

St Olaf Lutheran Church  
239 North 11th Street  
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Nonprofit Org  
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Fort Dodge, IA

To:

# The Visitor Newsletter

## December 2023



**Mission Statement: We at Saint Olaf Lutheran Church exist to  
Worship, Proclaim, Serve God and Teach His Word.**

***Deadline for the articles for the visitor  
newsletter is the 15th of every month.***

### **Worship Schedule**

#### **Sundays**

9 am Traditional  
10 am Fellowship  
11 am Contemporary

#### **Wednesdays**

6 pm

Sunday services live streamed  
on our Facebook page:  
St. Olaf Lutheran Church, ELCA  
and  
[www.stolaffd.com](http://www.stolaffd.com)

10:30 am 1400 KVFD AM

#### **Office Hours**

Mon - Thurs  
8:30 - 4:30 PM

EMILY + JOSEPH



Thank You  
*For being part of our day!*

# Note From The Pastor



## Waiting in the Dark

*Wait for the Lord, be strong and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!  
(Psalm 27:14)*

Two summers ago, Mindy and I went to Alaska and Canada and thoroughly enjoyed the experience of nature/God's country and all of its pristine beauty. It's a unique experience to be in a place and time where it is always light out. On the flip side, in the winter it is pretty much dark all the time. I asked a native of the Canadian wilderness, "How do you manage living in the darkness for several months out of the year?" Her answer was that she keeps busy with chores and all of the things necessary to survive in the wilderness and looks forward to when the light will return.

I do not like waiting! Waiting for the stop light to turn green, the slow moving car in front of me, long checkout lines, waiting rooms, a package to arrive, back pain to go away . . . !!!

So what do you do during times of waiting? Scream, cry, read a book, check out social media on your phone, binge watch TV shows on Netflix . . . ?

At a First Call Pastors meeting the Western Iowa Synod Mental Counselor guided us through a, "Mindfulness" exercise that helps you in times of stress. It involves several deep breaths in and out as you focus on the presence. What is causing you stress, physically and mentally? Gradually give that stress to God as you trust in his presence.

Jesus knows your pain better than anyone because he died an excruciating, humiliating death on a cross for you. Lift up prayers to Jesus. Read daily Advent devotions or watch them on social media. Pray for those you love and those you wish would stay out of your way. Give thanks to the creator of the universe who shines his light in the dark.

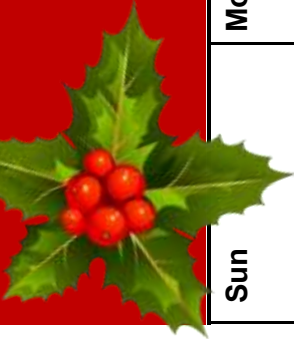
May you be filled with hope, joy, and peace as you wait for Jesus in the dark.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Jim



# December 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30		1	2
<b>3</b> 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship 1:30 pm Gunderson Angel Service	<b>4</b> 1pm Lifeworks 6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	<b>5</b> 9am OLES 5:20 Choir Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	<b>6</b> 8am Better Choices IGNITE 5:15-7pm Worship 6pm HS Youth 7-8pm	<b>7</b> 4:30 Bells	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	<b>11</b> 1pm Lifeworks 5:20 Choir 6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	<b>12</b> 12 pm OWLS (RSVP) 6pm Committee 7pm Council Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	<b>13</b> 8am Better Choices IGNITE 5:15-7pm Worship 6pm HS Youth 7-8pm	<b>14</b> 4:30 Bells	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 9am and 11am Special worship services focused on Lessons and Carols.	<b>18</b> 1pm Lifeworks 6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	<b>19</b> 9am OLES 5:20 Choir Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	<b>20</b> 8am Better Choices 5:15 IGNITE Christmas Party 7pm Children's Prog. HS Youth 7-8pm	<b>21</b> 1:30 Peace Circle 4:30 Bells	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 10am Worship Service - with Holy Communion 7pm Candlelighting	<b>25</b> Office Closed	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 8am Better Choices NO IGNITE NO HS YOUTH	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 10am Lessons & Carols						



Charles Sandvig	12/1
Julianne Springer	12/1
Nolan Lumsden	12/2
Nathan Henricks	12/3
Marlene Kalvig	12/4
Collin Cook	12/5
Eric Larson	12/5
Andrew Dutcher	12/6
Madelyn Dutcher	12/6
Cricket Pederson	12/7
Dionshay Altman-Miller	12/8
Joan Newsum	12/8
Anne Zwink	12/10
Jackie Pederson	12/11
Olivia Clausen	12/12
Grace Felch	12/12
Susan Linn	12/12
Molly Matthes	12/12
Lynda Mumm	12/12
Heather Oppedahl	12/14
JoLynn Sunken	12/14

Timothy Kalvig	12/15
Shirley Pederson	12/16
Jane Zenor	12/16
Jamie Haden	12/19
Lainey Ulstad	12/20
Max Morud	12/21
Erin Rial	12/21
Peggi Fortune	12/22
Olivia Ruiz	12/22
Jonathan Lockner	12/24
Holly Van Heel	12/24
Brian Pattison	12/25
Olyvia Selby	12/25
Shirlee Trent	12/26
Boston Gordon	12/27
Merill Mason	12/28
Jack Tjaden	12/28
Doris Williams	12/28
Sherri Josephson	12/29
Mallory Strutzenberg	12/29
Kennedy Bailey	12/30
Morgan Bowman	12/30
Dillon Urelus	12/31



# CONFIRMATION

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Alyssa Durschmidt,  
Andrew Horrell and  
Breeanna Kalvig were  
confirmed on  
October 29.



# TRUNK OR TREAT



The Life & Growth  
Committee sponsored  
this fun event!



It was held on  
Sunday, October 29.

## IGNITE ORANGE PARTY

We held our Orange Party on October 25.

The kids came decked out in the color orange or their Halloween costumes. They enjoyed eating orange food for dinner and painted orange pumpkins. Fun and games as well as treats were on the agenda!



## BIBLE PRESENTATION

On November 15 we had our Bible presentation and the following 3rd graders received their bibles.

Jianna Alvarez, Tess Feddersen, Willie Williams, Lincoln Pearson, Gracyn Walker, Kamdyn Ashbrook & Ember Fair.



## ALL SAINTS' DAY

On November 1 & 5 we lit candles for those who were baptized and to remember our saints who have gone before us.



# CONFIRMATION RETREAT

The 7th & 8th grade confirmation kids had a great time up in Ingham Okoboji for their Confirmation retreat. Pastor Jim and Alison O'Brien chaperoned the event.





## LOOKING AHEAD

### December

December 24 - One morning service at 10 a.m.  
One Christmas Eve service at night: 7 p.m.

December 26 - Office is closed

December 27 - No Ignite or HS Youth

December 31 - One service Sunday at 10 a.m.  
Lessons & Carols

### January

January 1 - Office is closed

## DAYCARE

Progress is continuing, renovations are moving forward. Flooring, ceiling grids, and paint have been started on the upper level. There has been a temporary heat run to keep the fellowship hall warm while we wait for the main heat unit to be completed. Sidewalks up front for an emergency exit are in, our back door now has a handicap-accessible ramp and a new sidewalk has been poured leading to the playground. The playground is installed and shade structures are up. The fencing is going up this week!! Exciting things are happening!! I am learning to look less because I see more progress when I stop peeking lol. We are still praying for a February opening!! The waitlist has been officially opened as of 11/16. Please contact me via my cell number at 515-227-8801 or through the Kingdom Kids of St. Olaf Facebook page if you would like on the waitlist!

- Kathy

## BOOK CLUB

The St. Olaf Book Club will meet on Monday, December 11 at 1:30 p.m. in the Gather Room. Our book for the month is *The Secret Life of Albert Entwistle* by Matt Cain. The main character is a newly retired 65 year old man living in a small English town who has no family, friends, or hobbies. The book is described as an uplifting and unforgettable story of second chances. Everyone is invited to attend book club. Books are available at the church to check out.

### OLES

OLES meetings are on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 9 a.m. Join them December 5 and 19 for coffee and fellowship.

Please feel free to join them, they only meet twice a month.



### SEW SISTERS



**We need your help and talents cutting and sewing.**

If you are interested, please call Nancy Hamilton at (515) 570-1731.

### ATTENTION OWLS

The OWLS will meet on Tuesday, December 12, at noon. Lunch will be catered and has been provided by a very generous anonymous donor. Entertainment will be the "Generations of Love" music group. Please RSVP to Linda Junkman @ 515-955-6098 by Dec 8 if you will be attending. Snow date is Wednesday, December 13. We hope to see everyone attend!

**OLDER WISER LUTHERANS**



### PEACE CIRCLE

The next meeting will be  
**Thursday, December 21 @ 1:30 p.m.**  
Judy Lang will be leading Bible Study.  
Sela Bryhne will be bringing treats.  
Please bring a dozen cookies  
that we be delivering to Lotus.

We will also be collecting items to donate to Lotus.  
Watch for that information to follow in the announcements.

**BIBLE  
STUDY**

## IGNITE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

### Merry Christmas Everyone!

Kids Programs, Shopping, wrapping presents, Singing, family dinner, baking goodies, and most importantly going to Church together. Some highlights I think about this time of the year. Traditions are so important to have in our lives. It's something to look forward to knowing it brings us Joy and Smiles. What do you look forward to during Christmas? What are your Family Traditions? Can't wait to hear about them during our Ignite time together.

#### Pre-School-6th Graders

Dec 6: Christmas Program Practice  
Dec 13: Christmas Program Practice  
Dec 20: Christmas Party  
Dec 27: No Ignite

#### High School Youth:

Dec 6: Life Changes  
Dec 13: Traditions/Gingerbread houses  
Dec 20: Meet at 5:15 p.m. for Christmas Party  
Dec 27: No Ignite

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!  
Heather

## IGNITE THANKSGIVING

In November we had our Thanksgiving Blessing Service. There was a special turkey and the trimmings meal on Wednesday, November 15. We encouraged all families to come, eat and worship together.



## POINTSETTIA ORDERS

If you would like to order a poinsettia for Christmas time at the church they will be \$13 and you can choose red or white. The church will be placing the order at noon on December 8. Please stop into the church to place and pay for your order before then.



## CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Children's Christmas program will be Wednesday, December 20, and will follow the meal from 5:15-6:00 p.m.

Please bring a two dozen cookies for the exchange following the service.

Please have your children wear their Christmas Best for the program.

We also encourage you to join us for our Christmas Eve services. We are offering a service at 10 am and a candlelight service at 7 pm.



## JIVE FOR FIVE

A Concert of Advent & Christmas Music  
FREE and open to the public!

Jive For Five, Brass Quintet and Jason Swedlund, Organ  
Tuesday, December 19, 2023. at 7:00 p.m.

St. Olaf Lutheran Church, 239 N 11th Street, Fort Dodge, Iowa

This concert is sponsored by the St. Olaf Lutheran Church Foundation.



## SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

### Christmas Donations Project 2022

The Social Concerns Committee has decided to collect donations for the **DSOC** (Domestic/Sexual Assault Outreach Center) this December. If you would like to contribute please purchase or gather any items below and drop them off in front of the office on or before December 19. Please label them DSOC. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

DSAOC is a crisis based shelter that offers a host of assistance to victims and their children fleeing domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, stalking and violent crimes. DSAOC shelter services are available 24/7, 365 days a year. Services within the shelter are all free of charge, confidential and supports the survivor's ability to once again control their own life.

#### SHELTER NEEDS

- Disinfectant Wipes
- Dish Soap & Laundry Soap & Dryer Sheets
- Cleaning Supplies
- Dishwasher Pods
- Storage/Freezer Bags
- Aluminum Foil & Plastic Wrap
- Bath Towels (hand towels & washcloths)
- Kitchen Towels/Washcloths
- Twin Size Sheet Sets & Pillows
- Fragrance Free Items
- Coffee, Filters, Creamer

#### PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Body Wash/Soap

#### PAPER PRODUCTS

- Paper Towels
- Paper Plates
- Napkins
- Plastic/Styrofoam Cups
- Kleenex
- Toilet Paper

#### BABY NEEDS

- Sippy Cups
- Diapers (size 5-6)
- Baby Wipes
- Baby Bottles
- Baby Shampoo
- Baby Lotion

#### OTHER ITEMS

- Batteries
- Lightbulbs
- Gas Cards
- Menards Gift Card (maintenance)
- Nonperishable Snacks
- School Supplies
- Food/Drinks



# ST. OLAF FOUNDATION

December 2023

This has been a busy and thought-provoking year for the St. Olaf foundation members. Supporting the Capital Campaign was a priority for this group but how to do so to maximize the contribution and abide within the by-laws of the foundation presented a challenge. The Lord does not always make things easy but he does provide a way. After much spirited discussion and review, the group was guided to a positive resolution. Discussion and approval of grants for the remainder of the year seemed to come easy after this!

Along with scholarships and the Capital Campaign contribution the foundation has supported additional items. The following are just a few of the approved grants: Feed My Starving Children Meal Packing, improvements and upgrades to the St. Olaf sound system, the SALT center at First Baptist Church, and the food pantry at the Salvation Army.

The foundation members appreciate your continued support through contributions both monetary and thoughts. We are truly blessed at St. Olaf to serve the Lord by serving others.

Laurel Puls



## ST. OLAF PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Who are the shawls for? Anyone who is in need of prayer, hope, comfort, and love may have a shawl. For members of St. Olaf and beyond. The ladies have been working hard, so there is a lovely variety of beautiful shawls available.

If you know of anyone who would be blessed by a prayer shawl or could use one your self, please contact Carole Peters at (515)576-2209 H or (515)408-2209 C. She will assist you to find just the right prayer shawl to be a blessing in any situation. Thank you for your important part in this St. Olaf ministry.



December 2023

## Merry Christmas from LSI!

At LSI, we recognize that the holiday season can be a challenging time for many, especially for the populations we serve throughout the year.

We know parents who feel hopeless, with few resources to raise their young children. We know adults with disabilities who feel voiceless, with no support system or connection to their community. We know immigrants and refugees working to become U.S. citizens, with little community support or help along the way. We know teens who are aging out of foster care, fearing they will never have a forever home.

In the spirit of giving, the spirit of love, and the spirit of working together, let us stand with them and lift them up this Christmas season.

As we reflect on the past year, we thank you — our generous supporters and community partners — for stepping up to give and help the people LSI is privileged to serve. We are grateful for your contribution in bringing the light of Christ to your neighbors who rely on these essential services.

LSI wishes you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

LSI's annual matching gift campaign is currently active, and those making a new or increased financial gift can double their impact through the end of the year. If you would like to learn more about how you can support Iowa children and families, contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Senior Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at [Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org](mailto:Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org) or 563-676-2065.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at [LSIowa.org](http://LSIowa.org) and [Facebook.com/LSI.Iowa](https://Facebook.com/LSI.Iowa).



## A MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS CUPBOARD



Fall has officially arrived with this cold weather. With that we start to look forward to our holiday seasons. The Lord's Cupboard has been very busy again in 2023. We give food to around 1,000 people every month. We couldn't do it without the generosity of our community. We are so grateful for all your support: dry good donations, garden donations, plastic bags, toiletries, personal hygiene items, volunteering your time and talents and monetary donations.

We try to have available items that are a holiday treat because sometimes people can't afford to purchase these extras. We won't be purchasing turkeys but will have hams and pork loins available for meat choices. If people want to donate meat, we will gladly accept it as long as it is still in its original packaging.

### For Christmas:

It has now become a tradition here at the Lord's Cupboard during the Christmas season to let clients pick between cake or cookie mix and then choose their favorite canned frosting. Please have the Christmas items delivered by December 11. If you are still receiving items after the date, please bring them in whenever you can. Clients will still be happy to take the holiday items.



## HEARTLAND HOPE AND HOMES

To the members and attendees of the congregation, we at Heartland Hope and Homes are searching for reliable volunteers that are feeling called to make a commitment to helping folks in our local area.

We are seeking store volunteers that can lift furniture, clean various items, and arrange products. Our HomeStore accepts donated items, and then recycles and resells them. With those proceeds, we do projects such as ramps, repairs, and renovations, in our Fort Dodge community, for those in need.

We are also seeking individuals who can go out and pick up furniture to bring back to the HomeStore.

Plus, we would ask for highly skilled volunteers who possess the ability to help with repairs, renovations, and building projects.

Lastly, monetary donations, or donations of home goods, and home building materials would be greatly appreciated at this time.

We believe our mission is a Christlike, hands-on experience for those looking for that type of servanthood. The sense of satisfaction derived from giving back is also a plus, thus creating a win/win for the individual, and the surrounding community.

Please consider donating your skills to this important Christian endeavor. You can make a difference in the lives of others!

You can contact us at: (515)576-4316, or stop by the HomeStore at 118 N. 12<sup>th</sup> St.

Sincerely,  
Shari Lehman – Development Officer – Heartland Hope and Homes  
and staff





# YOU ARE INVITED!

**BSA BIG GIVE LUNCHEON  
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023**

- CHI HEALTH CENTER | OMAHA, NE
- BEST WESTERN STARLITE | FORT DODGE, IA
- SOUTH SIOUX CITY MARRIOTT RIVERFRONT | SOUTH SIOUX CITY, NE
- LIFELONG LEARNING CENTER, NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE | NORFOLK, NE

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:**  
RETIRED ASTRONAUT CLAYTON ANDERSON  
"THE DREAM OF A LIFETIME"



← **SCAN TO REGISTER**



# Celebrate Advent



## WORSHIP

### ATTENDANCE

### Service Times

Day	Date	9:00	11:00	6:00	WEATHER	Totals
Wednesday	10/25	-	-	83	Cold	83
Sunday	10/29	113	46	-	Overcast &	159
Wednesday	11/1	-	-	82	Cold	82
Sunday	11/5	71	26	-	Cloudy, Nice	97
Wednesday	11/8	-	-	80	Cloudy, 55	80
Sunday	11/12	74	47	-	Nice & Sunny	121
Wednesday	11/15	-	-	80	Cloudy 55	80
Sunday	11/19	85	50	-	Nice	135
Wednesday	11/22	-	-	82		82
Sunday	11//26	83	51	-	20's, snow	134

## ST. OLAF LUTHERAN CHURCH— COUNCIL MEMBERS

Name/Position	Address	Email / Phone	Term Expiry
Carey Bligard	1744 Williams Dr.	515-570-4768 c	
President	Fort Dodge, IA 50501	bligard@me.com	2024
b. 7/25			
Brady Pearson	3043 Soldier Ridge Dr.	515-408-0327 c	
Vice President	Fort Dodge, IA 50501	515-576-2183 h	2024
b. 11/30		bpearsondc@gmail.com	
Pam Bygness	2410 235th Street	515-574-9395	
Treasurer	Ft. Dodge, Ia 50501	Pamela.bygness@gmail.com	2025
Erica Conley	22414 Theater Road	515-408-4113 c	
Secretary	Fort Dodge, IA 50501	econley@fdschools.org	2024
Doug Seltz	1553 Indiana Ave.	515-571-6712 c	
Property	Clare, IA 50524	515-546-6227 h	2024
b. 1/14		dseltz@wccta.net	
Linda Ulstad	1040 N 24 <sup>th</sup> Place	515-955-4038	
Christian Education	Fort Dodge, IA 50501	lulstad55@gmail.com	2024
Janet Meyne	1244 N 23rd Street	515-571-2678	
Worship and Music	Fort Dodge, IA 50501	jmeyne@gmail.com	2025
Kim Peimann	1175 Fox Ridge Rd.	515-570-8241 c	
Social Concerns	Fort Dodge, IA 50501	kpeimann@yahoo.com	2022
Jenni Szalat	1522 13th Ave N	5155717872	
Life and Growth	Fort Dodge, IA 50501	Jennifer.Szalat@unitypoint.org	2025
Chris Dutcher	20040 Sherri Lane	515-570-1514	
Youth	Fort Dodge, IA 50501		2025
Hailey Carstensen	1405 4th Ave N		
Youth Representative	Fort Dodge, IA 50501		2025
Juli Springer	1156 N 19th Street	jspringer@fdschools.org	
Long Range Planning	Fort Dodge, IA 50501		

**PASTORAL ACTS & STATISTICS**

**MONTHLY TREASURER'S REPORT**

Operating Balance 9/30/2023.....	99,942.25
<b>Receipts:</b>	
Offerings .....	\$112,324.42
Misc. Receipts .....	251,762.78
Total Receipts for October.....	<u>374,087.20</u>
<b>Disbursements:</b>	
Benevolence.....	0.00
Pastoral Ministry.....	25,396.08
Administration .....	9,165.98
Worship & Music .....	1,117.55
Christian Education .....	109.30
Our Church Home .....	6,608.45
Congregational Life .....	1,053.90
Youth Ministry- .....	2,034.98
Social Ministry .....	0.00
Stewardship .....	44.05
Previous Year Adjustments .....	0.00
Daycare.....	0.00
Building Improvements .....	21,233.08
Architect .....	1,149.12
Walsh & Assoc .....	0.00
Misc Campaign Expenses.....	620.50
Loan Repay – Foundation.....	1,000.00
Total disbursements for October .....	<u>69,532.99</u>
<b>Operating Balance 10/31/2023 .....</b>	<b>204,611.96</b>

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*Welcome to the Lord's Family*

*Lord Welcome into Your Kingdom*

*Isabelle Grace Flores 11/19/23*  
*Amelia Lyn Wells 11/26/23*  
*Daniel Michael Mericle 11/26/23*  
*Emmitt Joseph Mericle 11/26/23*

*Robert Breffle 10/26/23*  
*Delbert Estlund 10/27/23*  
*Pat Zeka 11/7/23*  
*Kermit Smith 11/10/23*



**CHURCH STATISTICS**

Weddings: 1  
Baptisms: 4  
Funerals: 4

# St. Olaf Staff

Pastor Emily Sauer (515) 230-2078  
Pastor Jim McColley (515) 571-4473  
Jade Bedel, *Office Manager* (515) 576-2103  
Sheri Morud, *Financial Manager*  
Jason Swedlund, *Organist & Choir Director*  
Matt Drees, *Contemp. Worship Coordinator*  
Ron Anderson, *Custodian*  
Linda Junkman, *Head Nursery Attendant*  
Carey Bligard, *Council President*  
Heather Oppedahl, *Youth Director*  
Jill Grindberg, *Ignite Director*  
Anna Miller, *Bell Choir/Wedding*  
Kathy Dencklau, *Daycare Director*

pastoremy@stolaffd.com  
pastorjim@stolaffd.com  
office@stolaffd.com  
sherimorud@gmail.com  
jcswedlund@gmail.com  
mdrees@fdschools.org  
ronaldanderson@live.com  
ljunkman@frontiernet.net  
bligard@me.com  
youth@stolaffd.com  
ignite@stolaffd.com  
office@stolaffd.com  
daycare@stolaffd.com

*A special thanks to our St. Olaf Visitor Newsletter Volunteers:*

*Melba Shelby  
Sandy Hess*

*Colleen Lynch  
Lucy Larson  
Vera Hartman*

*Eileen Carroll  
Rae Nanninga*

To the Visitor readers:

***Please let us know if your address or phone number has changed  
at 515-576-2103 or office@stolaffd.com***