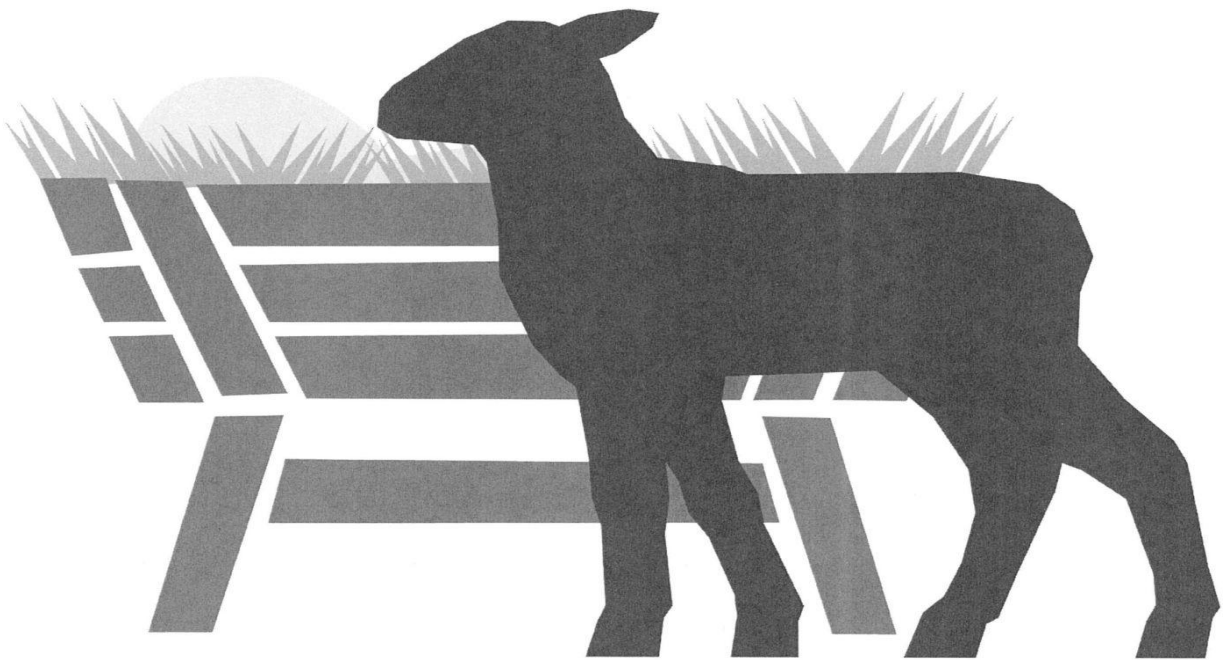


BORN
TO YOU ...
A
SAVIOR



December 14, 2025

Saint Thomas Lutheran

23801 Kelly Road, Eastpointe, Michigan 48021 - 586-772-3370

www.stl-eastpointe.org

Pastor - Rev. Dietrick Gladden – 248-719-2766 pastorgladden@stl-eastpointe.org

Specific Ministry Pastor - Rev. Richard A. VanBriggle, Deacon Don Cooley

Connecting Individuals to Jesus and to One Another

Educating Minds – Growing Faith – Serving People

We are here to serve our community. As you worship with us online, the Lord Jesus is at work, uniting us as friends and family. If you want to learn more about ministry in the community, go to www.stl-eastpointe.org, or like us on FaceBook. To get your questions answered more personally, contact the church office (586-772-3370) and ask for a pastor to call you.

Third Sunday in Advent

Joy: The Assurance of the Messiah

Prelude

Announcements and Attendance/Communion Registration



We would like to know you attended service today!

To record your attendance, you can scan this QR code with your phone's camera, it will take you to the web page/form for attendance. Fill out the form and hit the submit button.

Opening Hymn

"Arise, O Christian People"
(please rise on the last verse)

LSB 354

- 1 Arise, O Christian people! Prepare yourselves today;
Prepare to greet the Savior, Who takes your sins away.
To us by grace alone The truth and light were given;
The promised Lord from heaven To all the world is shown.
- 2 Prepare the way before Him; Prepare for Him the best.
Cast out what would offend Him, This great, this heav'nly guest.
Make straight, make plain the way: The lowly valleys raising,
The heights of pride abasing, His path all even lay.
- 3 The humble heart and lowly God raises up on high;
Beneath His feet in terror The haughty soul shall lie.
The heart sincere and right, That heeds God's invitation
And makes true preparation—It is the Lord's delight.
- 4 Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus; Turn not from me aside,
And help me to receive You This blessèd Adventtide.
From stall and manger low Come now to dwell within me;
I'll sing Your praises gladly And forth Your glory show.

We Gather Before the Throne of Grace

L: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

L: If the Lord our God kept a record of sins, who could stand before him?

C: But with Him there is forgiveness, therefore He is feared.

L: We are gathered in His presence to hear His Word, call upon Him in prayer, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us, therefore, first consider our unworthiness, and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot save ourselves. Together as God's people, let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and pray:

C: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

(silence for reflection and self-examination)

L: God has heard our cry. Immanuel is come. He has defeated our enemies, atoned for our sins, and authorized me to proclaim this good news to you: Your sins are forgiven, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

L: Let us pray: Almighty God, through John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, you once proclaimed salvation. Now grant that we may know this salvation

C: And serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives.

L: Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise

"Hark the Glad Sound"

LSB 349, vv. 1, 3

- 1 Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne And ev'ry voice a song.
- 3 He comes the broken heart to bind, The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace To enrich the humble poor.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sharing of Peace

L: The peace of the Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

(share the peace with one another then be seated)

Anthem

"Joy to the World"

M. L. Thompson

The Service of the Word

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance,

with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion

with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

(after the reading)

R: This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

New Testament Reading

James 5:7-11

Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

(after the reading)

R: This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel

(all rise)

Matthew 11:2-15

**C: (sung) Glory to the Father sing, Glory to the Son, our King,
 Glory to the Spirit be Now and through eternity.**

R: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew chapter 11.

C: Glory to you, O Lord,

When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, "'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.' Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

(after the reading)

R: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Nicene Creed

LSB, inside back cover

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen

(Please be seated)

Children's Sermon

Hymn of the Day

"Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding"

LSB 345, vv. 1-4
(tune LSB 691)

- 1 Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding! "Christ is near," we hear it say.
"Cast away the works of darkness, All you children of the day!"
- 2 Startled at the solemn warning, Let the earthbound soul arise;
Christ, its sun, all sloth dispelling, Shines upon the morning skies.
- 3 See, the Lamb, so long expected, Comes with pardon down from heav'n.
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow, One and all, to be forgiv'n;
- 4 So, when next He comes in glory And the world is wrapped in fear,
He will shield us with His mercy And with words of love draw near.

Sermon

"Blessed is the One: The Joy of Knowing Jesus is The One"

Matthew 11:2-15

Prayer of the Church

L: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.
(after each petition)

L: Lord in your mercy:

C: **Hear our prayer.**

L: O God, Your love invites us to rejoice in Your goodness. In every circumstance of life, teach us the joy that comes from knowing Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and eagerly expecting His gracious visitation; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen**

The Service of the Sacrament

"As we receive the True Body and Blood of our Lord, our faith is fed, our spirits are encouraged, and we are moved to share God's grace with the world."

[Because of the closeness of this sharing (and the concerns expressed in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29) we ask that those who have not been taught the faith at STL speak with a pastor or elder before communing.]

Preparation for the Sacrament

L: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

L: Assembled with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven, we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

C: (sung)

LSB 358, vv. 14, 15

**My heart for very joy must leap; My lips no more can silence keep.
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue That sweetest ancient cradlesong:**

**Glory to God in highest heav'n, Who unto us His Son has giv'n!
While angels sing with pious mirth A glad new year to all the earth.**

The Lord's Prayer

LSB back cover

L: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray,

C: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen**

Words of Institution

Pax Domini

L: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen

Entrance Hymn

“Welcome to Earth”

LSB 358, vv. 8, 13

Welcome to earth, O noble Guest, Through whom the sinful world is blest!
You came to share my misery That You might share Your joy with me.

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
A quiet chamber set apart For You to dwell within my heart.

Distribution of the Sacrament (Please be seated)

*Alcohol-free wine is available in the center of each individual cup tray.
Gluten-free host is available upon request from the host server.
If you are coming for a blessing, please cross your arms across your chest.*

Hymn during Distribution

Anthem

“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

B. Ingram

“Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness”

LSB 636 vv. 1, 2, 8

- 1 Soul, adorn yourself with gladness, Leave the gloomy haunts of sadness,
Come into the daylight's splendor, There with joy your praises render.
Bless the One whose grace unbounded This amazing banquet founded;
He, though heav'nly, high, and holy, Deigns to dwell with you most lowly.
- 2 Hasten as a bride to meet Him, And with loving rev'ence greet Him.
For with words of life immortal He is knocking at your portal.
Open wide the gates before Him, Saying, as you there adore Him:
Grant, Lord, that I now receive You, That I nevermore will leave You.
- 8 Jesus, bread of life, I pray You, Let me gladly here obey You.
By Your love I am invited, Be Your love with love requited;
By this Supper let me measure, Lord, how vast and deep love's treasure.
Through the gift of grace You give me As Your guest in heav'n receive me.

Text (st. 1): © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship. Text (sts. 2, 8): Public domain

“Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers”

LSB 515

- 1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers, And let your lights appear;
The evening is advancing, And darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising And soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; At midnight comes the cry.
- 2 The watchers on the mountain Proclaim the Bridegroom near;
Go forth as He approaches With alleluias clear.
The marriage feast is waiting; The gates wide open stand.
Arise, O heirs of glory; The Bridegroom is at hand.

3 The saints, who here in patience Their cross and suff'rings bore,
Shall live and reign forever When sorrow is no more.
Around the throne of glory The Lamb they shall behold;
In triumph cast before Him Their diadems of gold.

4 Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;
Arise, O Sun so longed for, O'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted, We plead, O Lord, to see
The day of earth's redemption That sets Your people free!

(please rise)

Post-Communion Canticle

"Christ Jesus, Lord and Savior Come"

LW 23, v.5
(tune LSB 341)

Christ Jesus, Lord and Savior, come, I open wide my heart, your home.
Oh, enter with your radiant grace, On my life's pattern shine your face,
And let your Holy Spirit guide To gracious vistas rich and wide.
Our God, we praise your name, Forevermore the same.

Post-Communion Collect

Benedicamus and Benediction

L: Let us bless the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

L: The Lord bless you ...

C: **Amen**

Sending Hymn

"Lord of Our Life"

LSB 659
(tune LSB 950)

- 1 Lord of our life and God of our salvation,
Star of our night and hope of ev'ry nation:
Hear and receive Your Church's supplication,
Lord God Almighty.
- 2 See round Your ark the hungry billows curling;
See how Your foes their banners are unfurling
And with great spite their fiery darts are hurling,
O Lord, preserve us.
- 3 Lord, be our light when worldly darkness veils us;
Lord, be our shield when earthly armor fails us;
And in the day when hell itself assails us,
Grant us Your peace, Lord:
- 4 Peace in our hearts, where sinful thoughts are raging,
Peace in Your Church, our troubled souls assuaging,
Peace when the world its endless war is waging,
Peace in Your heaven.



EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT THE STL MISSION There is a variety of ways to give your support to the mission of STL. For many the easiest is to simply mail in a check or drop your offering off at the church. If you prefer electronic giving, STL offers multiple options:

- Text "GIVE" to 1-586-800-2223
- Visit: www.stl-eastpointe.org and click on "Mission Support"
- Through your Pay Pal account
- Scan this Quick Response (QR) code

These will connect you to our on-line giving form, where you can have your mission support offering automatically taken from your checking account or use your credit or debit card (STL is charged extra fees for debit and credit card transactions). **You can even set up recurring giving with many of these options!** IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, OR DESIRE ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE (586-772-3370).

Upcoming Events:



(visit the web page or see the STL publications for more information)

Midweek Advent Worship on Wednesdays

At 7 p.m. on December 17th

Packing Holiday Food Baskets – December 19th – 5:30 p.m.

&

Distribution of Holiday Food Baskets

December 20th, starting at 10 a.m.

Christmas Eve Worship – 4:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship – 9:30 a.m.

New Years Eve Worship – 5:00 p.m.

Life Line Screening – January 26, 2026

Christmas Eve Plan now to attend the 4:00 pm Christmas Eve service at St. Thomas as the Kapelle and cast present, "Were You There On That Christmas Night?", a musical celebration that weaves scripture, favorite carols and new music into a beautiful pageant. Communion, candles, handbells and instrumentalists will add to this joyous celebration. All children in attendance will receive a special gift from the Wisemen. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

2026 Envelopes are available in the west hallway! Please stop by the table, print your name on the list next to the envelope # you are taking home. Information for electronic giving is printed in the worship folders. If you have any questions, contact Linda in the church office. **Please, do not use these envelopes until 2026!**

Patrons are needed to help defray the cost of the professional musicians hired to accompany the Kapelle and congregation at our Christmas Eve program. This year the Kapelle and cast will present, "Were You There On That Christmas Night?" by Lloyd Larson. If you would like to be a patron, please place your donation in an envelope marked "Patron for Kapelle" and place it in the offering box or bring it to the church office. Or you may donate electronically. Thank you for your support of the Kapelle as they edify the church through music in song.

Food Pantry Donations Needed for Christmas Baskets

Canned (Pull Tabs): Peaches, Pears, Pineapple, Chunky Soup

Boxed: Scalloped/Au Gratin Potatoes

Monetary donations also appreciated to purchase hams.

Tree of Warmth – We are putting together a warming tree with hats, gloves, and mittens for those that may need 1 can take 1. Can you help to fill the tree with any of these items? Please donate new items by placing them in the designated container in the west entrance. Thank You!

Life Line Screening – January 26th – Life Line Screening is the nation's leader in **Stroke and Cardiovascular Disease Risk** Screenings. There are 4 ways to book your appointment...Call 888-814-0466 and use promo code HSCA001, visit LLSA.SOCIAL/HSCA, text the word "circle" to 216-279-1607, or scan the QR code on the poster on the bulletin boards. The church office has 4 free screening vouchers, first come first served, call the office for more information.

Christmas Blessings from the Crusaders of Lutheran Northwest!

We have **two** Open House events coming up in January, so please join us and/or spread the word to any families you know who could benefit from a closer look at LHNW:

- **Wednesday, January 14, 7PM-8PM is TRANSFER PREVIEW NIGHT**, an informal Q&A with our Principal, Admissions Director & Athletic Director. Learn more about our school & the steps to a Spring or Fall transfer to Lutheran Northwest!
- **Wednesday, January 21, 7PM-8:30PM is 8TH GRADE INTRO NIGHT**, a program tailor-made for 8th grade families. Whether you've already been accepted at our school or are visiting for the very first time, we've got helpful information to share! (Note that 8th graders are also encouraged to sign up for our **HIGH SCHOOL PLACEMENT TEST on Saturday, 1/10.**)

Learn more about these and other upcoming events by visiting our website at www.LutheranNorthwest.com/events. Hope to see you at LHNW soon!

CEF Accounting Manager - Church Extension Fund, a ministry-based financial institution located in Ann Arbor, Michigan, seeks qualified candidates for the position of Accounting Manager. The position is responsible for a variety of accounting functions and maintaining the general accounting system for an entity with assets over \$250 Million. The individual will also complete financial reporting and is regularly engaged with the banking software system. The position is onsite and reports to the Vice President - Chief Financial Officer. A complete job description is available on CEF's website: www.churchextensionfund.com/news. Applicants should send a cover letter with resume no later than January 31, 2026, to Ms. Kris Nowak – Executive Assistant: via email at kris.nowak@mi-cef.org or via mail at Church Extension Fund, 3773 Geddes Rd, Ann Arbor, MI 48105.

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Watch services on Facebook or at www.stl-eastpointe.org – videotaping in progress during service

Our Confession of Faith

As members of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LC-MS), we subscribe to the three ecumenical creeds (Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian) and the Christian faith as confessed in the Book of Concord. This includes believing that:

- Jesus Christ is both true God and true man who died for our sins and rose again to save us.
- His body/blood are truly present in communion under the form of bread/wine (page 326).
- Communion is, among other things, an expression of doctrinal unity.
- Infant baptism is a Means of Grace through which God delivers one from sin and gives eternal salvation to all who believe (page 325 in Lutheran Service Book).

Weekly Worship with Communion - Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

Monday at 7:30 p.m.

"The Flock" for children and Cross†raining JC Style for youth

Faith Hope Love Gatherings - Sunday and throughout the week

Please Remember in Your Prayers this Week
December 21, 2025

In your prayers this week please remember:

- Those served by, and serving through, our Clothing Closet and Food Pantry ministries.
- Our pastoral call committee.
- Families that are torn apart by strife or conflict.
- Those who feel isolated or alone, along with those who suffer with depression.
- Christian schools and our GSRP Preschool as they further Christ's mission on earth.



To connect to the **STL PRAYER CHAIN**, contact Karen Dolan (mdolan421@gmail.com), text "Prayer" to 1-586-800-2223, or scan this QR code, with your phone's camera, to be taken to the prayer request form.

And we remember the unborn and newly born, the elderly and those nearing life's end, remembering all grieving families, and those who are in hospice care, especially Dolly Houth, Brenda Finger and Ed Vanick (former member).

† In Our Thoughts and Prayers †

✠**God's Healing Hand on:** Davis Cardamone, Joanne Awe, Stan Topel, Doug Klawender (son of Shirley), Rick Sturm (Sue Wensink's brother-in-law), Diane Gomulka (Sue Wensink's sister in-law's sister), Jessica Krug (Kuehn) (former member), Dorothy Rumsey (Becky Gladden's mother)

✠**Continued prayers for Healing & Strength for:** Harrison Ahee, Debbie Closurdo, Kennedy Pank (great-granddaughter of Marilyn Redmond), Andrew Brejnak, 19, (grandson of Gerry & Nola Klonowski, son of their daughter, Lisa), Robert Laroche (family of Jan Adams), Claire Armstrong (granddaughter of Clyde & Carolyn Armstrong), Sally Burk (sister of Lois Revard), Tamara Sommer (Connie's daughter-in-law).