have another child. In fact, you might just be saying to yourself now, “My gosh, that woman shouldn’t have one child, much less eight!”

But see, there’s the thing: Moms of big families are told constantly by other women that “I couldn’t do what you do!” or “You must have so much patience!” or “You must have a real way with children!” They think we were given a special gift or have a mutant gene that they do not possess. But they have no idea how much we are just like them. In fact, most of the women who say those things to me are better suited to raise a large family than I.

As I stood there in the kitchen that night, a moment of grace overtook the moment of discouragement. How many times had I told others,

“Discouragement is not from Christ, as Christ only encourages. Discouragement is from the devil!” I remembered it then, and my fears and anxieties were banished. Only the devil himself, the one who hates human beings to his rotten core, would taunt me with the notion that my lack of gourmet skills should preclude new life in my marriage. I saw the evil of it then, and I called him out. I still cursed a lot back then, and I am pretty sure I told the devil what he could do with his putrid flood of discouraging thoughts. Yeah, that was a good moment.

Since that day, five eternal souls have been created in our family, four of whom my husband and I have the privilege of raising on this earth. And, while I can’t claim to have conquered all the deficiencies and vices on my list (not even close! drat!), the existence of all my children has moved me along the path of holiness. Because that’s how it works: The souls in your life are gifts, each of whom is meant to sanctify you in a particular way. My little sanctifiers are the artisans who change and mold me in all the ways God knows I need, and they are their father’s and their siblings’ artisans, too.

That my family exists as it does is living proof that “with God, all things are possible”—even Leila Miller mothering eight great kids.



## HAMILTON UNITED CARE

Submitted by Mary Jeffers

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The Hamilton United Care board met Monday, December 5. Members present were John Galindo, Hoyt Morgan, Bobby Thompson, Odell Niemann, Sandy Shockley, Virginia Lovell, Susie Thames, Gene Clary, Sandy Shockley, Linda LuDuc, Barry Thompson, Ray Riley, Earline Blansit, Otis Fisher, and Mary Jeffers. Bill Massingill opened the meeting with prayer, and director Galindo called the meeting to order. Members read and approved the minutes and treasurer's report.

The board expresses a big THANKS to everyone connected with the community food drive. Appreciation also for Kevin Timmons's help when it became necessary to purchase food from David's Supermarket.

November donations came from the following:

AWE Elementary, Anonymous, Tiffany Bates, Bennie C., Sue and Jack Davidson, Dale Caraway, Bev and Lee Clauser, Calvary Baptist

Church, Carlton Baptist Church, Bill Craig (in memory of Robert Sutherland), Dale's Service Center, Chris English, Calvin and Laurel Friedrich, Tom English, Barbara Feldman, Evergreen Baptist Church, First Baptist Church, Michael R. Fuljenz, Hamilton Quality Meats, Betty Hardin, Carla Geer, Joy Gromatsky, Roseanne Hall, Horse Barn Ministries, Ramon Haile, Gary Gromatsky, Hamilton Health Care, James and Angie Green, John Galindo, Grace Bible Fellowship and Karen Jordan.

Also, Indian Gap Baptist Church, Memorial for Evelyn Jones, Sharon Krueger, Tonya Logan, George and Rose Krupala, Matthew Lippe, Littleville Baptist Church, Kathy Kachilla, Teresa Moore, Newton Marwitz Family, E. P. Mancuso, Misty Polster, Betty Patterson, Pleasant Valley Baptist Church, Primera Iglesia Bautista

Church, Betty Patterson, Pleasant Valley Baptist Church, St. John Lutheran Church Ruth Guild (LWML) Lutheran Womens' Missionary League, Ray Reinert, Sandy Shockley, Will Richey, Warren Smith, Ella Faye Stephens, St. Mary's Episcopal Church (USA), St. Mary's (Anglican), St. John Lutheran & Thrivent, St. John Lutheran Church, Linda and Neal Sutherland, Dale and Connie Seals, Larry Sullivan, and Trinity Lutheran Church (Pottsville) & Thrivent.

Also, Hilda Tatum, Thrivent Financial, Tops 1871 (Hico), Jeanne Wright (in memory of Hubert Harris).

Our November volunteers include Tray Blackburn, Earline Blansit, James Cantwell, Otis Fisher, Amy Eden Abigail Ernstes, John Galindo, Sandy Gardner, Hailey Holden, John Galindo

III, Panky and Earl Goforth, Mary Jeffers, Linda LeDuc, Burl Lewis, Richard Louch, Virginia Lovell, James Lancaster, Hoyt Morgan, Odell Niemann, Caleb Marwitz, Shelby Moore, Bill and Faye Massingill, Cruz Moncoda, Monica Mathes, Betty Patterson, Athlene Prazak, Josephine Rogers, Ray and Ava Riley, Sandy Shockley, Suzy Thames, Bobby Thompson, Brittany Wiley, and Matthew Watson.



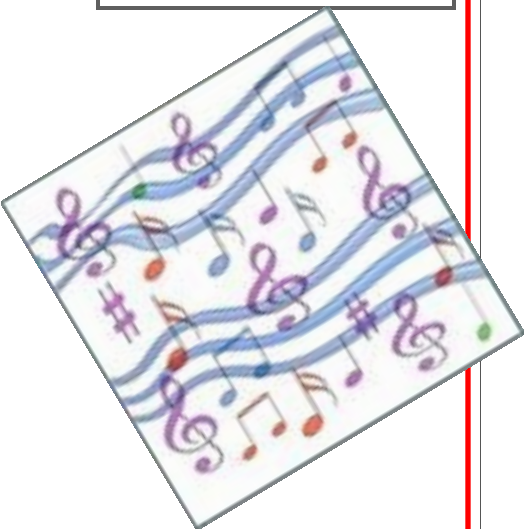
*United Care is open on the second and fourth Tuesday mornings of each month from 9:00 until noon for distribution of food, clothing, household goods, furniture and toys.*



## 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!



*“The small congregation could afford to pay him only a minimal salary, partly in potatoes and wool.”*

# **BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS JOHN FAWCETT 1772**

Blest by the tie that binds  
Our hearts in Christian love:  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above.

Before our Father’s throne  
We pour our ardent prayers;  
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,  
Our comforts and our cares.

We share each other’s woes,  
Our mutual burdens bear,  
And often for each other flows  
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,  
It gives us inward pain;  
But we shall still be joined in heart,  
And hope to meet again.

Orphaned when he was twelve, then forced to work fourteen hours a day in a sweatshop, John Fawcett was ordained a Baptist minister at the age of twenty-five. He be-

gan his ministry at a poor church in Wainsgate in northern England. The small congregation could afford to pay him only a minimal salary, partly in potatoes and wool.

After seven years of ministry, Fawcett received a call to the prestigious Carter’s Lane Church in London. All his personal belongings were packed onto the wagons outside the church. But as he was saying his farewells, he saw the tears on the faces of his people. As a result he changed his mind and decided to stay.

Not long afterward, he wrote this hymn for the congregation at Wainsgate. He recognized that the bond of love he experienced there was worth more than any material wealth. He and his wife, Mary, ministered in that small church for fifty-four years.

*“He recognized that the bond of love he experienced there was worth more than any material wealth. He and his wife, Mary, ministered in that small church for fifty-four years.”*

Thank you to everyone who helped the kids perform the musical

Christ-myth Busters  
I got to see the DVD of it with Jaley and it turned out exceptional.

Thanks especially to Misti Poster for the last few practices and stepping in to direct at the last minute.

In Christ,  
Stacy

Children’s choir  
will not be meeting  
for the month of

**January**



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

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

**Sunday January 15th at 2:00 P.M**

**Bring a snack and join in on the fun!**



## DECEMBER NEWS 2011



*"We have been learning about the birth of Jesus and how to spread the good news of Jesus' birth. We talked about how special Christmas time is. How exciting it is to see the beautiful trees and the presents and to hear the Christmas songs."*



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

December is one of the most exciting times of the year. We have been learning about the birth of Jesus and how to spread the good news of Jesus' birth. We talked about how special Christmas time is. How exciting it is to see the beautiful trees and the presents and to hear the Christmas songs. The real reason we celebrate Christmas is to celebrate the birth of God's only son Jesus.

We have been working on our Christmas Nativity Program. The children have all selected their costumes. We had donkeys, sheep, shepherds, Joseph, Mary, three kings, and several beautiful angels. The children look so cute in their costumes. We have read several stories about the birth of Jesus. The children loved the story and were all excited about doing the program. They have been practicing their Christmas songs, learning their Bible verses and they love wearing their costumes. The children did a fantastic job in their Christmas programs.

This month in the three year old class, we have been reviewing all of the letters they have learned so far this year A-H, as well as the numbers 0-8. We continue to work on writing their names. The four year old class is also reviewing number and letters. We have also been working on conso-

nant sounds and blending our letters. Also, they are beginning to write and read words.

Martha and Tootie have worked really hard with the children this month making several beautiful crafts. They made snowmen, Nativity cards, Christmas tree cards and snowflakes.

Our hallways look so festive!

Thank you to all of our families that brought food items to the party and made it so wonderful! We appreciate all that you do for the preschool! I believe that our preschool is so important to our community and we greatly appreciate all of your donations and contributions! Thank you also to Case Koether for the cheese balls and snowmen cookies; to Bryce Bankston for the bag of oranges and to Destiny Weido for the treasure chest items.

As you and your children celebrate the Christmas season and celebrate the birth of Jesus, may you truly experience the joy that comes from knowing that "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son" (John 3:16). Have a wonderful Christmas holiday and we will see you back at preschool on January 2, 2012!

# Support

## SUPPORT FOR ERIK CHRISTENSEN

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](mailto: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.

**Circuit Convocation @ Trinity  
Copperas Cove  
Saturday, January 28th  
From 9-12**

With lunch following  
VP Scott Murray will be the speaker and give an update on the state of the synod. All members are invited to attend. There will be a question and answer session after the speaker.

If you are interested in attending please let Pastor know so that he can RSVP.

# THE STORY

The adult books and study guides are in and available for pick up in the back of the church. They can also be picked up at Sunday School on January 8th.

The students books will be handed out at Sunday School on January 8th.



Join us at Faith Lutheran Church In Stephenville

On Sunday, January 15th @ 2:00 PM

Hear Alice Klement

Speak to us of Mission work

**She is the director of the Refugee Ministry of the Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church of San Antonio and a former Lutheran School Teacher drawn to the ministry of outreach.**

Ms. Klement reports, “somehow while working in ‘Equipping ministry’, God also developed in me a love for outreach. I began taking short-term mission trips and started my congregation’s Refugee Ministry.” Come and hear about the mission trips she has taken to foreign lands and her plans for future trips.

A meal will be served for all following the presentation.

All are invited

COME! BE INSPIRED! BE EQUIPPED TO REACH OUT!

For more information or to let us know you are coming  
Please contact Lynann Simpson @ 254-968-3927 or 254-592-6255  
Or Marlene White @ 254-965-2049 or 254-967-3379



# Thank You's



From our Seminary Family 2012– More to come in our February Newsletter

Hi!

How are you? We are in our 4th year at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and our family just received the wonderfully generous, amazing gifts for our daughters from your congregation. We were totally "floored" by the amount of presents and overwhelming kindness of your church! Wow, our hearts were definitely touched by the support! Our girls (ages 2 and 5) couldn't stop dancing around the room when we unpacked it!

Thank you! God's blessings on your Advent and Christmas season!

In Him,  
Andy and Stephanie Roettjer

Thanks to all of you who were able to be with us to celebrate our Mother-grandmother's 80th birthday. She had a wonderful time as did all of us. We feel so blessed to have been raised, cared for and loved by her for all our lives.

We also feel equally blessed in knowing that she has such a special and loving "church family" that shows such love and care.

May God continue to bless the St. John family as you continue to love and care for one another and all of God's children.

The children, grandchildren and great grandchildren,  
of Winnie Pearl Kelm

Words cannot describe how YOU, our church Family, have blessed us this Christmas. Your love, support, gifts, cards, visits, and prayers have been greatly appreciated by our entire family.

So many of you brought food, goodies, monetary gifts, and notes of encouragement. Our Christmas presents were even bought, wrapped, and placed under the tree! Our furnace was replaced entirely by you.

We couldn't begin to list everything you have done for us. Christ has truly made His presence shine in our lives through you!

Love,  
The Reich Family

I, Stacy, also want to thank, my husband Keith, for his love and support. You continue to be my night in shining armor. For almost 25 years now, you have loved and cared for me in the similar fashion that Christ loved the church. Thank you for doing mine and your jobs the past few weeks and for your support as I am healing.

For my young men: Reagan, Jonathon, and Riley, who have made their love known to me and have carried a burden that young men shouldn't have to bear at this time in their lives. You all have surpassed my expectations of what I wanted my young men to turn out to be, even in spite of my frailties and imperfections.

To my sweet angel Jaley: for daily reminding me of the joy of innocence, for your love of life, and your sweet cards you made and brought to the hospital.

And to my church family:

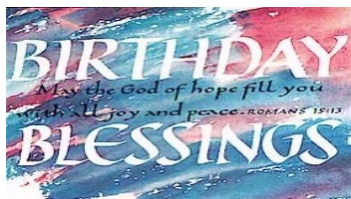
As I write this note of appreciation my eyes fill with tears at the love and support I feel from you. Thank you for caring for my family while I was in the hospital. They were better cared for than I could do myself.

I can see the fingerprints of God when I look at you.

In Christ with great love and appreciation,  
Stacy

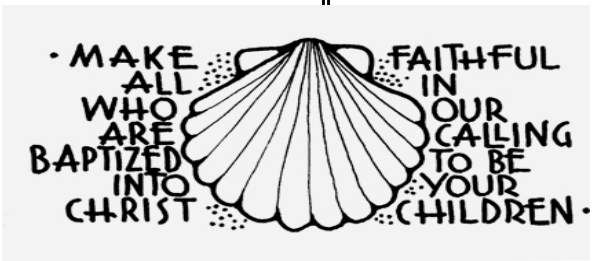
### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1st	Gracie Knudson	25th	Imogene Goins
3rd	Breanne Turner		Dorothy Schoedel
4th	Brandon Sommerfeld		Jason Young
	H. C. Wenzel	26th	Jason Seider
5th	Ida Sommerfeld	27th	Cara Finstad
	Jayson Whitt		John Isensee
7th	Kolten Kunkel	28th	Frances Donahoo
	Ashley Padgett		Kelli Nolen
8th	Christina Rudolph		Kathy Payne
9th	Alex English	30th	Louise Landrum
11th	Charles Jahns		Jimmy Sommerfeld
12th	Charles Niemann		Ollie Zschiesche
14th	Jaydon Watson	31st	Vicki Worley
	John Zaruba		Brooke Tomlinson
15th	Tracy Cox		
17th	David Zschiesche		
20th	Jean Ranney		
	Raymond Wenzel		
23rd	Hunter Gromatzky		
24th	Brenda Armstrong		
	Doug Payne		
	Kansas Pierce		



### JANUARY BAPTISMS

1st	19th
Mark Nolen	Karen Johnson
4th	Bonnye Wenzel
Henry Wenzel	22nd
7th	Vicki Marwitz
Don Tyson	27th
Jerry Zschiesche	Loren Lawson
10th	28th
Winnie Kelm	Sheldon Kautzsch
14th	29th
David Tyson	Rusty Bottlinger
16th	Melissa Delagarza
Mark Bottlinger	Tracy Cox
17th	
Craig Roberts	
18th	
Karen Johnson	



### JANUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

1st	William and Sandy Olsen	36yrs
20th	Jimmy and Brenda Schrank	22yrs
23rd	James and Betty Tischler	58yrs
25th	Jimmy and Judy Whitt	45yrs



Baptized into Your name most holy,  
 O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
 I claim a place, though weak and lowly,  
 Among Your saints, Your chosen host,  
 Buried with Christ and dead to sin,  
 Your Spirit now shall live within.



# Youth News

St. John Lutheran

## Jr high Dates to Remember

Confirmation will be starting up again this week on Wednesday.

We will be taking the Christmas decorations down for a servant event.

Snack list for January:

4th Marcus

11th Mason

18th Abbie

25th Kyle

## 2nd Super Sunday

January 8th

Jr and Sr Youth

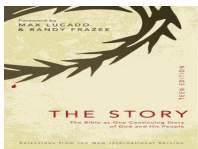
Following morning worship.

**Activity:**

Volleyball in gym

**Lunch provided:**

THE STORY Curriculum begins January 1st. Be sure to be in Sunday School each week to take part in this series. Let us know if you need a ride.



# THANK YOU

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

Thank you to the Youth and Sponsors who helped purchase and assemble the goodie bags for the Christmas Eve Program.

Also for the youth who took part in the children's program at Pottsville and Christmas Eve.



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

January  
January

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



Stamps for Missions  
An LWML Project



The Ruth is requesting your help in collecting used postage stamps. 100% of the sale of these stamps helps fund the shipping costs of Lutheran World Relief items (i.e., quilts, school kits, health kits, etc.)

Here's what to do:

- Cut stamp of envelope leaving at least 1/4 inch around the edge
- Or leave it on the envelope and we will cut it off
- No torn or damaged stamps
- No metered stamps
- Computer generated stamps are o.k.
- Stamps printed on envelopes are o.k. (save the entire envelope)



There is a box in the foyer to collect your donations.

Thank you,  
The Ruth Guild



This project is just one of the projects the Ruth Guild is currently working on. The January meeting was a big success! All ladies are invited to join us Next month on February 6th at 5:30 pm.



Thank you again for your support with the mite box collection and the Christmas gift collection for our seminary family. They were truly blessed by your generosity.

January 2012

Address Service Requested

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

www.stjohn-lcms.com

WE ARE ON THE  
WEB!

Non Profit  
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# THE STORY

Beginning **January 8th,**

The Sunday School portion starts.

Be sure and join us as together we discover  
God's Word through HIS STORY.

**Breakfast in FLC @ 8:30 am**

**Sunday School & Adult Bible 9am**

**Sunday Morning Worship 10am**

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