



The Voice



December 2017

NOTES

John and I are so touched by the lovely ornaments and contributions to our first Christmas. As we approach the holidays now, I am so excited that we have these pieces to get started with. They are so unique, fun, and special. John and I have truly been blessed by the generosity of your congregation. The support has meant so much to us as we start this new chapter in our lives. We will treasure every ornament always!!!

*Wishing you and everyone the best,
Emily and John*

To all my friends and church family of St. John's, First of all, thank you so much for keeping me and my family in your prayers during this most difficult health setback. To those of you who sent cards, thank you for your kindness. To Pastor Nierman, thank you for all the visits to the hospital; you saw me at my worst, and our prayers together were so needed. I'm told I have a long road ahead, but I'm moving in the right direction. Sincerely,
Kathie Molesky

St. John's Congregation,
Thank you for the cards and care packages. I stay busy with mostly work, taking some courses through the education center and working on my scuba diving certification. Please pray for the men and women serving up north. They are sacrificing so much. I work with a great team, and we get along well together. See you all soon.
In His name,
SFC Osterman

Member Spotlight: Jim Larson



Jim Larson was born December 24, 1944 in Dayton, Ohio. When he was five years old, his family began attending Westwood Lutheran Church where he was confirmed in the eighth grade. He and his family moved to Vandalia the following year and began

attending church there, but Jim continued to attend Westwood as well. Jim graduated from Vandalia High School in 1963 and enlisted in the Navy.

A few years after returning home from the Navy, Jim met his wife, Linda, in economics class at Sinclair in 1969, but they didn't start dating until 1971 when they ran into each other at Wright State. In 1972, while they were still dating, Jim decided to hitchhike around the country to visit friends. He was gone for about four months! Upon returning to Dayton from his trip, Jim took a job at Siebenthaler's Nursery. He and Linda were married at Linda's church, Otterbein United Methodist, in Dayton, on April 7, 1973.

In 1974, his uncle knew Jim liked working at Siebenthaler's, and told him he saw a greenhouse for sale in Covington. Jim and Linda decided to buy the greenhouse and opened Larson's Garden Center. They moved to Covington where their daughter, Kate, was born in 1977 and their son, David, in 1979.

In 1979, Jim went to work for Stanley as a quality control manager for the garage door opener company. After about five years, a sales territory opened up, and Jim took it. Until his retirement in 2000, Jim was on the road as a salesman quite often.

It was around 1982 when Jim and Linda found themselves at St. John's looking for a church for their family. Jim says that from the moment they walked in, they felt like they were home. At the time, Lynn Williamson was the pastor, and he was very influential in their choice. David and Kate were both baptized on July 4th of that year.

Over the years, Jim became involved in many activities. He has taught Sunday School, participated in the choir, church council, Fort Rowdy, Fastnacht, decorating the church, and served as lector and assisting minister.

In 2013, Jim suffered from an optical neuropathy where he lost more than half his eyesight. Thanks to the prayers of the congregation and the grace of God, some of Jim's eyesight has returned! Jim says he loves his church, and he just wants to see it thrive.

PRAYER LIST

HOSPITALIZED, RECOVERING AT HOME, and OTHER PRAYER CONCERNS

Ruth Subler	Phyllis Drieling	Marge McKinney
Charlie Horman	Kathie Molesky	Mary Sampson
Jim Perry	Leon Hollopeter	Roger Colby
Jack Besecker	Erica Hollopeter	Judy Fletcher
Sally Griffin	Linda Larson	The Flory Family

IN EXTENDED CARE and SHUT-INS

Nola Hines
Viola Beaver
Art Wehneman (CCC- rehab)
Bill & Francis Leistner (Brookdale-Troy)

Linda Morrow (Cincinnati)
Bill McKibben (CCC- rehab)

FRIENDS & RELATIVES OF MEMBERS

Kennedy Kraft (granddaughter of MaryAnn Francis)
Phillip Connell (son-in-law of Viola Beaver)
Mary Colby (mother of Roger Colby)
Owen Gauntt (friend of Dawn Flory)
Ethel Besecker (friend of Colbys)
Linda Davis (wife of Fred Davis)
Mike Simon (friend of Jim Perry)
Joyce Gilbert (friend of Jim Perry)
Nelson Dohm (friend of Jim Perry)
Glen Gowen (friend of Belinda Perry)
Thelma Archer (friend of Jim Perry)
Tammy Elliott-Geyle (former member)
Joan Will (cancer-aunt of Laura Schmidt)
Mary Littlejohn (friend of Jim Perry)
Marilyn Helke (friend of Colbys)
Larry Laub (friend of Jim Perry)
Fran Maynard (friend of Colbys)
Shirley Sheffer (friend of Dawn Flory)
Joel Miller (Connie Adams' brother-in-law)
Elizabeth A. Nierman (Peace Corps, in Ukraine)
Donna F. Sowders (cancer)
Neil Stackhouse (cancer)
Lester Smith (friend of Jim Perry)
Bridget Simon (friend of Jim Perry)
George T. Burelison (friend of Jim Perry)
Andrew Purvis (grandson of Pattie Perry)
Joanne Schmidt (mother of Jim Schmidt)
Jesse Slankas (cancer, nephew of Joey Armstrong)
Leslie Slankas (sister of Joey Armstrong)
Kenton Stacy (combat wounded, in VA Hospital, San Antonio, TX-
grandson of Wanda Stacy)



FAMILY & FRIENDS IN THE ARMED FORCES

Troy Cron- grandson of Phil & Linda Iddings
Brandon Moyer – Navy, in Washington state
Jon Osterman- Army, Middle East
Cory Purvis- Army, at Ft. Bragg, NC (Pattie Perry's grandson)
LTJG Mary Strade-Ships Gnnr- USS John C. Stennis (sister of Laura Schmidt)

SCRIPTURE FOR SUNDAYS IN



522 Sunday, December 3, 2017

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 (7)
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

Sunday, December 10, 2017

First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 (13)
Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-15a
Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

Sunday, December 17, 2017

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm: Psalm 126 (3) or
Luke 1:46b-55 (52)
Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sunday, December 24, 2017

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Psalm: Luke 1:46b-55 (52) or
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 (1)
Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27
Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Christmas Eve, December 24, 2017

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm: Psalm 96 (11)
Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14
Gospel: Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Christmas Day, December 25, 2017

First Reading: Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm: Psalm 98 (3)
Second Reading: Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]
Gospel: John 1:1-14

Happy Birthday

3 - Gloria Hahn	18- Erica Hollopeter
4 - John Mutzner	21- Betty Hollopeter
10- Linda Morrow	22- John Longenecker
13- Ted Davis	23- Brittany Stacy
15- Helen Kellar	24- Jim Larson
16- Richard Hahn	25- Roger Colby
18- Carol Forsythe	



THE WONDER OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas, December 25th, is just around the corner. We once again celebrate one of the great mysteries of the Christian Church, that Jesus is of the same substance as God the Father and of the same substance as we human beings. This is so important because only the humanity that Jesus took on could be saved, and only God can save us. Therefore, our savior must be truly human and truly divine.

Other solutions to the puzzle have been proposed and rejected by the Church. 1) Some proposed that Jesus was only a human being, but a human being specially anointed by the Holy Spirit like the prophets in the Old Testament. This view stressed the humanity of Jesus but ignored his divinity. Colossians 1:15-20 makes clear the supremacy of Christ in the universe and in the Church. 2) Some proposed that Jesus seemed to be human but was really only God. This view stressed the divinity of Jesus, but ignored his humanity. Philippians 2:5-11 is an ancient Christian hymn that Paul quoted. It makes clear that Jesus is pre-existent and divine, yet became human in order to rescue us. 3) A third group tried to steer a middle course between these two extremes. They said that Jesus was not divine, but was supreme among all of the creatures that God created. This view sees Jesus as neither divine nor human. The great prologue to the Gospel of John (John 1:1-18) makes clear that Jesus was eternal with God the Father (John 1:1-5) and then, also, became human for our sake (John 1:14).

The Council of Chalcedon (451 AD) debated the identity of Christ and then rejected all three of these approaches as being too simple. It strongly affirmed a great paradox, that Jesus Christ is completely human (Luke 1:26-31) and completely divine (Luke 1:35). The ancient Church theologian, Origen, was quoted often by Luther in order to make an accessible picture of the two natures of Christ. As heat permeates steel, so the eternal Word (Christ before he took on our humanity) has assumed a human nature and completely filled it with divine light and life. This is the great wonder of Christmas.

In His Service,
Pastor Nierman



“For it is good to be children sometimes,
and never better than at Christmas,
when its mighty Founder was a child
Himself.”

— Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*



TROY — Eric Brian Flory, age 48, of Troy, passed away Wednesday, November 1, 2017, at Upper Valley Medical Center, Troy, OH.

He was born June 18, 1969 in Hagerstown, MD to Leah (Mounce) Flory of MD and the late Donald R. Flory.

In addition to his mother, Eric is survived by his wife of 26 years: Dawn M. (McKibben) Flory; children: Kaitlyn Flory, Meredith Flory, Landon Flory, and Jaiden Flory, all of Troy; sisters: Jennifer (Tim) Fuss of MD and Alice (John) Landino of MI; mother-in-law and father-in-law: Billy and Betty McKibben of Covington, OH; sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law: Christa and Ray Burton of Troy and Patrick and Violet McKibben of Troy; nieces and nephews: Bethany, Rachel, Demir, Meghan, Renee, Bryant, Blake, and Madison. Eric was preceded in death by his father.

Eric received his MBA from the University of Dayton. He had worked at Hobart Bros., in Troy, Vernay in Yellow Springs, Nitto in Piqua, and most recently at Datwyler in Vandalia.

Eric was a member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Covington; he was the President of Miami County SAY Soccer and a P.L.U.S. TEAM advisor.



“Ever feel guilty that you’re helping distort the true meaning of Christmas?”

SOCIAL MINISTRY

We will be assembling Christmas Baskets for the shut-ins on Saturday, December 9th and ask for the congregation's help in delivering them on Sunday, December 10th. If you have any questions or would like to make a donation or a monetary contribution for this purpose, please contact one of the committee members: Kris Davis, Ann Horman, or Betty Hollopeter. Please have your donation or monetary contribution to us by December 3rd so that we will have ample time to make the necessary purchases. Thank you for your help in funding and donating to this worthwhile cause.

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION SUNDAY

The honor of your presence is requested on
Sunday, December 17th, 2017
when we celebrate Pastor Nierman's
15th anniversary at St. John's.



This will be a great event for our church as the Bishop of the Southern Ohio synod, the Rev. Suzanne Dillahunt, will worship with us and deliver the sermon.

Pastor Nierman's 15 years of service makes him the longest-tenured pastor in our church's history. We're pleased that Bishop Dillahunt, whom we remember as a long-time friend of our church, will be able to share in our celebration.

Following the service, we will break bread together with a fully catered lunch in the fellowship hall; no need to bring a thing—just a healthy appetite! We encourage everyone to make time in their busy December schedules to attend this important event for our church.

Mascara Brushes Needed

If you wear makeup, you probably go through a few tubes a year and throw them out when you're done: mascara wand and all. But, before you pitch your used-up tubes, unscrew the cap and save the mascara wand. These wands can be cleaned and sterilized and then put to an adorable new use. **You see,**



mascara wands are a key ingredient for saving wild animals! Lots of wildlife organizations use sterile mascara wands to help nurture the tiny creatures they care for. You might not have considered it, but those little bristly brushes that work so well on eyelashes also have an incredible

impact on the fur of vulnerable, little wild animals. **They could also use baby blanket, baby bottles, flannel or fleece material, and towels.** If you have any of these items you would like to donate, please give them to Linda Catterlin.

Dinner and a Mission Results

Here were the organizations with the most "votes":

- Local - Miami County Recovery Council
- State - Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Ohio
- National - Lutheran Disaster Response
- International - ELCA World Hunger

Youth!

The St. John's Ewe-th are at it again, and you won't want to miss the annual Christmas program on December 10th during the service featuring angels, shepherds, and **talking sheep!** We will have a "Happy Birthday, Jesus" party with birthday cake immediately after the service.



Christmas program rehearsal reminder:

December 3rd at 9 am and 11 am

December 9th to be determined

December 10th Dress rehearsal at 8:45 am

On December 3rd, youth and their families are invited to the Cinemark theatre to watch The Star movie.

Thank you to all who helped make this year's Skating Party a rolling success! A special thank you to Sandy Longenecker and Jackie Kiehl for baking our cookies! See you next year!!



Crockpot Shredded Chicken

from Marjorie Mutzner

Put 2 or 3 large chicken breasts in crockpot. Do not add water. Put lid on to collect meat juice. Cook until done.

Remove and shred. (I put the cooked hot meat in a stand mixer and beat slightly to shred.) Return meat to crockpot, which should have a small amount of juice left in pot. Add 8 oz. cream cheese and one envelope of dry original ranch dressing. Cook on low for an hour.

Stir. Mixture is ready to serve hot or cold. For the full large crockpot, I used 13 chicken breasts, 4 cream cheese blocks, and 4 ranch dressing envelopes.



Briana King and Sandy Longenecker will be collecting donations for Pastor Nierman's Christmas gift.