

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH LIFE Together

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT
DECEMBER 16-17, 2017

ADORING The Prayer of the Church

Persecuted Christians in:

Algeria
Central African Republic
Tajikistan
Tanzania

Partner Church:

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Argentina

Birth:

Hudson David Klee (nephew of Gretchen Musa)

Baptism:

Alba Maria Venuti (daughter of Tracy and Alex Venuti)
Luciana Margaret Venuti
(daughter of Tracy and Alex Venuti)

Comfort, health, recovery:

Dale (friend of Kathleen McDonald Tompkins)
Sue (friend of Kathleen McDonald Tompkins)
Susan Anderson (sister of Pat Braun)
Michael Beckett (friend of the Musa family)
Jeanne Engel and family (friends of the Musa family)
Candice Garcia (niece of Kathy and Rick Deist)
Nishita Garg (friend of the Strnads)
Ron Gifford (father of Dan Gifford)
King family
Krachenfels family
Hayden Kruse

Rev. Mark Meier (nephew of Jeanette Marti)
Amy Piunti (niece of Jim Williams)
Carol Schmidt (niece of Toni Breseman)
Diane Schroeder (mother of Beka DiVenere)
Elvira Schroeder
Viola Solberg (great-aunt of Pastor Nelson)
Anita Tekriwal (friend of Lauren Wohlrab)
Janyce Thomas (sister of Denyce Wendte)

Peace and comfort for the family and friends of:
Ruth Johnson (mother of Tom Johnson)

Those who need our ongoing prayers:

John Byrd
Evan Ellis (stepson of Alan Schmidt)
Eldon Geyer (cousin of Joan Kaliher)
James Graham (father of Marilyn Graham)
Cody Gregory
Louise Guethle (friend of Debbie Feyerabend)
Gary Hodgson (son of Albertine and Paul Hodgson)
Carol Jablonsky (friend of Debbie Feyerabend)
Henry Jancik (son of Jennifer Vogel)
Jeremy Kadletz (relative of Joan Kaliher)
Jason Keeley (friend of Marianne King)
Jim McBride (brother-in-law of Rose D'Eccliss)
The Paw family
Debra Verdico (friend of Karen Crawford)
Shirley Zeigler

Please submit your prayer requests to the website or call the church office at 630-668-0701 x400.

ADORING

Baptism

We rejoice in the new birth given in Baptism today to:

- **Luciana Margaret**, daughter of **Tracy and Alex Venuti**. Sponsors are James Harvey and Jennifer Harvey. Luciana was born October 1, 2017.
- **Alba Maria**, daughter of **Tracy and Alex Venuti**. Sponsors are Brianna Venuti and Michael Harvey. Alba was born October 1, 2017.

MATURING

SUNDAYS

Adult Bible Study

Love Living Graciously: How St. John Leads Us through Life Sacramentally

- **Place:** The Study
- **Time:** 10:00 a.m.
- **Commitment:** 45 minutes
- **Contact:** Pastor Bruzek bruzek@stjohnwheaton.org

After centuries of privilege, our story seems to be falling out of favor. All around we sense the challenges—political, (a)moral, atheist, philosophical, materialist, religious—and suddenly things feel much like they did at the start of Christianity, when disciples of Jesus were considered alien and even outlaws. Now what? Has the world really moved beyond the story of the Crucified? And if not, how do we continue to tell the only story this world's got, the only story that *really* matters? The Gospel of St. John remains a compelling narration of Christ's Way through this world and then Home again in joy.

Trouble Hearing the Sermon?

Bring your own headphones and listen directly through your phone. **Just a few simple steps:**

- 1) Connect to the wi-fi network named **Listen**.
- 2) Download and open the **AudioFetch** App (search for "AudioFetch" in your app store).
- 3) Listen in during the service!

Questions? Ask John Crowe or Pastor Buchs.

High School Youth Catechumenate: *What's next?*

- **Place:** Lower Level High School Room
- **Time:** 10:00 a.m.
- **Commitment:** 45 minutes
- **Contact:** Pastor Buchs dbuchs@stjohnwheaton.org

Forty-five minutes a week! We have so much to do. Come along as we work together to build on all the things you've learned so far. This class is driven by your interests and participation as you learn to follow Jesus with maturity—as we work to answer the question: what's next?

Confirmation

- **Place:** Lower Level Youth Room
- **Time:** 10:00 a.m.
- **Commitment:** 45 minutes
- **Contact:** Pastor Nelson mnelson@stjohnwheaton.org

Confirmation at St. John is a three year process beginning in 6th grade. The focus of this year's study is The Christian Life and our lessons will be divided into units on Prayer, Liturgy and Theology of the Body. Friends are encouraged to come.

Sunday School

- **Place:** Lower Level
- **Time:** 10:00 a.m.
- **Commitment:** 45 minutes
- **Contact:** Gretchen Scheel gscheel@stjohnwheaton.org

Children in preschool 3's through grade 5 are invited to come along for Sunday School each week. This is sure to be a fun year filled with God's word, sacred music, good friends, and lots of Bible adventures! Bring a friend and join us. Parents are asked to sign in and sign out children in preschool through grade 2. Older students will be dismissed at 10:50 a.m. Childcare is available for infants through age 3 in the ARK from 9:45 to 10:50 a.m. Please remember to sign in and sign out.

WEDNESDAYS

J.O.Y. Group (Jesus. Others. You.)

- **Place:** The Study
- **Time:** 9:00–10:30 a.m.
- **Commitment:** 90 minutes
- **Contact:** Vicar Joshua Ralston 630-668-0701 x412
jralston@stjohnwheaton.org

Have you ever been confused about some things written in the Epistle of James? As we look through this letter, we will learn how James is often misunderstood. When it seems Paul and James disagree on key teachings, we will discuss how they are describing two sides of the same coin. All adults are welcome to join as we dive in!

Pastor Chats resumes January 17, 2018

Families are encouraged to come on Wednesdays during Advent for dinner at 6:00 p.m. followed by Taizé Prayer at 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAYS

Men's Bible Study

- **Place:** The Study
- **Time:** 6:30–7:15 a.m.
- **Commitment:** 45 minutes
- **Contact:** Vicar Joshua Ralston 630-668-0701 x412
jralston@stjohnwheaton.org

Men are welcome to come join our Bible study as we continue to dig deep into the book of Acts. Come join us and stay also for the morning Eucharist service at 7:40 a.m.

FRIDAYS

Friday Morning Women's Bible Study *Love as Strong as Death: the Song of Songs*

- **Place:** Chapel and The Study
- **Time:** 9:00 a.m.–10:15 a.m.
- **Commitment:** 75 minutes (childcare provided)
- **Contact:** Pastor Buchs dbuchs@stjohnwheaton.org
or Pastor Nelson mnelson@stjohnwheaton.org

Bernard of Clairvaux wrote of Songs, "It is everywhere love that speaks. If you are hungry, grasp the sense of what he reads, let him love you. At the very same time, if you wish to grasp the sense of your love, read the Song of Songs. If that does not surprise you—love has been co-opted by the

world and its meaning taken far afield. But here we find a redemption of desire and longing, a reclaiming of the vocabulary of love.

SATURDAYS

The Catechumenate: Welcome to St. John!

- **Place:** The Study
- **Time:** 8:30–10:00 a.m.
- **Commitment:** 90 minutes,
breakfast and childcare provided!
- **Contact:** Pastor Bruzek 630-668-0701 x421
or bruzek@stjohnwheaton.org

St. John is a wonderful, happy community of faithful folks, and we would love to have you be a part of it. Surrounded by the beauty of this sanctuary and intent on living a joyful life of mercy and witness, we are devoted to Christ and rejoice in his Word and Sacraments. Come and see if this is the place for you.

If you have any questions at all, or know somebody who might enjoy the class, please contact Pastor Bruzek.

EMBODYING

Gifts for Grace

- **Place:** Outreach Bulletin Board—The Commons Stairwell
- **Time:** Before/After Worship or Taizé services
- **Commitment:** Purchase one or more gifts
- **Contact:** Kathie Thorne 630-308-7281

Extend the love of Jesus and show support for Grace Christian Academy in Chicago by donating needed classroom items and general operating supplies and funds. Gift tags designating special requests, along with instructions for tagging and drop off, will be posted through January 7. For tax deductible monetary donations, take a tag marked *Tuition Assistance* and make checks payable to *Grace Christian Academy*. Collected gift items will be presented to Principal Carlo Giannotta and the students of Grace on Sunday, January 7, 2018 at the annual pancake breakfast in the gym. Everyone is invited to attend!

**Grace Christian Academy
Children's Christmas Program and Dinner
Monday, December 18**

- **Place:** Grace Christian Academy
4106 West 28th Street, Chicago
- **Time:** 4:30–7:30 p.m.
- **Commitment:** 3+ hours
- **Contact:** Kathie Thorne 630-308 7281
kjthorne@comcast.net

Support and witness the beauty of God's love present in the mission at Grace Christian Academy. Volunteers are needed to serve dinner to Grace's students and parents prior to their Children's Christmas Program. Helpers are invited to enjoy the program and then stay to help serve tamales after the event. The Thornes will arrange carpooling for anyone interested in volunteering.

**Morning Eucharist and Breakfast Club
Thursday, December 21**

- **Place:** Chapel and The Commons
- **Time:** 7:40 a.m. and following
- **Commitment:** 20+ minutes
- **Contact:** Gretchen Scheel 630-668-0701 x403
gscheel@stjohnwheaton.org

NEW! All are invited to Morning Eucharist followed by a light breakfast in The Commons. Please come to enjoy the Lord's Supper and His Word and stay for the second most important meal of the day and a chance to visit with friends. Gluten free options are available. Breakfast Club is held on the third Thursday of the month during the school year.

Garden Club Closes the 2017 Season

Many thanks to the following Garden Club members who maintained the gardens on Thursday mornings at St. John: **Bill Cooper, Rose D'Eccliss, Larry Eckert, Tom Hecht, Roy Kaufmann, Kathy Leimbach, Jeanette Marti, Kathleen McDonald Tompkins, Lee and Don Raezler, Bill Schewe, Emalee Stellwagen, John Thorne, Carol Toenies and Marilyn Whetstone.** Weeding, trimming, sweeping, planting, dead-heading and raking are just some of the tasks performed by these volunteers from early spring to late fall. Watch *LifeTogether* next year for the opening of a new season. New members are always welcomed.

**Christmas Art Walk: A Gift to Remember
Through December 24**

- **Place:** Downtown Wheaton
- **Time:** Daily, during business hours
- **Commitment:** 1 or more hours
- **Contact:** Jayne Bischoff 630-945-1974
jaynebischoff@gmail.com

The City of Wheaton and the Jonahre Foundation present the *Gift to Remember* Christmas Art Walk. The community is invited to explore 12 downtown Wheaton stores, each hosting a piece of fine art commissioned to tell a portion of St. Luke's account of Christ's birth. The event opens with an artist's meet-and-greet in stores on Tuesday, December 12 and on Saturday, December 16. Also, a living nativity with animals can be seen at Carlson Hardware's Garden Center on Saturday from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. For additional information and a map of participating stores and artists visit www.christmasartwalk.com.

**ST. JOHN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL
2018-19 Enrollment for Congregation
and Current Preschool Families**

- **Place:** St. John Preschool
- **Time:** Starting Friday, December 1
- **Commitment:** Completed application with \$85 non-refundable fee
- **Contact:** Valerie Gaede, Director 630-668-0701 x436

Enrollment for St. John member children and current preschool children and their siblings is underway. The 2018-19 school year enrollment forms and brochures are available outside the office in the preschool hallway. An enrollment form can also be downloaded from our website: www.stjohnwheaton.org.

Please note: enrollment opens to the public on Monday, January 8, 2018.

Thank you!

The ladies of the Afternoon Circle would like to thank everyone who ordered greens and poinsettias this year. Proceeds totaling \$1,268.65 were raised to support the St. John Lutheran Emergency Response Team (L.E.R.T.) The donations will be used for travel expenses: gas, meals, housing, equipment and emergency needs.

Hunks vs. Punks backyard football game Sunday, December 31

- **Place:** The Chester's backyard
23W616 St. Charles Rd., Carol Stream
- **Time:** 2:30–4:30 p.m.
- **Commitment:** 2+ hours
- **Contact:** Aaron Zoeller 630-818-5123
amzoeller80@gmail.com

Calling all St John men and boys! Join us at the Chester's for the annual backyard touch football game. Don't worry, there is no tackling and bumps and bruises are nursed afterwards with chili and eggnog! If you've never done this before, why not make this the year you join us? Bring warm clothes and pray for snow.

Church Directory: More Dates Added! January 4–6, 2018

- **Place:** Rooms 202–203
- **Time:** Thursday and Friday 2:00–8:00 p.m.
Saturday 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
- **Commitment:** One hour
- **Contact:** Nicole and John Byars 312-479-8678
or ndbyars@mac.com

Due to an overwhelming response for the new directory, three January photography sessions have been added with Lifetouch Church Directories and Portraits. Each participating family receives a complimentary 8 x 10, a copy of the new book and the option to purchase professional portraits at discounted prices. Schedule your session in The Commons on weekends or anytime on our website: www.stjohnwheaton.org. *The complimentary 8x10 portraits from November sessions have arrived and are available in The Commons.*

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SERVICE SCHEDULE 2017

Advent Taizé

- Wednesday, December 20 – 7:00 p.m.

Dinner served in the Gym before the service from 6:00–6:45 p.m.

The Feast of the Nativity

- Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols, Sunday, December 24 – 4:00 p.m.
- Christmas Eve Eucharist, Sunday, December 24 – 7:00 p.m.
- Christmas Day Eucharist, Monday, December 25 – 10:00 a.m.

No Saturday 5:30 p.m. service, Sunday morning services or Sunday education hour

Last Week of December

- Tuesday, December 26 – No Morning Eucharist, Office closed
- Wednesday, December 27 – Morning Eucharist 7:40 a.m., Office closed
- Thursday, December 28 – Morning Eucharist 7:40 a.m., Office closed
- Friday, December 29 – Morning Eucharist 7:40 a.m., Office closed

First Sunday after Christmas

- Holy Eucharist, Saturday, December 30 – 5:30 p.m.
- Holy Eucharist, Sunday, December 31 – 8:30 a.m.
- Holy Eucharist, Sunday, December 31 – 11:00 a.m.

NEW! *Sunday education hour resumes January 21, 2018, 10:00 a.m.*



Quilters • Tuesday, January 9, 2018

- **Place:** Lower Level "Naehstube"
- **Time:** 6:30 p.m.
- **Commitment:** 2 hours
- **Contact:** Christa Caspari 630-665-7642

You are invited to join our quilters for a relaxing evening of sewing, quilt tying, crochet, knitting and embroidery. Finished items are donated to local and other charities. If you enjoy or would like to learn any of these crafts, contact Christa about joining the group when it resumes in the New Year.

Women's Book Club • Tuesday, January 9, 2018

- **Place:** The Commons
- **Time:** 7:00 p.m.
- **Commitment:** 1–2 hours, plus reading time
- **Contact:** Gretchen Scheel gscheel@stjohnwheaton.org

Join us the second Tuesday of each month in the new year for an evening of fellowship and book discussion. Our January selection is *The Glass Castle*, a memoir by Jeannette Walls recounting the unconventional, poverty-stricken upbringing Walls and her siblings had at the hands of their deeply dysfunctional parents.

Upcoming dates and titles include:

February 13: *Most Wanted* by Lisa Scottoline

March 13: *Big Little Lies* by Liane Moriarty

April 10: *The Twelve Tribes of Hattie* by Ayana Mathis

Confirmation Winter Retreat

Saturday, January 13, 2018

- **Place:** St. John and off site
- **Time:** 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
- **Commitment:** 8 hours, \$20
- **Contact:** Pastor Nelson mnelson@stjohnwheaton.org

NEW! This all-day retreat will be filled with faith, fun and fellowship! Spend some time with classmates refreshing Confirmation habits. Enjoy wintertime fun as well as lessons and games at church. Cost includes a light breakfast, lunch and outdoor winter activities. Remember to bring your Bible, confirmation binder and winter clothing. Feel free to invite a friend!

ME and MY Shadow • Every other Tuesday

- **Place:** Hosted in homes
- **Time:** 9:30–11:00 a.m.
- **Commitment:** 90 minutes or as long as you can stay or play
- **Contact:** Anne Jackson 312-340-8898 or ms.anne.jackson@gmail.com

Me and My Shadow gives little ones a chance to play and interact socially while moms and dads do the same! Upcoming 2018 dates are January 9, 23, February 6, 20, March 6 and 20. Contact Anne for the location or if you have questions.

***LifeTogether*—Christmas Early Deadline**

All submissions for the **December 30/31** issue of *LifeTogether* should be emailed to **Sandy Crowe** (scrowe@stjohnwheaton.org) by **NOON on Tuesday, December 26**. Please provide the place, time, commitment and contact information along with a brief (100 words or fewer) description. Events outside of St. John are publicized at the discretion of the pastors. Items received after December 26 will be placed in the January 6-7, 2018 edition.

Offering Envelope Change

Starting in 2018, your offering envelopes will be mailed to your residence on a monthly basis. Research from other churches our size shows that this frequency helps members to better tend their giving, and the flexibility allows churches to keep accurate membership records as changes occur throughout the year.

All active, confirmed members of St. John will receive offering envelopes mid-month, dated for each week in the upcoming month. January envelopes will arrive mid-December. Please take a moment to provide any recent contact information changes here: www.stjohnwheaton.org/forms/update_your_info. Thank you for your cooperation with this new process!

2018 St. John Women's Retreat: *Vocation Journeys*

Friday, February 2 and/or Saturday, February 3, 2018

- Place: Hilton Hotel
3003 Corporate West Drive, Lisle, IL
- Time: 5:30 p.m. Friday–12:00 p.m. Saturday
- Commitment: 2–16 hours
- Cost*: \$50 for double occupancy room/\$100 for single.
Register and pay at
www.stjohnwheaton.org/womens-retreat
Retreat is free for those not staying overnight.
- Contact: Gretchen Scheel 630-668-0701 x403
gscheel@stjohnwheaton.org

Women don't need to be all things to all people, nor do we need to be one-dimensional creatures. We will discuss the ways that our vocations shift as we age, and our priorities and roles are constantly in flux. During our time together, we will consider how God's grace frees us to consider the ways that we can best serve the world's needs in our particular times and places, through our various vocations from friend to family, learner to teacher, leader to follower, care-giver to care-receiver.

This year's Women's Retreat features Dr. Rachel Eells, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Concordia University Chicago (CUC). She has served as faculty member in and chair of the psychology department at CUC after having taught in Lutheran elementary schools. She holds a PhD in Educational Psychology from Loyola University Chicago, an MEd in Gifted and Talented Education from the University of Arkansas Little Rock, and a BS in Special Education and Lutheran Teacher Education from Concordia University Nebraska. She lives in Park Ridge with her husband, Brandon, her 11 year old, Lucy, and her two sibling cats, and her current hobbies are chemistry (code for "messing around with essential oils") and construction (knitting scarves, mostly).

** Don't let the cost keep you from coming; scholarships are available. See Pastor Buchs.*

2018 St. John Men's Retreat: *Running and Finishing the Race*

Friday, February 9 and/or Saturday, February 10, 2018

- Place: Hilton Hotel
3003 Corporate West Drive, Lisle, IL
- Time: 5:30 p.m. Friday–12:00 p.m. Saturday
- Commitment: 2–16 hours
- Cost*: \$50 for double occupancy room/\$100 for single.
Register and pay at
www.stjohnwheaton.org/mens-retreat
Retreat is free for those not staying overnight.
- Contact: Pastor David Buchs 630-668-0701 x408
or dbuchs@stjohnwheaton.org

The Apostle Paul's writings are rich with images that help us understand the Christian life. Come and learn from Paul how to pursue life in Christ with vigor and certainty as a strong athlete would. And then, learn how to see death as a cause for rejoicing in the expectation of the prize we have sought. Paul gives us a full, surprising picture of the challenge, adventure, and joy of being a Christian.

This year's Men's Retreat features the Reverend Adam Koontz, pastor of Mount Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lititz, PA and church planter of Concordia Lutheran Mission, Myerstown, PA. A graduate of Swarthmore College and Concordia Theological Seminary, he is a doctoral candidate in New Testament and patristics at Temple University in Philadelphia. He and his wife Jennifer have five children, Christian, Lydia, Isaac, Julia, and Paul.

** Don't let the cost keep you from coming; scholarships are available. See Pastor Buchs.*

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

Sunday • December 17

- 8:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
- 10:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study (The Study)
- 10:00 a.m. High School Catechumenate (Lower Level)
- 10:00 a.m. Confirmation (Lower Level)
- 10:00 a.m. Sunday School (Lower Level)
- 11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
- 5:00 p.m. Governing Board gathering
(The Commons)

Monday • December 18

CLOSED

Tuesday • December 19

- 7:40 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Chapel)
- 9:30 a.m. Me & My Shadow (off site)
- 6:45 p.m. St. John Ringers (Balcony)
- 7:30 p.m. Dartball (Lower Level)

Wednesday • December 20

- 7:40 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Chapel)
- 9:00 a.m. J.O.Y. Group (The Study)
- 6:00 p.m. Advent Dinner (Gym)
- 7:00 p.m. Taizé
- 7:30 p.m. Kantorei (Balcony)

Thursday • December 21

- 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study (The Study)
- 7:40 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Chapel)
- Breakfast Club following (The Commons)

Friday • December 22

- 7:40 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Chapel)

Saturday • December 23

No 5:30 p.m. service

Sunday • December 24 Christmas Eve

No 8:30 or 11:00 a.m. services

- 4:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols
- 7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist

You can prepare for Christmas Day worship by reading:

Isaiah 52:7-10

Hebrews 1:1-6

John 1:1-14

Christmas Poinsettias

As we look toward Christmas and bringing flowers into our space, we invite you to consider a donation toward our Christmas Flower Fund. If you wish to contribute, please complete the bottom portion of this notice and place it, along with your check made payable to St. John Lutheran Church, in your pre-printed Christmas Poinsettias offering envelope or in the beige envelope found in the pews and mark it "Christmas Flowers." You may place the envelope in the offering pouch or drop it by the church office.

I/We would like to donate toward the Christmas Flower Fund

Name (please print) _____

Occasion (if you wish) _____

Phone _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____



Christmas Sharing 2017

“Pray For Our Family”

Perhaps you noticed an unfamiliar name among the families we've been praying for these last few weeks. One of the Christmas Sharing families requested prayers. We may not know what the family's burdens are, but our good and gracious Heavenly Father does. He will sort it out. He knows the vision impaired single Dad raising a daughter; the single Mom juggling two jobs while raising two sons. He knows the families making a new home in a strange land having fled persecution in their homeland. He knows those struggling with the press of life. We invite them to come with their burdens—some obvious, others not so much. Here they discover a place to relax for a bit and soak up a welcoming warmth that makes some reluctant to leave. It is love in action providing the warmth. It is your children who say helping with Christmas Sharing is their favorite thing to do. It is you asking, “What do you need?” and then providing it. It is the men carrying out food boxes for our invited guests. It is delivering food boxes to those unable to come. It is you talking with a Dad while his wife shops. It is offering cookies and hot chocolate to strangers, or watching children playing with their new found toys. You smiled. They smiled back. You chat with our guests and help them

find what they need. The sound of many languages floats through the air, yet it isn't noisy. People move from room to room, yet there's no rushing. They come out of need. You come out of love, wanting to serve. They are the guests—you the servants. They returned home carrying with them the warmth of joy and love.

You touched the lives of more than 740 people. The welcoming warmth, love and caring atmosphere experienced within these walls went home with each of the 156 families who came through our doors. Once again, by God's grace, we were able to demonstrate to the invited families and the community at large, what happens when gratitude for what God has given us—salvation through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ—overflows into acts of love and mercy toward others. Reflecting God's love will radiate throughout the year.

It takes many acts—large and small, known and unknown—to make Christmas Sharing happen. Some contribute food or clothing; others contribute paper products or toys. Some contribute their time; others contribute financially. This year more than 200 people gave of their time. Thanks to all who contributed in any manner.

A special note of thanks to:

- Christmas Sharing Committee—Jean Babchak, Kathy Bytner, Marilyn Hess, and Dave Richardt for their commitment to the project and their willingness to serve.
- Sean Hannon, Store Director of Mariano's in Wheaton, for the donation of grocery bags. Daniel Pacheo, manager of Aldi's in Carol Stream for his assistance with the food purchased.
- All who came out to help load and transport the food purchased.
- Gretchen Scheel, Val Gaede and the children attending Pastor Chats for gluing labels on the many grocery bags. Also the volunteers who distributed the bags after worship services.
- Our Sunday school teachers and students for giving up their classrooms.
- The confirmation class, parents, sponsors and leaders for giving vitality to Saturday's clean up after the event.

- Steve Chester for transporting clothes racks to and from Trinity Episcopal; for donating most of a day to pick up the public school's donations in the morning and then to pick up and distribute the Fellows boxes to six of the host churches in the evening. And all those who assisted with the loading and unloading his trailer.
- Joshua Dunn for sharing his photography skills.
- Our Preschool students for the warm hats, mittens, and scarves and for helping sort food.
- Rachel Burrell who used her skills to contact the 65 Burmese families invited; Wheaton College students, David Wagstaffe and Ella Micola who shared their gift of language working as Spanish translators and Bob Shuster for enlisting their assistance.
- Katie Licht and her helpers for hosting the hospitality corner. All the cookie bakers for the abundance of homemade goodies. Bill Schewe for playing Christmas music.
- All who helped fulfill families' special requests, especially Anna Piro, and her mom, Norma, who acted as personal shoppers for Christmas Sharing.
- Everyone who helped with the initial set up, the many hours of sorting the food and clothing donations, especially all who worked Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and most especially families who came for the Family Service Night.
- All who assisted during the event itself, especially Craig Quinte, Jean Babchak, and their crew for smoothly managing the food room; all who helped load our guests' food boxes and selections, especially Beverly and Tom Hecht and Jim Zeigler for overseeing activities in The Commons; all who provided families transportation; Emalee Stellwagen for delivering food boxes to the families unable to attend; and all who came to help clean up on Saturday afternoon.
- A special thanks to all parents who brought their children to make this a family servant event.
- Pastor Bruzek, Pastor Nelson, Pastor Buchs and Vicar Ralston for their enthusiastic support and direction.

Christmas Sharing began 48 years ago when a school teacher and school social worker pooled resources to help seven needy families. This year, eight area host congregations served more than 920 families. The guest family names come primarily from the Wheaton-Warrenville public schools.

This is St. John's 17th year as a host congregation. Each of the 156 families who came through our doors left with toys for the children, clothing they personally selected, linens and other household items, and a box of food to feed their family for a

week. Thanks to your generous contributions there was more than enough for all—a true blessing. All will be used. The clothing is going to Pacific Gardens Mission in Chicago. All food boxes were distributed.

I give thanks to God for all of you and pray you will continue to let God have good use of you. Come join the fun next year, we have plenty of room.

*A Blessed Christmas and New Year to you all,
Carol Hoelter
Christmas Sharing Coordinator*