

DEC 24



The Forerunner

a publication of St. John Lutheran Church
Williston, Ohio

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Ask the Pastor What are you reading this December?

This December I am going to be reading the book,
"The Advent Conspiracy: Making Christmas Meaningful (Again)"

and I would like to invite you to join me.

From their website: Advent Conspiracy shows you how to substitute consumption with compassion by practicing four simple but powerful, countercultural concepts: Worship Fully—because Christmas begins and ends with Jesus. Spend Less—and free your resources for things that truly matter. Give More—of your presence: your hands, your words, your time, your heart. Love All—the poor, the forgotten, the marginalized, and the sick in ways that make a difference. Find out how to have a Christmas worth remembering, not dreading. Christmas can still change the world when you, like Jesus, give what matters most— your presence.



The four concepts of Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, and Love All seem like nice reminders as I prepare for Christmas and I think they would fit well with our Reverse Advent Calendar Project too.

If you are interested, the book is available on Amazon for \$9.00 <https://a.co/d/gIJOdVc> (\$5.99 for Kindle) It may also be available at your local library, but I have not verified.

How are we going to read the book together? At the very least, I would like to create space for discussion on our St. John Williston - Online Community Facebook group. (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/3270411673060044>) This is accessible to anyone who has a Facebook account regardless of location and mobility. I plan to post questions based on a couple of chapters at a time throughout Advent.

I am also open to meeting for an in-person discussion group like we did for **"The Journey"** last year. This could be morning or evening, at the church or a **different location (a local restaurant, a park, someone's home, etc.)**. We could meet once to discuss the entire book, or make it more of a short-term study group during the four weeks of Advent. Take a look at the book, maybe read the first chapter, and let me know what sort of gathering you would be interested in.

However you choose to participate (or not) in discussion with your church friends, I hope you will consider reading the book.

Just a winter reminder...

Worship and activities at St. John will be cancelled if there is a LEVEL 3 Snow Emergency declared in Ottawa County. We will hold worship and activities if there is a Level 1 or Level 2, but only venture out if you feel it is safe to do so. Your safety and the well-being of everyone is our top concern!



In Memory of Wayne Bauman
George and Sandra Pollauf
In Memory of Norma Jean Gast
Terry Gast
In Memory of Danny Jeffers
Karen Jeffers and Families
In Memory of Michael Jeffers
Karen Jeffers and Families
In Memory of Harry and Betty Younker
Karen Jeffers and Families
In Memory of Lawrence and Lenora Jeffers
Karen Jeffers and Families
In Memory of Emory Lasseter
Carolyn Lasseter and Marilyn Sandrock



Dear St. John-Williston,
As the crisp autumn air settles in and the leaves turn to shades of crimson, we at Mom's House want to express our deepest appreciation for your generous gift. Your support is instrumental in helping up to fulfill our mission of offering vital resources and educational opportunities to single mothers and their children who face financial hardships. Your contribution plays a pivotal role in providing these families with the crucial support they need, including access to early childhood education that paves the way for a brighter future. We are incredibly grateful to have you as a cherished member of our community.

With Love,
Christina Rodriquez
Executive Director
Mom's House-Toledo

Dear People of God,
Every day at Trinity Seminary, we experience firsthand how your support brings our mission to life. You are part of a legacy nearly 200 years strong, one that continues to shape leaders for Christ's Church in our ever-changing world. Because of your generosity, through mission endowments, grants and scholarships, you open doors we never imagined possible. Your gifts allow us to deepen our faith, stretch our understanding, and respond to God's call. For this, we thank God for you. Thank you for standing with us as we prepare to serve Christ's Church at work in the world.

With gratitude,
The Students of Trinity Lutheran
Seminary at Capital University

A Very Special Thank You to all who helped with the Community Thanksgiving Worship Service and Meal on Nov. 24th. Our organist, Beckie Goldstein led the choir in wonderful music and our worship assistants made sure everyone from the community felt welcome. We had over 90 people in attendance and most stayed for a delicious meal prepared and served by the Ladies of the church. What a wonderful way to celebrate Thanksgiving with our neighbors and friends!

St. John-Williston,
Thank you for your generous donation of \$1000 from your Sack for a Sack Campaign. Thank you for your continued support of our pantry.

Genoa Community Food Pantry



The *Forerunner* is published monthly by St. John Lutheran Church 21140 W. Toledo Street Williston, Ohio 43468 Corner of Main and Toledo Street

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Fall/Winter Worship
Saturday at 5:00 PM
Sunday Worship 9:45 AM

Deadline for the
January 2025 Forerunner is
Monday, December 16th
Please send articles and/or
information to
office@stjohnwilliston.org.



"Creating and nurturing life changing relationships based on the love of God in Jesus Christ, so that we may grow in faith, serve God and serve our neighbor."

LisaAnne Gregg
Office Administrator
419-836-5514
office@stjohnwilliston.org



Mon-Tues-Wed 9am—3pm
Thurs. hours vary
Closed Friday

How many of you are familiar with an Advent Calendar?

The idea dates back to the German Lutherans in the 1800s. It is based on the tradition of writing chalk tally marks on walls or lighting candles to count the remaining days until Christmas. Modern Advent calendars help you count down the days by either moving a little star on a calendar or opening up a little pocket or box to reveal a tiny gift (or moving Hans Gruber down the Nakatomi Plaza). Since they were very little, we have gotten chocolate Advent calendars for our kids. (Actually, that's something we still do.) Each day they can open the numbered window and count down the days until Christmas with a piece of chocolate. One year we even found an Advent calendar filled with dog treats. I doubt Fancy understood the sentiment, but she was glad to have a daily treat.

This year, I would like you to consider participating in a twist on that idea... a Reverse Advent Calendar. Instead of taking something out for yourself, the idea is to put something in or set something aside to give to someone else— thus giving instead of getting. There are boxes and calendars listing different items for each day until Christmas available at the church. Or you can print a calendar from the newsletter or Facebook and use your own box from home. At the end of Advent, the reverse calendar will result in a collection of 24 items that can be dropped off at the church to support a good cause at Christmas time.

*The calendar we have created supports the needs pantry at the **Advent Lutheran Center and the LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry at Elliston Zion.***

*The **Advent Lutheran Center** is one of five day programs operated by Luther Home of Mercy. Here, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities socialize with others, interact with the community and learn new skills. When this site opened several years ago, there was a strong desire by participants to give back to their community through volunteering. However, they discovered many places are not willing or able to accommodate persons with disabilities as volunteers and the offer to help was frequently declined.*

That did not deter the Advent participants... instead, they opened their own personal needs pantry. (They believe this to be a first-of-its-kind program in Ohio and a true celebration of the positive community spirit of those they serve.) This project is largely funded by the individuals themselves, their families, and the staff who work there. They are not always able to keep up with the community demand for products. Our help enables the participants to keep the pantry open and keep offering smiles and needed items to others.

*The **Light Neighborhood Pantry at Elliston Zion** is open to all residents of Ottawa County struggling with food insecurity. They are a free local choice food pantry where clients can select the items they want and will use. The pantry can get many food items from the Toledo NWO Food Bank, but hygiene and personal need items are rarely available. Our help enables them to provide these items for the people they serve. On average, the **LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry** serves 25-40 families each month and serves dinner once a month to as many as 70 people. The **LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry** is open on the 2nd Weds. of each month from 5-7 PM and is also available in emergency circumstances. They also have a partnership with the Blessing Box here at St. John to share items they have in abundance with our community.*

Our Reverse Advent Calendars will support both organizations when they are filled. Also this year our Christmas offering will be designated to support our neighbors as they meet these community needs. You will hear more about these ministries in the season of Advent.

Supporting our neighbors at

The Luther Home of
Mercy Needs Pantry

The LIGHT Neighborhood
Pantry at Elliston Zion



REVERSE CALENDAR OF GIVING FOR ADVENT

1 Shampoo	2 Deodorant	3 Small pack Toilet paper	4 Hairbrush	5 Body Wash
6 Small Laundry Soap	7 Razors	8 Dish Soap	9 Shaving cream	10 Lotion
11 Feminine Hygiene items	12 Dryer sheets	13 Toothbrushes	14 Body powder (Gold Bond type)	15 Toothpaste
16 Small Laundry Soap	17 Q-tips	18 Dish Soap	19 Deodorant	20 Body Wash
21 Disinfectant (Lysol) Wipes	22 Hand Sanitizer	23 Small pack Toilet paper	24 Shampoo	25 Merry Christmas to all!



December Circle Meeting

Esther Circle would like to invite the Rebekah Circle to join us for our December meeting at 2 pm on **Tuesday, December 3, in the Social Hall.**

We are studying "The Women of the Bible"....."Esther" for our December meeting.

We'll follow our study with singing Christmas Carols and then we'll socialize. We would ask that you bring either an hors d oeuvre OR a plate of cookies.

Any other ladies in the congregation are also cordially invited.

If you're interested, please confirm with Diane Gerkenmeyer at 419.836.7052. It's bound to be an enjoyable afternoon. Please join us.



The prayer chain will be updated effective Jan. 1, 2025. If you are on the prayer chain and wish to remain, there is nothing for you to do.

If you would like to be added to the prayer chain, you have a change in phone number or change in your email address, please let Margaret Berger (419-340-2150) or the church office know. (419-836-5514 or email office@stjohnwilliston.org)

The email prayer chain is distributed via email by Margaret, Pastor O'Brien or the church office. You do not need to do anything but pray. There is no need to respond to the emails.

When phone call prayer chain reaches you, you are asked to call the next person on the prayer list to keep the chain going. We try to keep the information distributed at a minimum to avoid any errors or misinformation.

The prayer chain may be used for medical concerns, special needs or in a time of thanksgiving in your family or friends.. And as always, we prayed for YOU today!



Altar Flowers

2025 Altar and Chancel Flowers are ready to order! Please see the sign up list on the office door across from the main staircase.

Altar Flowers are still \$25
Chancel Flowers are still \$20

Please fill out the Flower Order Form and submit it along with your payment to the church office or place it in the offering plate. Please do this early as the spots fill up quickly and the office needs to know the information before the weekend selected. Please keep in mind that flowers cannot be ordered without both the form and the payment. Thank you!



**THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®**

Connecting faith & finances for good.®

Attention Thrivent Members:
Did you know??

If you are Thrivent insurance or investment policy holder, our church may be eligible to earn Thrivent contributions to financially assist the efforts of our St. John Congregation.

Please contact Diane Gerkenmeyer at rondiangerk@aol.com or 419-276-3800 to learn how you can get Thrivent support for our church and St. John community.



Shopping with the Stars
Available now!

Just pick a star or take a gift list from the table located in the narthex and purchase a gift for one of our neighbors at The Luther Home of Mercy

No Wrapping Needed!!
Return to church
by Sunday,
December 8th.



Most are inexpensive but bring great joy to the residents.



JOIN US IN WATCHING
THE CHOSEN SERIES

WE WILL GATHER
FOLLOWING SUNDAY'S
WORSHIP (11:00ISH) AND
HAVE PIZZA WHILE WE
WATCH THE SHOW.

WE WELCOME ANYONE TO JOIN US.
IF YOU MISS AN EPISODE OR NEED TO CATCH
UP, YOU CAN FIND THE SHOW AT
[HTTPS://WWW.ANGEL.COM/WATCH/THE-CHOZEN](https://www.angel.com/watch/the-chozen)

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

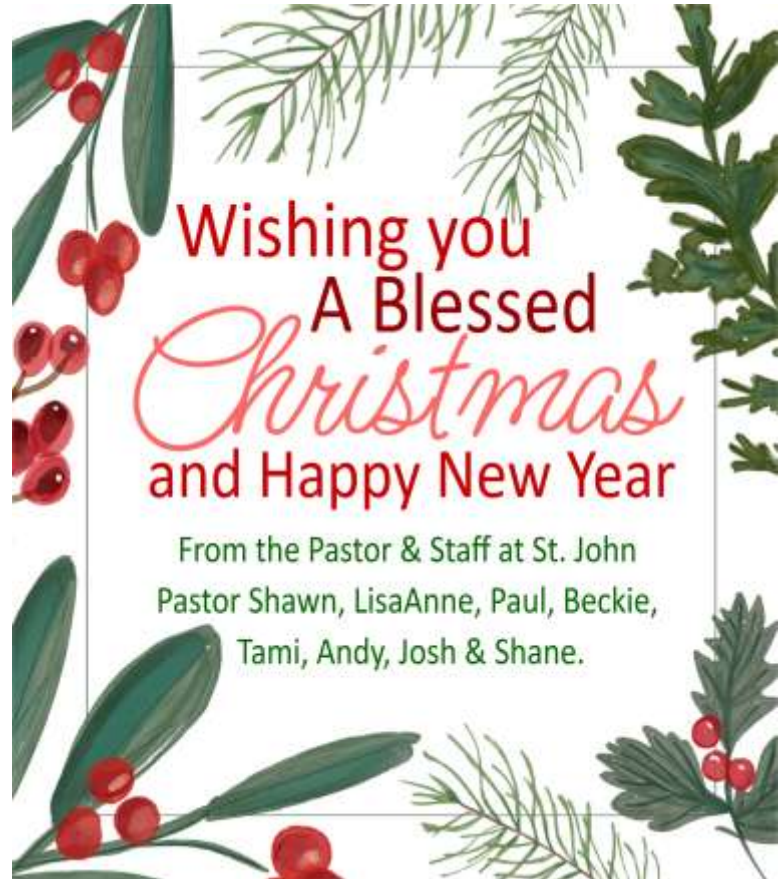
DECEMBER 1ST AND 15TH
JANUARY 12TH AND 26TH
FEBRUARY 2, 9, AND 23
MARCH 9 AND 23



Join the St. John
Dartball Team!
Get those pitching arms
ready and join us for fun
on Tuesday nights when
the Western Ottawa
County Dartball League
meets for fun
and fellowship!

December games:
12/3– HOME vs. Elmore St. Paul
12/10– AWAY at Elliston Trinity UCC

All are welcome. No experience needed.
All are welcome to come and cheer
on our St. John Team, too!
See or call Jeff Schimming for more info.
419-356-3552





The 7th Annual Williston Community Christmas Tree Lighting & Meal

Saturday, December 7th

**Join us for Saturday worship at St. John at 5 PM
and then follow us outside to the Christmas Tree
(just east of the parsonage) where we will celebrate the season together!**

**Following the Christmas Tree lighting, we will join together for a
Community Meal to be served in the St. John Church basement.
We will also have games with prizes!**

**Please join the Evangelism Committee, your church family and your
neighbors to celebrate the beginning of the Advent season.**

Thrivent Choice Dollars will be donating the cost of the meal.

**We will be collecting donations of paper products and personal items
for Nightingale's Harvest.**

**They have a need for certain items such as liquid dish soap, liquid hand
soap and toilet paper, but all items are greatly appreciated. A box will be
placed by the elevator for all to donate at any time. Nightingale's Harvest
provides a food pantry for families with cancer in Northwest Ohio.
They are located at Our Savior Lutheran Church on Alexis Rd. in
Toledo. They have received many of our blankets over the years.
We have invited them to join us.**



Join us for Once a Month Sunday School!

We meet every first Sunday of the month, October through May, in the basement at 8:30 am



Bring the whole family for a bible story, craft, snack, video, and music!
(Yes, we want parents too!)

See you December 1st at 8:30!



**Confirmation
NEWS**

Confirmation Class
Every Sunday
at 8:30a.m.



**ST. JOHN'S ANNUAL CHILDREN'S
CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

**"CHRISTMAS AT THE
BEACH"**

**WILL BE ON SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 8TH
DURING THE 9:45AM
CHURCH SERVICE**

**A GATHERING WITH LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL FOLLOW THE
CHURCH SERVICE IN THE BASEMENT.**

FEEL FREE TO BRING YOUR FAVORITE COOKIES TO SHARE!

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR BEACH ITEMS TO BORROW FOR THIS
PROGRAM. PLEASE CALL TAMMY MAZUR FOR INFORMATION.**

419-266-6491

Prayer/Contact Cards...

You will see blue Prayer/Contact cards in the pews. Please fill them out if you have a prayer request, a change in your contact information, would like to join the St. John family or to speak with the Pastor. Just place them in the offering plate.



Worship Assistants Always Needed-Always Appreciated!

We SO appreciate the help we receive every week from our wonderful worship Assistants.

Whether you read scripture, serve communion, usher or count the offering...your actions are vital to our worship ministry!

Please watch your email and the upcoming Forerunners for an updated list of worship assignments.

We are in need of additional worship assistants!

If you would like to be added to the rotation, please call the office and we will gladly fill you in on the details!

Our Blessing Box at St. John can always use your help!

Our Blessing Box is used every day by our neighbors and friends in the Williston Community.

It is filled almost everyday with canned food items, snacks, and personal hygiene items.

We couldn't do it without you! Our most needed items are:

Peanut Butter and Jelly, small boxed of cereal, toothpaste and toothbrushes, canned meat, ready to eat snacks, Ramen noodles, Canned fruit, soup, spaghetti and spaghetti sauce, bathroom tissue.

(Please no expired items or glass jars, please)

A special thank you to those who keep the Blessing Box stocked Everyday...especially Carolyn Lasseter and Marilyn Sandroock and Ron and Diane Gerkenmeyer and those who donate items every week! Thank you for helping us serve our neighbors!

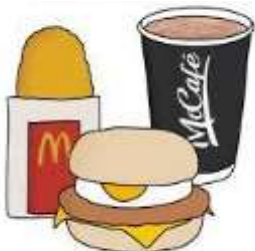


The "Blanket Ladies" gather to make quilts on Tuesday mornings at 9:00 am.

These beautiful blankets are then distributed to those in need all over the country! Come join us! No experience needed!

Any bed sheets (preferably queen size) are needed for quilt backings. Donations may be left in the box outside the church office. All are welcome to join us and the coffee is always on!

You only need to know how to tie a knot!



Join your St. John Family for Breakfast!

We meet every Wednesday at 7:00 AM at McDonald's in Genoa. All are welcome to join us for a fun morning of fellowship, breakfast and conversation!



Faith Practice #3 Readings

Job

Our Faith Practice Readings will continue after a break for Advent.

December 30 – Job 21
January 6 – Job 22
January 13 – Job 23
January 20 – Job 24
January 27 – Job 25
February 3 – Job 26
February 10 – Job 27
February 17 – Job 28
February 24 – Job 29
March 3 – Job 30
March 10 – Job 31

March 17 – Job 32
March 24 – Job 33
March 31 – Job 34
April 7 – Job 35
April 14 – Job 36
April 21 – Job 37
April 28 – Job 38
May 5 – Job 39
May 12 – Job 40
May 19 – Job 41
May 26 – Job 42



WREATHS — across — AMERICA

REMEMBER the Fallen. . .
HONOR those who Serve. . .
TEACH our children the value
of Freedom.

On **December 14, 2024 at 11:00 am**,
Wreaths Across America

will be at **Clay Township Cemetery,
Harris-Elmore Cemetery and**

Union Cemetery in Oak Harbor, Ohio to

remember and honor our veterans through the laying of Remembrance Wreaths on the graves of our country's fallen heroes and the act of saying the name of each and every veteran aloud.

Please join us and help lay these wreaths upon the hundred's of graves of our honored veterans. You may also sponsor wreaths with your financial donations at

www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org



A new building access system has been installed at St. John.

Those needing regular entry to the church, outside of regular business hours (Mon-Thurs 9-3), will be issued a personalized access card to gain entry to the main doors near the parking lot. There is an access box on the right side of the main door.

If you have a need for an access card, please see Andy after worship or stop in the church office.

Further information, including instructional videos on the new system, will be available soon. Please watch your weekly email more information.

This project is part of and is paid in part by Andy Kessler's Senior CapStone project at the University of Toledo.



Join the Choir...

You'll Be Glad You Did!

If anyone interested in joining the bell choir and/or singing with the choir this fall and winter, please contact Beckie Goldstein or see her after church services.

Practices are after Sunday's service.



St. John- Williston

Christmas Eve
Worship



December 24, 2024

**4:00 pm-Christmas
Eve Family Service**

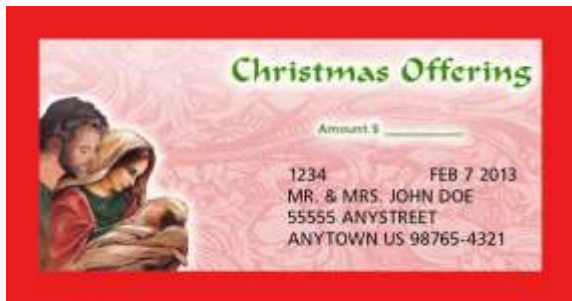
**7:00 pm-Traditional
Worship and Carols**

**11:00 pm-Christ Mass
and Candlelight**

Worship Assistants will be
needed for all services.
Please see the list near
Pastor's office



DECEMBER STEWARDSHIP



Our 2024 Christmas Offerings will bless two ministries this year.

The **Advent Lutheran Center** is one of five day programs operated by Luther Home of Mercy. Here, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities socialize with others, interact with the community and learn new skills. When this site opened several years ago, there was a strong desire by participants to give back to their community through volunteering. However, they discovered many places are not willing or able to accommodate persons with disabilities as volunteers and the offer to help was frequently declined.

The Light Neighborhood Pantry at Elliston Zion is open to all residents of Ottawa Country struggling with food insecurity. They are a free local choice food pantry where clients can select the items they want and will use. The pantry can get many food items from the Toledo NWO Food Bank, but hygiene and personal need items are rarely available. Our help enables them to provide these items for the people they serve. On average, the LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry serves 25-40 families each month and serves dinner once a month to as many as 70 people. The LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry at EZUMC is open on the 2nd Weds. of each month from 5-7 PM.

Please use your assigned envelope or simply write "Christmas" on your offering envelope. Thank you for supporting our neighbors in Christ and helping our community.

December Prayer Points

CoffeeWithStarla.com

- **Gratitude for the Year**
- Thank God for His blessings and guidance throughout the year.
- **Peace During the Holidays**
- Pray for peace in your heart, home, and among loved ones during the holiday season.
- **Focus on Christ**
- Ask for the ability to keep Jesus at the center of all celebrations.
- **Strength to Finish the Year Well**
- Pray for energy and perseverance to complete tasks and goals for the year.
- **Protection Over Family**
- Ask for God's protection and safety over your family as you gather for the holidays.
- **Comfort for the Lonely**
- Pray for those feeling alone or grieving during this time, that they may experience God's comfort.
- **Guidance for the New Year**
- Seek God's wisdom as you plan for the upcoming year and set goals that align with His will.
- **Rest and Renewal**
- Ask God for moments of true rest, both physically and spiritually, during this busy season.
- **Healing and Health**
- Pray for healing for those who are sick or struggling with health issues as the year ends.
- **Generosity and Compassion**
- Ask for a heart of generosity to share love, blessings, and kindness with those in need.

Finding time to observe ADVENT becomes even more important as we try to focus on the TRUE MEANING of CHRISTMAS amidst the demands and busy rush of our culture.



Thanks to our St. John Staff for a wonderful 2024! As we reflect on the many accomplishments of 2024 here at St. John, we extend an invitation to the congregation to contribute to "Gifts for our Staff" for their hard and dedicated work throughout the year. If you would like to contribute, please mark "Staff Gifts" on an envelope and place it in the offering plate. Thank you!



REMEMBER...JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON!

advent CALENDAR *FOR KIDS!*

<p>Perform a random act of kindness</p> <p>1</p>	<p><i>two</i></p> <p>Donate food to a local food bank</p>	<p>Have a coloring contest</p> <p>3</p>	<p><i>four</i></p> <p>Buy socks for a homeless shelter</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Watch a favorite holiday movie</p>
<p>Make or buy a new Christmas ornament</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Let someone go in front of you in line</p> <p><i>seven</i></p>	<p>8</p> <p>Clean out and donate outgrown toys</p>	<p>Build a snowman out of cotton balls</p> <p>9</p>	<p>Take cupcakes to your local fire department</p> <p>10</p>
<p>Decorate a gingerbread house</p> <p><i>eleven</i></p>	<p>Help wrap a Christmas present</p> <p>12</p>	<p><i>thirteen</i></p> <p>Leave a happy note for someone to find</p>	<p>Have a game night in your PJs</p> <p>14</p>	<p>Make paper snowflakes</p> <p>15</p>
<p>Drink hot cocoa</p> <p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Make Christmas cards</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Bake Christmas cookies</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Sing Christmas carols</p>	<p><i>twenty</i></p> <p>Take a family photo in front of the Christmas tree</p>
<p>Read your favorite Christmas story</p> <p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Take a car tour of your local light displays</p>	<p>Deliver Christmas cards to your neighbors</p> <p>23</p>	<p><i>twenty-four</i></p> <p>Watch or attend a Christmas Eve service</p>	<p>Read the Nativity story</p> <p>25</p>

Communication Resources, Inc • PO Box 8110, Canton, OH 44711 • www.ChurchArt.com



Join us for Sunday School!
Sunday, December 1st @ 8:30 AM
Invite a friend to Sunday School and share bible stories, crafts, music and snacks!!



From the Bishop

Daniel Blecker

In Ephesians 4:1-6, St. Paul writes:

“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.”

This has been a long election season filled with strong and hurtful rhetoric. While talking with folks on Sunday mornings, the topics of divisiveness and disunity are front and center. One woman shared with me that her brother stopped speaking with her after she shared her political views with him. She shared how painful it is to worship together and not speak with one another. She asked if maybe I could speak with him. I took that opportunity to pray with her, and asked that the Holy Spirit soften hearts, heal hurts, and bring reconciliation.

As I consider the pain and brokenness that has accompanied this election season, I am reminded of St. Paul’s call to unity. In Ephesians chapter 4, Paul writes about the unity that we are called to share in the Body of Christ and in the wider community. As followers of the crucified and risen Jesus, we pattern our lives after the one Lord who calls us to follow. And while following Jesus, “...**to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called.**” A life that is marked by humility, gentleness, patience, love, and unity. We certainly cannot change the behavior of others, but we can model for others the life that followers of Jesus are called to live. This is the life that I’m trying to live. I invite you to join me.

To close, I want to take a moment to thank our pastors, deacons, synod authorized ministers, and parish leaders, who have so faithfully served as models of unity and love through this election season. Some of our congregations are serving as polling places. And I know that many of our parishes have scheduled prayer vigils and services. Thank you for your faithful and loving witness. You are making a difference.



Give something
unexpected
this
Christmas.

With ELCA Good Gifts, you can help continue to fill “God’s Global Barnyard” with gifts that help grow the church, fight hunger and transform lives! You may also let someone know that you are thinking of them by giving a gift in their honor. Simply visit <https://goodgifts.elca.org> and go shopping!



1. Choose your gift
2. Get a card
3. Make a difference!



Christmas Poinsettias

From:	In Memory or in Honor of:	From:	In Memory or in Honor of:
Jane Phillips	Grace and Arnold Johnson	Chuck and Jeri Permar	Joe, Norma and Joe Rensch & Robert Permar
Fred and Melissa Lammers	Norman Lammers	Duane and Tami Tailford	Loved Ones
Fred and Melissa Lammers	Dave Lammers	Al and Traci Brown	Dilly Schimming and Grandparents
Jack and Jill Mathews	Kate and Larry Hoenbrink		Dilly Schimming, RayLee, & Grandparents
Jack and Jill Mathews	Mary and Charlie Mathews	Dave, Kris, Kurtis and Aubrey Lee	Dilly Schimming
Donna Mathews	Charles and Mary Mathews	Jim Schimming	Our Grandparents
Gary and LisaAnne Gregg	Son-Robert "Bobby" Begell	Richard and Shirley Crosskill	Dick Buhrow
Gary and LisaAnne Gregg	Mom-Rosella Fleitz	Rick and Lori Buhrow	Our Grandparents
Carolyn Lasseter & Marilyn Sandrock	Ralph and Edna Sandrock	Rick and Lori Buhrow	Loved Ones
Carolyn Lasseter & Marilyn Sandrock	Emory Lasseter	Larry and Nancy Strohscher	Richard Phillips
Carolyn Lasseter & Marilyn Sandrock	Frederick and Karen Sandrock	Jane Phillips	Howard Neuman
Carolyn Lasseter & Marilyn Sandrock	Jennifer Johnson	Dave and Deanna Neuman	Virginia Webb
Carolyn Lasseter & Marilyn Sandrock	Rob and Clara Lasseter	Dave and Deanna Neuman	George Webb
Allen & Judy Yockey	In honor of our family	Lenore Harmeyer	Loved Ones
JoElaine Schimming	Kenneth Schimming	Lenore Harmeyer	Loved Ones
Victoria Kiss and Nate Miller	Janet Miller	Denny and RoseMarie Dickenson	Robert Bench
Victoria Kiss and Nate Miller	Richard Kiss, Jr.	Elaine Gruetter	Lawrence Gruetter
Margaret Berger	Don Berger	Lee and Debbie Wehner	Ray and Lois Wehner
Margaret Berger	Tim Berger	Lee and Debbie Wehner	Ollie and Mary Ann Gruben
Dave and Vicki Huber	In Honor of our Grandchildren-Emily, Lainey, Hadley and Colton	Carole Beamer	Dan Beamer
Linda Schlievert	Clarence and Helen Schlievert	Paul Beamer	Helen Schlievert
Tom Siglar	Dad, Tom Siglar and Grandparents	Paul Beamer	Dan Beamer
Ashley and Hailey Hodulik	Loved Ones		In Honor of the birth of our Great Granddaughter, Evie born 11-8-24
Dave and Jennie Hodulik	Loved Ones	Dave Gilbert	John, Norma and Joe Rensch
Ron and Diane Gerkenmeyer	Our parents	Jon and Valerie Baumbach	Richard and Rosalie Baumbach
Ron and Diane Gerkenmeyer	Our Sisters	Jon and Valerie Baumbach	Dean Fondessy
Beth Johnson	Loved Ones	Karolyn Jansen	Emerson and Marilyn Fondessy
Mary Harmeyer	Loved Ones	Karolyn Jansen	George Gerkenmeyer
Bernie Blausey	Marjorie Blausey	Kelly Matwiejczyk	In Honor of our Grandkids
Bernie Blausey	Loved Ones	Bob and Diane Kapp	Wade and Audrey Wolf
Fredericksen Family	Paul Fredricksen, Sr	Bob and Diane Kapp	Dick Armstrong
Fredericksen Family	Joe and Laura Vincent	Bob and Diane Kapp	Earl, Arnold and Grace Johnson
Doris Titgemeyer	My parents	Bob and Diane Kapp	Megan Elizabeth and Arica Grace Goldstein
Doris Titgemeyer	Carl Titgemeyer	Jerry and Beckie Goldstein & Family	Richard Harmeyer
		Jerry and Beckie Goldstein & Family	

Thank you for sharing the beauty of your poinsettias with your St. John Family. Poinsettias will be available for pick up following the Christmas Eve Services or on Thursday December 26 during business hours.





CHURCH COUNCIL Highlights

11-21-2024 Church Council Highlights

Members Present: **Pastor O'Brien, Dan Kessler, Tim Titgemeyer, Diana Lambert, Jennifer Nelson, Dave Neuman, Deanna Neuman, John Mazur, Margaret Berger, Kellie Ulrich, Pam LaRue.** Guests: Andy Kessler, Jacob Higginbotham and Trent Krumnow.

Members Absent: Cheryl Berger, Kristina Wildman

Devotions led by Pastor: Bread for the Day-Hebrews 10

Pastor's Report: Worship Attendance: In Person average for October 2024-111.5 compared to October 2023-175. Online average for October 2024- 79.8 compared to October 2023-106.6. Numbers 12 hospital/home-bound visits/individual or family meeting, 5 committee/group meetings, 7 community/youth/fellowship event, 7 professional/clergy activities, 1 Baptism

Baptism: presided at the baptism of Eloise Patricia Delventhal (daughter of Aaron & Jennifer) on October 26.

Thanksgiving Worship-St. John will again host Community Thanksgiving Worship. Sunday, November 24th at 5:00p followed by a community meal at 6:00p. Advent Study-We will be reading **"The Advent Conspiracy" by Rick McKinley, Chris Seay, et al.** The book is \$9.99 on Amazon, \$1.99 on Kindle. I will make space for discussion in our St. John Facebook Group, and I am also interested in getting together in person if there are people who are interested. Take a look at the book, maybe read the first chapter, and let me know what sort of gathering you would be interested in. Reverse Advent Calendar and Christmas Offering-Pick up a box/calendar for our Reverse Advent Calendar (we will be counting the days to Christmas by putting items IN instead of taking something out). With our donation of personal needs items and our Christmas offering we will be supporting Luther Home of Mercy's Advent Center and the food pantry at Elliston Zion. Pastor made a motion to have the Christmas Offerings split between the Luther Home of Mercy Advent Center and the Elliston Zion Food Pantry in evenly. Pam LaRue 2nd. Motion passed.

Financial Secretary, Treasurer & Finance Committee Report: Income: We are 90% of our monthly budget and 96% of our year-to-date budget. Expenses: We are 97% of the monthly budget and 96% of the year-to-date budget. Budget updates were passed out to the committees and changes will be ready for review at the December Committee meeting.

Christian Community Life: We talked about pre-packing for the food pantry on Thursday, Dec. 19th @ 6:30. Then serving on Saturday, Dec. 21 @ 8:30. The congregation has done a fantastic job in donations for the PAJAMAS !!! THANK YOU !!! We started wrapping them, there are some MALE sizes still needed. Please don't forget about the "Shopping with the Stars" for the Luther Home of Mercy Residents. CCL will be serving cookies and drinks in the cloister after the Christmas program on Sunday morning.

Evangelism: Final plans for the Christmas Tree Lighting were made. Sunday, November 17th was set aside for the outside tree decorating -weather permitting. The tree has been decorated now.

Parish Education: Trunk or Treat was a great success. We estimated that we had 60 kids plus families. We had 4 kids plus families at Sunday School. Still working on getting Kelly access to our shared files- she is going to meet with Andy after church some Sunday.

Stewardship: Our church will be ringing the Salvation Army bells at **Miller's on Wednesday, Dec. 4th** from 10-6 pm.. Please sign up if you are able to help out.

Worship Life: Thanksgiving community service, there are 15 planning to attend from St. Peter and St. Luke's. Elliston Zion UMC members may be attending as well, but we do not have a count from them. The Schimming sisters will be decorating for Christmas after November 24th service. Advent begins December 1st, will need to get the advent wreath out, the choir will have a candle lighting song for the 4 weeks of advent. Christmas Eve Services are 4, 7, 11. Will need to check candles to be sure they are in good condition for the candlelight services, Melissa L will be helping with this. We need ushers to pass out candles at 7 and 11. Worship service volunteers will be needed at all services. Will check with LisaAnne to see how this is going. Some continued discussions on old hymnals. Our old hymnals are somewhat scattered in different locations and would like to have all them in one location.

Property: The door access system has been installed with the special entry features and cameras. The WiFi thermostat has been installed in the sanctuary. The heat in the parsonage has been regulated.

Nominating Committee: Dave Neuman made a motion for council to accept the member of the 2025 slate as completed. John Mazur to 2nd the motion. Motion passed.

Old Business: Andy Kessler said that the Door Access System is up and running with the cameras. Members will need a key card, 6-digit pass code or phone app to have unassisted access. There is a doorbell entry for assisted entry, and for visitors or deliveries.

New Business: Thanksgiving Offering will go to the local Ottawa County Holiday Bureau for the Allen, Clay, Harris Unit families in need. New committee meeting night will be Wednesday, Dec 18, 2024. Motion was made by Deanna Neuman and Dan Kessler 2nd Motion passed.

Deanna Neuman made a motion to adjourn. John Mazur -2nd. Motion passed and meeting ended at 7:55 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Diana Lambert, Council Secretary





The Annual St. John Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 19 at 11:00 AM.

All members are encouraged and welcome to attend this meeting and to vote on important issues of the church and also to celebrate all God has done in us and in our church this year.

Below is a list of our 2025 Nominees for Church Officers and Board Members.

Thank you to those who have filled these roles in the past, those who continue to serve now, and those who will serve in the future.

2025 Nominees for Church Officers and Board Members

Church Officers	New Nominee ('25)	Still Serving till Jan 2026	Thank you for serving!
President	David Neuman		Tim Titgmeyer '21
Vice-President	Rick Buhrow '25		
Secretary		Diana Lambert '24	
Financial Secretary		Kristina Wildman '22	
Treasurer	Dan Kessler '23		
Board Members	New Nominee	Still Serving till Jan 2026	
Finance		Jennifer Nelson '22	
Christian Community Life	Deb Wehner '23	Judy Encheff '24	
	Cheryl Berger '23	Holly Delventhal '24	
Evangelism	Linda Schlievert '25	Robin Perkins '24	Margaret Berger '21
	Carol Beamer '25	Ben Perkins '24	Beverly Harder '21
Parish Education	Carol Jensen '23?	Deanna Neuman '22?	Stefanie Hill '21
	Victoria Kiss '25	Kelly Morse '24	Natalie Symanski '23
Stewardship	Heather Cashen '25	Jack Matthews '24	Pam LaRue '21
	Marty Schloegl '23	Jane Phillips '24	
Property	John Mazur '23	Rol Sandrock '24	
	Dave Huber '23	Eric Horvath '24*	Richard Phillips
Worship Life	Cebie Titgmeyer '25	Kellie Ulrich '22*	Jill Kao '21
	Tracy Donnelly '23	Amy Schloegl '22	
Nominating Committee	Pam LaRue	Ron Gerknesmeyer	
	Lori Buhrow	RoseMarie Dickinson	
	Rosemarie Dickinson	Kris Lee	
	Kriss Lee	Mona Vogelbacher	
Lutheran Ministries of Mercy		Gene and Amy Bihn	
Lutheran Homes Society Representatives		Karolyn Jansen and Owen Jansen	
NW Ohio Synod Representatives		Kent Delventhal Evie Zimmerman	

*Kellie started in '23 but is filling a term that began in '22

*Kellie is eligible to run for a second term. (2026)

*Eric started in '25 but is filling a term that began in '24

2025 *new nominee*
 2024 *middle of first term*
 2023 *on the ballot for a second term*
 2022 *middle of final term*

Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.



Saturdays 5:00pm	Sundays 9:45 am
Ushers	Ushers
	1-Jill Kao
7-Jack Mathews	8-Diana Lambert
14-Ron Gerkenmeyer	15-Jim Vogelbacher
21-Donnelly Family	22-The Titgemeyers
28-Buhrow Family	29-Diana Lambert
Lectors	Lectors
	1-Deanna Neuman
7-Beverly Harder	8-Diana Lambert
14-Amy Schloegl	15-Melissa Lammers
21-Nancy Strohscher	22-Cebie Titgemeyer
28-Jonah Danhoff	29-Kellie Ulrich
Acolytes	Acolytes
	1-Mila M.
7-Liam D.	8-Makenna C.
14-Trenton	15-Rylan S.
21-Jonah D.	22-Lauren H.
28-Nolaan	29-Rylie C.
Communion	Communion
	1-Roland Sandrock
7-Ron Gerkenmeyer	8-Kellie Ulrich
14-JoElaine Schimming	15-Pam LaRue
21-Carol Vargo	22-Robin Perkins
28- Al & Traci Brown	29-Dave Neuman

Saturdays 5:00pm	Sundays 9:45 am
Ushers	Ushers
4- Jack Mathews	5-Jill Kao
11-Ron Gerkenmeyer	11-Jim Vogelbacher
18-Donnelly Family	18-The Titgemeyers
25-Buhrow Family	26-Diana Lambert
Lectors	Lectors
4-Sandy Toth	5- Jerry Goldstein
11-Nancy Strohscher	12- Kellie Ulrich
18-Beverly Harder	19-Tim Titgemeyer
25-Jonah D.	26-Melissa Lammers
Acolytes	Acolytes
4-Jacob H.	5- Mila
11-Liam D.	12- Makenna
18-Jonah D.	19- Rylan
25-Nolan D.	26-Lauren
Communion	Communion
4-Alice Witt	5-Roland Sandrock
11- Carol Vargo	12- Margaret Berger
18-Ron Gerkenmeyer	19- Cebie Titgemeyer
25- Al & Traci Brown	26-Robin Perkins




















We will need worship assistants
 for all three Christmas Eve
 Worship Services!
 Please sign up on the list next to
 the Pastor's Office to serve this
 Christmas Eve!
 We can't do it without you!

Thank you for serving the Lord! If you cannot make your assignment, please make arrangements for a replacement then let the office know as soon as possible.



DECEMBER

at St. John

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p>  <p><i>First Sunday of Advent</i></p> <p>The Chosen Movie 11 AM 8:30am -9:30am Confirmation Class 8:30am -9:30am Sunday School for ALL AGES 9:45am -10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am -12:00pm Choir practice</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>9:00am Blankets 2:00pm -4:00pm WELCA Christmas Meeting (SH) 7:30pm -9:30pm Dartball-HOME</p>	<p>4</p>  <p><i>Mints for Emakant</i></p> <p>7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds 10:00am -6:00pm Red Kettle Bell Ringing at Millers 6:00pm -7:30pm Cub Scouts Committee Meeting (B)</p>	<p>5</p> <p>5:45pm -7:45pm Women's Community Ecumenical Christmas at Genoa Christian Church</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Office closed Set up for Christmas Tree Lighting (B)</p>	<p>7</p>  <p>5:00pm Contemporary Worship 6:00pm -7:00pm Community Christmas Tree Lighting and Meal</p>
<p>8</p>  <p>CHRISTMAS PROGRAM</p> <p>Children's Christmas Program (9:45 worship) Shopping with the Stars Gifts Due today!! 8:30am -9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am -10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am -12:00pm Choir practice 5:00pm -8:00pm Boy Scout Court of Honor (B)</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>  <p>9:00am Blankets 7:30pm -9:30pm Dartball@Elliston Trinity UCC</p>	<p>11</p>  <p><i>Mints for Emakant</i></p> <p>7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds</p>	<p>12</p>  <p>BOARDS & COMMITTEES Committee Night 7 PM</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Office closed</p>	<p>14</p> <p>5:00pm Contemporary Worship</p>
<p>15</p>  <p><i>Third Sunday of Advent</i></p> <p>The Chosen Movie 11AM 8:30am -9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am -10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am -12:00pm Choir practice 4:00pm -6:00pm Scouts Pack Meeting (60 ppl in Basement)</p>	<p>16</p>  <p>Newsletter DEADLINE Forerunner deadline 9 AM</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9:00am Blankets</p>	<p>18</p>  <p>Church Council Council Meeting 7 PM (adjusted date!) 7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Poinsettia Delivery</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Office closed Poinsettia Delivery</p>	<p>21</p> <p>9:00am -12:00pm St John Serves Genoa Food Pantry 10:00am -3:00pm Mathews- SH Rental 5:00pm Contemporary Worship</p>
<p>22</p>  <p><i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i></p> <p>Baptism of Annie Hill 8:30am -9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am -10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am -12:00pm Choir practice</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Deadline for bills and reimbursements for 2024</p>	<p>24</p>  <p>Christmas Eve Christmas Eve Services at 4/7/11 PM 9:00am Blankets</p>	<p>25</p>  <p>MERRY Christmas Merry Christmas- Office Closed</p>	<p>26</p>  <p>Poinsettia Pick Up</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Office closed</p>	<p>28</p> <p>5:00pm Contemporary Worship</p>
<p>29</p> <p>8:30am -9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am -10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am -12:00pm Choir practice</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>  <p>New Year's Eve 9:00am Blankets</p>	<p>1</p>  <p>Happy New Year! Office closed</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Office closed</p>	<p>4</p> <p>11:00am -3:00pm Victoria Kiss (SH) 5:00pm Contemporary Worship</p>

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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419-378-1112 cell

E-mail address:

pastorobrien@stjohnwilliston.org

Church Office

LisaAnne Gregg

Office Administrators

M-T-W

(Thurs. hours vary-church office

closed on Fridays)

9:00am-3:00pm

Church: 419-836-5514

E-mail address:

office@stjohnwilliston.org

*Visit us on Facebook

In person and online!

Fall/Winter Worship Hours at St. John

Saturday- Contemporary Worship 5:00 PM

Confirmation Class- Sunday 8:30 AM

Sunday School- October-May 8:30 AM

First Sunday of each month- All Ages

Sunday- Traditional Worship 9:45 AM