

# The Visitor

October 2016

St. John's Lutheran Church ELCA • 2190 Jackson Hwy Chehalis, WA 98532  
360/748-4741 • office@stjohnschehalis.net

## What is Your Story?



The first 25 years of my life I lived in one state, Michigan. The next 17 years of my life I have lived in five different states, had three kids and served six different congregations. When people ask me where I am from, I have trouble answering the question. A better question is to ask, “**What** are you from?”

It is true that the place where we find ourselves shapes how we interact with the world around us. People in Michigan are different than people in Iowa who are different than people in Arizona who are different than people in Washington. Our place shapes who we are.

For people like me who have lived in many diverse places, it is the stories that shape me more than the geography. I can't take Arizona with me to Washington (many of you wouldn't survive the summers anyway). But I can take objects from each place I've lived.

The top shelf of my bookcase in my study



displays memorabilia from every place I have lived. From my high school diploma to the Nutcracker I received last Christmas, every object there tells a story. Even the jar of bath salts tells a story (ask me about it sometime).

We all carry a treasure of stories around with us and with the objects that we choose to let into our lives. Those stories inform us just like the geography around us shapes us. We are going to tell our stories.

This month, Sara Blair, is sharing her story. In the coming months, others from church leadership will be telling their stories of how God has shaped their lives through the ministry of St John's congregation.

As the leaders tell their stories, we want you to think about your story. How has St John's Lutheran Church shaped you? Write it down. We'll put it in a future *Visitor*. If we don't hear from you, don't be surprised if you get asked to tell your story. Your story shapes you. Your witness to the story can shape someone else and encourage their walk with Christ.

*Pastor Matt*

## How Poverty Drew Me into Its Ministry

*By Carolyn Schoenborn (on behalf of our congregation's RISE Lewis County ministry)*

My first exposure to poverty was as a teen-ager visiting (no, touring) the camps of migrant workers who came to work on the farm where I grew up. I was shocked to see their cabins that had no electricity and no running water. But, I thought, that's just how the migrants *chose* to live.

Then years later my husband and I took on a ministry on the Yakima Indian Reservation. There I learned to see poverty as real people who were

actually doing an unbelievably remarkable job finding ways to stay alive. I also learned first-hand how complex and unbelievably difficult poverty is to deal with - for individuals, for families, for communities, and even for the church. But most important, I saw, for the most part, the people in poverty as persons of value and worth.

To make a long story short, I also learned how easy it is to burn-out and become hardened while working with people in continuous states of crises

*(continued on page 2)*

### St. John's Lutheran Church Statement of Mission:

Rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ, we exist to:

- **PROCLAIM** God's unconditional love as an invitation to all,
- **GROW** in discipleship as we follow in Jesus' steps, and
- **SERVE** others as instruments of God's Holy Spirit.

St. John's  
Lutheran Church, ELCA  
2190 Jackson Hwy  
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Office Hours:  
Monday - Thursday  
8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Editor:  
Linda Lowery

## Worship Schedule:

- 8:30 a.m. Worship
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Class
- 11:00 a.m. Worship

## Summer Worship Schedule:

- One Worship Service at 9:45 a.m.

## Poverty . . .

(continued from page 1)

– especially if you unwittingly have a major paternalistic instinct. That paternalism led me into a lot of work doing food and clothing banks. But, I never learned how to actually address the *causes* and shackling dynamics of poverty. When we left our ministry in Wapato, I begged God to never place me in the middle of poverty again.

So, now that I'm retired, why am I back working with poverty here in Lewis County? Because God has moved me a loooong way in learning more about poverty; and especially about

*"If you ever listened to what people in poverty have to go through in one day, and saw that they are still standing, you would be in awe of them!"*

people - no matter who they are or their station in life - and how valuable we all are to God and one another as human beings.

I am also learning that it is important to understand the causes and dynamics of poverty. I am learning to know, love and respect people living in poverty. I'm learning there are "heart" issues that must be addressed in

all of us. I am learning that I'm not here to "solve their problems" for them; but I am called to enter their lives and let them enter mine. I am not called to be their parent; but I am called to be their sister!

This is why I invite everyone reading this article to seriously consider participating in the poverty training entitled *Bridging the Gap Between Us and Them!* Please! Ask God whether this might be something that

could help **you** become an even more effective disciple of Christ, called to reach out and touch the lives of those in poverty.

Our Facilitators,  
Michaelle Sorlie

(Housing Coordinator for Lewis County Health and Social Services); and Meja Handlen (Contracts Coordinator for Lewis county Health and Social Services) are certified Poverty Coaches with Dr. Donna Beegle's *Communication Across Barriers* program and have a combined 40+ years of working with persons in poverty.

## Bridging the Gap Between "Us" and "Them"!

Begins Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup> (from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm)

and runs through two Tuesday and Thursday evenings on the 11<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> (from 6:00 – 8:30 pm).

Can't make every session? Register anyway!

We'll have videos you can use to catch up on what you miss!

**Meeting Location:** St. Johns Lutheran Church  
2190 Jackson Hwy, Chehalis

**Cost:** \$50 (Includes 15 hours of training, Saturday's noon meal, and accompanying materials)

## You will learn to:

- Communicate more effectively with those living in poverty
- Learn how to use the hands-on activities of modeling and dialogue
- Have concrete strategies and material to use right away as you help educate others about poverty in Lewis County
- Be able to conduct Poverty Competency Assessments

## My St. John's Story

A few months ago at the Council Retreat, Pastor Matt asked us all, "Why do you attend St. John's?" Although my answer may not be "correct," it was immediate. I attend St. John's Lutheran Church for the people, they are my church family and my prayer warriors.

I was baptized at St. John's almost (gasp!) 40 years ago and it's been my second home ever since. I remember amazing Sunday School teachers, awesome weeks of VBS, and still talk about this crazy cool Halloween maze down in the basement during a Harvest Party one year. Sunday mornings always included my hugs from Glen Som (my first crush) and Woody Harter. Some of my favorite Sundays were when Buck and Bette Ballou returned from Arizona each fall. When I was younger we had special music once a month and I always had my fingers crossed, hoping it would be Arden White singing *How Great Thou Art*. I think I was seven when I finally realized the song was NOT entitled *How Great Thou Arden*.

Growing up I was extremely blessed to have some of my best friends also attending

St. John's. My parents never had to bribe me to get up on Sundays because I was so excited to go to church and see Heather Gage, Katie Fenn and Becky Mauermann. It has been such a joy to see them at St. John's now with their own families. Not gonna lie, my confirmation years were a little rough, but Sue Killilay was such an amazing influence on me and my walk with Jesus, right when I needed it most. I had the time of my life in Youth Group with the trips, concerts, Bible Studies, and Youth Choir. Millions of memories I still treasure, with friends I still have.

One of the best parts of moving back home six years ago was being able to regularly worship again at St. John's, as well as getting involved again. Serving as a council member, teaching Sunday School, joining a few committees as well as being involved in calling Pastor Matt has let me get to know St. John's members I didn't know, as well as get to know members I did on a completely different level. This has been such a blessing! So many, many laughs as well as amazing discussions

over the last few years. Soon after I moved home, I was involved in a fundraiser for one of our church families. I was hoping to raise a few hundred dollars with a breakfast and a silent auction. St. John's members blew me away (once again) with their generosity and together we raised \$7,000.

Thank you, St. John's Lutheran Members. Thank you for being my family for almost 40 years. Thank you for always being there to clean up (salute to the Jahnsen family) after events. Thank you for the Sunday morning hugs (Deane Johnson, yours are my favorite!) Thank you for getting the answers to the questions I feel like I'm always asking (Linda Lowery, you're the best!!) Thank you for taking every challenge I've ever given you and far exceeded my expectations! Thank you for being the reason I attend St. John's. Thank you for supporting and encouraging and loving the Blair family all these years – you have been the best example of Christ-like love, over and over and over again.

In His Name,  
*Sara Blair*

## The Church Council . . .

has approved the request by the Worship & Music Committee to raise funds to replace the sound system in the sanctuary. It has not been working well consistently for some time. We can replace our current system with an up-to-date digital system for \$15,000. We need to have approximately half of the cost as a down payment to

proceed. It would be nice to have the new system in place before the holidays. We are looking for donations both big and small to help us reach that goal. Donations can be placed in the offering plate with the designation "sound system" or handed in to the church office.



## October Celebrations

### Birthdays

- 1 Eric Moir
- 3 Logan Lee
- 4 Heidi Meier
- 6 Myrna Brossard  
Katie Meier  
Nathan Suhrbier  
Matt Unzelman
- 8 Caitlin Phillips
- 9 Grace Bauer  
Jerry Carlson
- 15 Christopher Grill
- 16 Jackson Humphrey  
Ron Kuxhausen  
Molly Russell  
Ben Suhrbier
- 18 Francis Allbritton
- 19 Dave Fenn
- 20 Dave Cosser

- 22 Stephen Grill
- 23 Drew Brown
- 24 Matthew Gage
- 27 Wyatt Dean  
Donna Moir
- 28 Pat Soderquist
- 30 Martina Munz  
Jamison Scott
- 31 Michael Grega

### Anniversaries

- 1 Christine and Tom Larsen
- 7 Michael and Krista Thomas
- 12 Billie and Eric Melin
- 13 Barb and David Stanfield
- 15 Travis and Kristine  
Newman
- 25 Bert and Grace Bauer  
Katie and Troy Meier

### Baptism Anniversaries

- 1 Austin Carlson
- 2 Jennifer Grega
- 3 Zachary, Emma & Joel  
Rotter
- 6 Truman Affeldt
- 8 Erin Brown
- 9 Grace Bauer  
Joan Jahnsen
- 15 Jason Humphrey
- 19 Hans Meier
- 23 Vicki Graham  
Sara Lunders
- 26 Allen Unzelman
- 31 Matthew Unzelman

If we missed your birthday or anniversary, let us know! Call the church office at 748-4741 or e-mail: office@stjohnschehalis.net.

## Bits and Pieces

### Thank you . . .

Dear St. Johns Family, I would like to thank you for all of the cards, gifts, visits and especially for the prayers for me as I underwent and am recovering from knee surgery. It meant a lot and was much appreciated.

Sincerely,  
*Gail Dean*

To our St. John's Family, Thank you all so much for your visits, cards, caring notes and prayers for us during this time of health issues for me. We appreciate so much your thoughts and your loving support mean so much. Progress is coming along, however slower than I would like at this time. Thank you all again!

*Bob and Judy Utter*

### New Address:

Jim and Doris Carey  
2700 Colonial Dr., #206  
Centralia, WA 98531

**The Women's Sweet Life Cafe retreat** was a huge success! We had a good team-building activity that resulted in lots of laughter. There were numerous sweets and hot beverages consumed throughout the day. We sang some uplifting songs and had some great conversations around some interesting topics. We focused on getting our nourishment by having a relationship with Jesus and support from friends. Life is also sweet when we serve others by putting our love into action.

There were a number of women that wanted to attend but the day didn't work for them so **there will be one more Sweet Life Café event on Saturday, November 5, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at the Jahnsen house on Lake Mayfield.** If you are interested in attending, talk to Joan Jahnsen, 748-3901 or pick up a registration form in the church office.



## Dollars and Sense

### Operating Income and Expenses:

September 16, 2016

Income	\$13,673.45
Expenses:	(14,130.65)
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$(457.19)</b>

Year to Date as of  
Through September 26, 2016

<b>Income</b>	\$166,880.22
<b>Expenses</b>	(167,056.64)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$(176.42)</b>

# October 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
<i>Wednesday's Together!</i> 4:15 p.m. Kids of the Kingdom 4:30 p.m. St. John's Knitting Ministry 5:00 p.m. Children's Chime Choir 5:30 p.m. Dinner is Served – <b>All are welcome!</b>						1 6:00 p.m. High School Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Bell Choir Practice 6:30 p.m. Confirmation Class 7:00 p.m. Adult Choir Practice	
<b>2</b> 8:30 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Study Class 11:00 a.m. Worship 2:00 p.m. Crop Walk	<b>3</b> 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Social Ministry 7:00 p.m. Youth and Family	<b>4</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center	<b>5</b> 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study 1:00 p.m. Agate Hospital Auxiliary 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301 <i>Wednesday's Together</i> (see schedule)	<b>6</b> 9:00 a.m. Bible Study Fellowship	<b>7</b> Pastor Matt's Day Off	<b>8</b> 9:00 a.m. Poverty Coach Training	
<b>9</b> 8:30 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Study Class 11:00 a.m. Worship	<b>10</b> 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study	<b>11</b> 11:30 a.m. Women's Lunch Bunch at Denny's 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center 6:00 p.m. Poverty Coach Training 6:00 p.m. Mutual Ministry 6:30 p.m. Church Council	<b>12</b> 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301 <i>Wednesday's Together</i> (see schedule)	<b>13</b> 9:00 a.m. Bible Study Fellowship 5:30 p.m. Staff Meeting 6:00 p.m. Poverty Coach Training	<b>14</b> Pastor Matt's Day Off  <b>Visitor Deadline</b>	<b>15</b> 9 a.m. <b>Oktoberfest</b>	
<b>16</b> 8:30 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Study Class 11:00 a.m. Worship	<b>17</b> 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study	<b>18</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center 6:00 p.m. Poverty Coach Training 7:00 p.m. Lewis County Genealogical Society	<b>19</b> 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301 <i>Wednesday's Together</i> (see schedule)	<b>20</b> 9:00 a.m. Bible Study Fellowship 12:00 p.m. Young at Heart Luncheon and Program 6:00 p.m. Poverty Coach Training	<b>21</b> Pastor Matt's Day Off	<b>22</b> 6:00 p.m. Lutheran Campus Ministry Overnight in Community Center	
<b>23</b> 8:30 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Study Class 11:00 a.m. Worship	<b>24</b> 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Habitat for Humanity	<b>25</b> 5:30 p.m. Taekwondo in Community Center 7:00 p.m. Women's Book Guild	<b>26</b> 6:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop #301 <i>Wednesday's Together</i> (see schedule)	<b>27</b> 9:00 a.m. Bible Study Fellowship	<b>28</b> Pastor Matt's Day Off	<b>29</b>	
<b>30</b> 8:30 a.m. Worship – <b>Wear Red!</b> 9:45 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Study Class 11:00 a.m. Worship	<b>31</b> 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Music & Worship					<b>October 15, 2016, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.</b> <b>Featuring:</b> <b>German Style Lunch</b> <b>Used Book Table</b> <b>St. John's Crafts and Wares</b> <b>Outside Vendors</b>	

## Stories of Faith in Action

Dear friends in Christ,

She was grieving and afraid — her husband had just died and she had a great debt to pay. Worried a creditor would take their two children away as slaves, the widow turned to the prophet Elisha for help. All she had left was a jar of oil — and her faith.

When Elisha told the widow to collect empty vessels from her neighbors, she did so without question. She returned home, and as instructed, poured her last jar of oil into the new vessels. One by one each vessel filled up. Oil was flowing and suddenly she had filled all the vessels to the brim. Not only did the widow have enough oil to pay the creditor, she also had enough to provide for her family for years to come. It was a miracle!

Wow. What an incredible story of faith in action — and how God provides. Faced with adversity, the widow turned to God and received more blessings than she ever could have imagined (2 Kings 4:1-7).

### Hope Springs at Abiding Ministries

On Sunday, Aug. 24, 2014, the last hymn was sung, the blessing was said and the doors closed on Bethlehem Lutheran Church, in Pittsburgh, Pa. Bethlehem had merged with another congregation, and its 100-year-old building was scheduled to be torn down.

That is, until a connection was made with Abiding Ministries — a new ELCA faith community in Pittsburgh. Abiding Ministries was in search of a space and found a fit in the vacant church building. But it

Sometimes when we think about our congregations, synods or households, it is easy to view them through a lens of scarcity. But the story of the widow reminds us that when we turn to God in faith, God provides in ways beyond our imagination. In the midst of scarcity, we find abundance. In a world where terror and cruelty proliferate, we discover seeds of hope and love. Lutherans don't withdraw from the world.

This year's *Stories of Faith in Action* highlights ELCA ministries that span this country and the globe, some of which illustrate the way challenges can lead to God-given opportunities. You'll also notice a new feature this year, faith reflections from ELCA members like you.

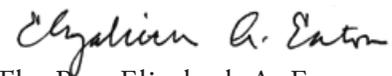
You are a part of each of these stories — through your faithful, regular offering, a portion of which is used to fund ELCA ministries beyond the congregation, which is called Mission Support (see below). Combined with gifts from

other ELCA members, Mission Support advances the work of your congregation, your synod and the work we do as a wider church. Thank you for your generosity!

As a member of the ELCA you are part of a much larger story. You are connected with our 9,300 congregations, 65 synods and one churchwide organization. Your church is connected globally to 72 million Lutherans through its membership in The Lutheran World Federation. We are church — together!

And like the widow who was challenged to reach out to her neighbors in a time of need, God is calling us to see and honor our connectedness with the world around us. Your offering is one way to do that.

How will you share God's gifts with your neighbors in the coming year? With gratitude,



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton,  
Presiding Bishop

needed work.

"There were stray cats living in the building, the lights didn't work, the roof leaked. We came in and got things cleaned up," remembered Christine Rotella, mission developer for Abiding Ministries.

In less than a year, the new congregation has become an important part of the neighborhood, offering a meal and worship on Sundays and financial workshops during the week. Abiding Ministries has become a source of hope where many

experience extreme poverty:

"God has provided me with a new spiritual and physical energy here," said Moses, a member there. Another member, Patrick, added, "[This church] has restored my faith, something I had given up on since I was a child."

Children are even showing up after school for fellowship, snacks and support in a safe space. Once Rotella came across a group of five boys caught in a street fight with

*(continued on page 7)*

adults and pulled them inside the church. That afternoon ended with songs in the choir loft instead of violence. Two of boys came back and sang in worship that Sunday, and

### Comfort in Prayer

After a long, exhausting day training with a group of U.S. Marine Corps Reserve members, Cris Frigm, pastor of Trinity Lutheran in Taneytown, Md., and a Reserve U.S. Navy chaplain, handed out prayer books and led night prayer in the field. Following worship, members turned in for the night, leaving not one prayer book behind.

“Every time I train with the group, I try to lead a service out of the prayer book,” said Frigm. “Sometimes they take the books with them, and sometimes they don’t. This particular night, it seemed they really needed the time for worship. Not one book came back to me.”

Now in his sixth year as a Reserve U.S. Navy chaplain, Frigm has developed a long

they have been visiting the church on and off ever since.

“One asked if his funeral could be in the church and if I would do the prayers,” said Rotella. “He tried to talk about

relationship with a group of residents at Oakwood Lutheran Ministries in Wisconsin who inspired by the Green Bay Packers, call themselves the Oakwood Packer. During the third Friday of each month, they pack boxes of prayer books and ship them to pastors like Frigm.

“My first deployment was to Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, Africa. That was the first time I received the books,” he said. “They have been a great resource especially with the Marine Reservists because they don’t get a lot of support outside their drill weekend. It’s helpful for them to take that book with them and have that extra support.”

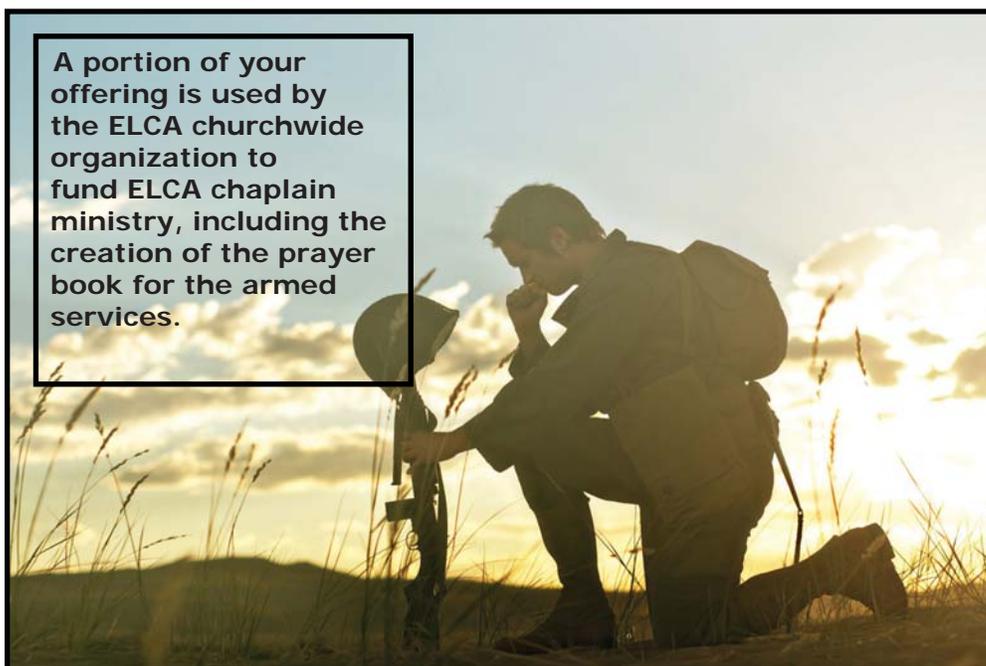
Ron Mach, a retired pastor and Oakwood resident of 14 years, said he has spent the past

needing a casket for bodily resurrection but did not have words. We are right where God wants us.”



nine of those years volunteering with the packing group. “This opportunity for serving our sons and daughters in the military with food for the spirit as well as food for the body was the right mission for our Oakwood Packers,” said Mach. “We have a joyful sense of partnership with the ministry of Chaplain Frigm who provides pastoral care in the name of Christ and the ELCA.”

To date, the group has packed approximately 1,000 boxes to send to various ministries throughout the world, and they hope to continue their ministry long into the future.



**A portion of your offering is used by the ELCA churchwide organization to fund ELCA chaplain ministry, including the creation of the prayer book for the armed services.**

# Oktoberfest!

A highlight for St. John's and our community is the annual **Oktoberfest**. This year Oktoberfest will be held on **Saturday, October 15**, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Lunch offerings include:

- Brat combo (with or without sauerkraut), drink and pie: \$5.00
- Brat: \$2.00
- Hot dog combo with chips and drink: \$4.50

- Hot dog: \$1.50
  - Chips: 50¢
  - Piece of pie: \$2.00
  - Cinnamon rolls: \$1.50
  - Coffee/tea/raw cider/soft drink: 50¢
  - All-day coffee (refills as many times as you like): \$1.00
- (Please note: prices are subject to change depending on donated items.)*

This is a great time to get a jump start on Christmas

shopping or pick up interesting and unusual gifts. And don't forget about the brat and sauerkraut lunch – and delicious homemade pies! **Volunteers are needed to help set up and clean up at the end of the day.** Watch for the sign-up sheets to be posted in the narthex. Questions regarding vendors, to donate food items or to help with food service, please contact Sara Blair at 748-6878.



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