



The church is adorned with banners during the Christmas season. These banners are among many created by the Decorating Committee.

Decorating Committee

By Linda Wenzl

Until Fr. Lyle Schulte was transferred to St. Joe's there was no actual decorating committee. Fr. Lyle designed and carried out the decorating with the assistance of one or two parishioners when needed.

When Fr. Lyle knew that he was leaving St. Joe's he called me and asked me if I would organize and chair a decorating committee to work with our new pastor, Fr. Al. I agreed, so he took me into the church and showed me how to operate the banner pulleys and where he had the decorations he had made and the banners stored.

At that same time he formed the Sacred Worship committee of which he said I would also be a member representing the decorating committee. I served as chairman for three years.

Anne Swenson and Tari Wallner took over and are still co-chairs of the committee which has grown to nine or 10 members. Fr. Al and the committee work together to coordinate the various seasonal events, themes and decorations.



Poinsettias donated by parishioners in memory of loved ones fill the sanctuary during the Christmas season.

Decorating Committee

By Sandy Cekosh

I volunteered to be on the decorating committee because I thought it would be fun, something that wasn't too time consuming. It's fun to help transform the church for the liturgical seasons of the church calendar. Fr. Lyle did a lot of neat stuff, some of which is occasionally used today. Anne Swenson and Tari Wallner are so creative! They get ideas from Fr. Al, who pretty much lets them have free reign over the project. They come up with the ideas and the committee works together to make it look great!

I was not Catholic when we joined St. Joe's in 1990. We started attending shortly after we moved just down the street from the church. Immediately, I sensed a special "feeling" about this church. There was warm and welcoming atmosphere; the music was very upbeat and celebratory. It was the first time I felt the love of God in the Catholic Church, even though we had attended another parish for many years prior to our switching.

Fr. Lyle always stressed that "God is Love" and I truly felt it here. Within a year or two, I enrolled in the RCIA program, not sure where it would take me, and joined the church the following Easter. I began to grow in my faith and am still continuing on my journey —there's so much to learn!

There are many very special people I've met and they all inspire me to persevere. There is something for everyone at St. Joe's, so many opportunities to be involved and stay active! It's the people here that make St. Joe's a great parish.



Banners designed by members of the Decorating Committee in the form of a tent hang from the ceiling during the Easter season.

Decorating Committee

By Joann Kronebusch

When I was hired as parish secretary in 1987, Fr. Lyle was the church decorating committee along with Florence Sankey, the housekeeper. He did the designing, purchasing, gluing, etc., and Florence did the sewing. She also assisted him with hanging banners if he needed help. He had a room full of rolls of colored fabric that could be hung straight/swooped/tied whatever on the rods that were attached onto the wires from the ceiling of the church.



During the Easter season, the tabernacle is surrounded by flowers donated by parishioners in the memory of loved ones.

Sacraments

By Joe and Adrian Mitch

Remember when parents had to attend small group classes in different homes to prepare their children for First Communion? The class was monitored by one of the priests or sisters from the school. The children received the sacrament in a group no larger than four at a weekend Mass of their choice.

During the reign of Msgr. Finucan and Fr. Falconer, our kids were confirmed while still in grade school.

At one particular Confirmation Liturgy, on a rainy afternoon, right as Father was talking about the Holy Spirit, a bolt of lightning lit up the church definitely letting us know that the Holy Spirit was present at the event.

Tgif Tale

Joining St. Joe's

*By Joann
Kronebusch*

When I moved to Stevens Point in 1980, I was looking for a church. At that time there was lettering over the crucifix in the church – The Price of Love – that touched me.

Then when I heard St. Joseph Parish pastor Fr. Lyle Schulte's sermons, I was locked into St. Joseph Parish. He expressed the love and care of the St. Joseph Parish community.

I also enjoyed attending many of his classes/talks that he gave for parish members.



This is just one of many tables which feature cookies galore at the annual St. Anne's Society Cookie Walk.

TgIF Tale

Cookie Walk

*By Agnes
Kobishop*

Ah, the St. Anne's Cookie Walk: Nearly 20 years of making dozens and dozens of cookies, and the hall with all the tables lined up and filled with cookies is a sight to behold.

Our volunteers put in untold hours of baking and decorating cookies and "poof" they are gone in 30 minutes. What a compliment to our bakers and decorators!



Members of St. Anne's Society (from left) Agnes Kobishop, Adrian Mitch and Gail Klauck are ready for Cookie Walk customers.

St. Anne's Society

By Adrian Mitch

Over the years, St. Anne's has undergone many changes, starting with the name. It was known as St. Anne's Altar & Rosary Society. With the dissolving of rose heads, the Rosary was dropped off. Eventually the Altar was deleted from the title even though they still take care of the needs of the altar.

With the boundaries change, the structure of the organization was altered. We formed 13 groups, each consisting of approximately 25 women, with a chair and co-chair, responsible for one month of the year. Ladies coming over from other parishes implemented new ideas.

We began to serve funeral dinners under the sponsorship of St. Anne's and work on fund raising projects to help the parish....Chili Supper, Salad Luncheon, Craft Fair, Bake Sales and Cookie Walk. We saved for many years in order to give the parish a gift on its 100th anniversary. We paid for the refinishing of the church pews. We began to give semi-annual donations to the parish.

For many of us it was our night out from the kids. We looked forward to being with adult women. In recent years, with more women working, that night out wasn't as important any more, so our membership began to lessen. We have dropped some of the fundraisers because of less workers and because the parish has taken on many new fundraising events.

Although we have struggled the last few years, we were able to have a special celebration for our 100th anniversary. We still work hard for our annual Christmas Cookie Walk and contribute to the budget of the parish, as well as take care of the needs of the altar, such as hosts, wine and candles.



Are these two of Santa's elves? No, just Tim Kaczmarek (left) and Paul Hesch, ready to assist buyers at the annual Cookie Walk.

Craft Fair

By Adrian Mitch

St. Anne's held a Craft Fair and Chicken Salad Luncheon in the fall for many years. The hall was filled with booths, including Craft Cottage, Book Worm, Dried Treasures, Green and Growing, Sweet Shoppe, Bakery, to mention a few. For lunch you had a choice of St. Anne's delicious chicken salad or barbecues served with jello salad and bars for desert.

It was eventually replaced with our even more famous Christmas Cookie Walk, which began because of an article in a magazine and a couple of women who thought it was time to try something new. That began way back in Ehr Hall.

We used to bring our mixers, cookie sheets and equipment from home because that kitchen downstairs was not equipped with the conveniences we now enjoy in the Family Center kitchen. It has evolved over the years into a good fundraiser and enjoyable project.

TgIF Tale

Circus

*By Joann
Kronebusch*

I remember Fr. Lyle hiring the world's smallest complete circus in 1992. It was mostly a one-man show performed on the parking lot and we had a great time watching this one man with animals, acrobatics and puppets.

St. Joe's Memories

By Myrna Horgan

Memories of St. Joseph Parish since we joined in 1971 are many. Earlier years brought mostly school or school-related involvements such as scouting and Home and School President responsibilities with fund raising activities. In those days there was no hot lunch program so twice a year on Halloween and Valentine's Day we had what was called "Hot Dog Day" for the kids and Home and School served hot dogs and cup cakes served by the parents. That was such a special treat for the kids who carried brown bag lunches all year. Can't help but think it wouldn't be much of a treat today with the sophisticated hot lunch menu kids are privileged to enjoy!

As the kids grew, the involvement changed. Ed and I became Confirmation mentors for a group of kids. They were a very special group and it was a growing experience for us too. I still have hanging on my wall a lovely counted cross-stitch from one of the groups given to us in appreciation for preparing them for the sacrament.

CCD Program

By Marcia Molner

St. Joe's has a terrific CCD program that I have been privileged to participate in. This is my 10th year teaching 2nd graders. Under the direction of Lynn Meyer I have helped prepare over 100 2nd graders to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist.

Here is a funny story from one of my first years:

One evening Fr. Al was discussing Mass items with my students. He asked the question, "What do we store the Body of Christ in? It begins with the letter T." One of my little 2nd grade girls piped up with, "It must be Tupperware! My mother says it keeps everything fresh."

Tgif Tale

Centennial Baby

By Michael
& Susan Buza

Our oldest son, Joseph, is the centennial baby of the parish. Other than the obvious, his name is Joseph, he was born in January 1984 and he was baptized that same year at the Easter Vigil.

Pastoral Memories

By Fr. Lyle Schulte

How about this for a memory? When I arrived in July 1979, I was trembling. To ease my entry into your midst I wrote a letter of introduction in the bulletin that first week. Two full, legal pages typed!

Well, it went over so well that I wrote more letters again and again, week after week on all sorts of topics—always pastoral. Except for my annual vacations, the letters kept coming. I was amazed!

When it came time to move to Menomonie, Margaret Simonis presented me with a copy of each letter from the 17 years of my stay—about 850 letters—1700 typed pages! Can you believe that! Gosh, with my weekly 15-minute homilies, you must surely have eventually heard every thought I ever had!

That's not the end of the story. At my going-away gathering in the church, July 1, 1996, there came a point in the program where I turned away from the audience that had gathered in church to talk briefly with the Master of Ceremonies. When I turned back to look at the people, everyone was holding a life-sized picture of my silly face in front of their own. There before me were "400 Fr. Lyles" looking back at me! Everyone held their pose—laughing.

What did it mean? I guess it meant that my 17 years of long homilies and 850 letters had made everyone think and act like me. I had brainwashed(?) them. And I thought, "How could they stand looking at me for 17 years?"

Anyway it all ended up with a great laugh. I indeed found love and life at St. Joseph Parish. I hope you all found Jesus and His love in return.

Operation Bootstrap

By Linda Wenzl

Operation Bootstrap is a community-wide organization which assists people in Portage County who are experiencing hard times with whatever their needs may be. The assistance can be in the form of groceries, clothing, paying for medications, gas for transportation to work, or bills they can't meet or providing needed housewares, bedding and furniture.

All of it is made possible through the generosity of the residents here who donate these things or monetary support. St. Joe's parishioners have always generously supported our collections for Operation Bootstrap throughout the years.

Endowment Trust

By Ed Horgan

Each piece of history of St. Joseph Parish helps to link generation to generation. All the events of our storied past weave a most interesting foundation for a strong and proud people of faith.

One of the most important cornerstones of strength for our parish came about through the efforts of our current pastor, Fr. Al, who did a lot of research and initial work with the diocese to give birth to the St. Joseph Congregation Endowment Trust.

Thanks to his leadership and the gift of \$38,856 from a generous parishioner, our Trust documents were signed and the accounts opened on August 26, 1998. In less than 10 years St. Joseph Trust has grown from that initial gift to over \$1,000,000 today!

Recently, \$10,000 from Trust income was paid into the school heating system fund. In fact, every budget year sees more income from the Trust to help us to meet our financial needs. This is truly a wonderful example of our past parish members remaining a vibrant part of the present and future of St. Joseph parish. Remembering our parish trust in our wills helps us stay strong and connected to our past. What a gift!

Thank you Fr. Al for your work and foresight in establishing the St. Joseph Trust. We appreciate all that you do for us. You too are our gift!

Place of Peace

By Mitzi Hlavac

It was 1997 and St. Joseph Parish was well represented in the group which came together to explore the question of a Christian's response to poverty. We prayed together weekly using Matthew 25 as our focus and discussed possible action for almost a year before purchasing a house we called Place of Peace. It was located at 1248 Portage St. We opened our doors in the Fall of 1998 to serve and share a Thursday evening meal. At our first Thursday meal we had two people. A beginning!

After almost 10 years our numbers have grown from two to sometimes 50. The numbers are not as important as the fact that community is being created by those who come to share a meal.

Many people in our area, including our parish, are involved in this ministry and all these whether cooking, contributing money or collecting groceries for our small pantry are addressing the questions of Matthew 25: "Lord, when did we see you hungry?"