Volume 0695
Issue 320
December 2022

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Ask the Pastor

Why do some people write "Xmas" instead of "Christmas"? Are they intentionally trying to take Christ out of Christmas?

You are not alone in your question. A poll on the website bible.com asked their readers: "What concerns you the most about how the world is attacking Christmas, a Christian holiday?" The most popular response was… "Using an "X" to replace Christ's name in Christmas - i.e. Xmas." The objection to Xmas is usually along the line that people have taken Christ out of Christmas and replaced him with an unknown, since the Greek letter chi (pronounced kai), which looks like the English letter x, is the symbol for an unknown quantity in mathematics.

But truthfully, this is more of a misunderstanding than part of an effort to subvert Christianity. In Greek, the word "Christ" (CRISTOS) begins with the letter chi, which again, looks like the English letter *X*. Xmas is simply an abbreviation; one that has been around for a long time.

Some say using the single letter *X* for Christ dates to the first century AD along with other Christian symbols, but the evidence is lacking. Others believe that it came into widespread use by the thirteenth century along with many other abbreviations and symbols for Christianity and various Christian ideas that were popular in the Middle Ages. However, scholars don't know for sure.

We do know that in the fifteenth century Xmas emerged as a widely used abbreviation for Christmas. In 1436 Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press with moveable type. In the early days of printing, typesetting was done by hand and was very tedious and expensive. As a result, abbreviations were common. In religious publications, the church began to use the abbreviation C, or simply X, for the word "Christ" to cut down on the cost of books and pamphlets. From there, the abbreviation moved into general use in newspapers and other publications, and "Xmas" became an accepted way of printing "Christmas" (along with the abbreviations Xian and Xianity). Even Webster's dictionary acknowledges that the abbreviation Xmas was in common use by the middle of the sixteenth century.

So, while it's possible some people use "Xmas" as a way to avoid writing "Christ." And there are secular and commercial reasons that "XMAS" appears in ads and on signs; because it can be larger and more attention-getting in the same amount of space (more bang for the buck). Those factors do not take away from the thoroughly Christian origin of the word "Xmas." In this instance, concerns about taking Christ out of Christmas by writing "Xmas" instead of spelling out "Christmas" are misdirected.

If you would like to submit a question for "Ask the Pastor", Biblical, theological, church-related, or anything you have been dying to ask a pastor, you can hand me a note, ask me after church, send an e-mail, or sneak into the church after dark and anonymously slide a sealed envelope under my office door. If I answer your question in print, I will not include your name unless you explicitly ask me to.

FORERUNNER NEWS

Please note that because of the timing of the Christmas Holiday, the deadline for the January Forerunner is on Monday, December 29th at 9:00 AM. Thank you for your understanding!

Worship Helpers Needed! Sign up in the office today!

UPCOMING!

Our annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 29, following the service. Please planning on attending!

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

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Pastor Shawn O'Brien
Cellphone:
419-378-1112 cell
pastorobrien
@stjohnwilliston.org

Fall/Winter Worship
Saturday at 5:00 PM
Sunday School 8:30 AM
Sunday Worship 9:45 AM

Deadline for the January 2023 newsletter is MONDAY, DECEMBER 19th
Please send articles and/or information to office@stjohnwilliston.org.

St. John Lutheran Church

"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

LisaAnne Gregg
Lori Buhrow
Office Administrators
9am—2pm
Monday—Friday

12
9 3
CHURCH
OFFICE HOURS

With Heartfelt Thanks

Thank you so much to the entire congregation for the Anniversary of Ordination Celebration. Plans were kept pretty secret, so I wasn't sure what to expect, but it was wonderful. Thank you to Diana who was apparently planning since last January. Thank you to the team who designed the plaque, it's beautiful. Thank you to Diane for the kind words during the meal. Thank to Alice and Carol for planning the dinner. Thank you to everyone on their crew who helped in the kitchen with preparation and clean-up. Thank you to everyone who brought food; there was an incredible amount of food and everything I had was delicious. Thank you to Tami, Traci, and Kris for the beautiful table decorations. Thank you to Mona for the delicious cake. Thank you to Margaret, Cheryl, and Jo Elaine for the reception on Sunday (and more cake). Thank you to everyone who contributed for the very generous gift. Thank you to those who sent cards or wrote notes. (I received a ton of cards and notes; thank you!) It was so nice to sit down with my family on Sunday afternoon and read them all. And thank you to everyone who worked behind the scenes to host such a great weekend. I know there is so much work that went into this celebration that I never saw. (And I know as soon as I start listing names someone gets overlooked, so I apologize, but thank you!)

I do not take for granted that St. John is a special congregation. I love you all and I am grateful for the love I have received. Thank you for 13 years of appreciation, forgiveness, and serving God together. I am very blessed!

Pastor Shawn O'Brien

Our Newest Patriarch

Henry Krukemyer is now the newest Patriarch of our St. John Congregation, November 15, 2022. His name has been added to the Bible and his picture will soon be on the picture board. Congratulations Henry!!!

Remembering with Love

Memorials and Gifts to St. John

In Memory of Carol Tank
Arline Sabin

In Memory of Dorothy Marchal
Doris Titgemeyer

In Memory of Norma Jean Gast
Terry Gast

In Memory of Roger Jensen
Arline Sabin

In Memory of Michelle Maix
Carol Purney
Jeff & Janet Clough
Susie Bires
Jeff Schimming
Pat Sievert
Merle & Shirley Berger
Gary Vargo
Helen Tenteris
Donna & Susie Mathews
Tim & Cebie Titgemeyer
JoElaine Schimming
Mo Majewski
Tara Taylor
Doris Titgemeyer
Phyllis Haeft
Larry & Doris Lafferty
Roland & Janis Sandrock
Dave & Lisa Smithmyer
Lowell & Diane Hartman
Carol Beamer
Alice Witt
Roger Clark
Sherri Fiechaber
Dean & Sandy Miller
Laraine & Gary Meinke
Wayne & Vicki Takach

*If a name has inadvertently been
left off the list, please let the office know.

In Memory of Lois Kinsel
Lowell and Diane Hartman
Gary and LisaAnne Gregg

In Memory of Miriam Camper
Arline Sabin

In Memory of Ray Fredericksen
Arline Sabin

Women of the ELCA

ESTHER CIRCLE: Tuesday, December 6
12:00 p.m. (Noon)
In the Social Hall

REBEKAH CIRCLE: Tuesday, December 6
6:00 p.m. at Nancy Strohscher's house

Church Constitution Update

The Constitution Committee has been at work all summer updating our church constitution. (This is something we are to do every 5 years.) The Northwestern Ohio Synod Council has reviewed our updates and added its own suggestions. The document has been summited to the St. John Church Council, which recommended congregation approval. The next step is voting on the approved updated document at our January 22, 2023, Annual Congregational Meeting. If you would like to review the Draft Constitution before the meeting, contact the church office at (419) 836-5514

ALTAR FLOWERS

The 2023 Altar and Chancel Flower chart is posted on the door near the office.
Please sign up for the weekend you would like to order Altar or Chancel flowers.
Fill out the blue slip and place it in the offering plate and label it flowers or drop it off at the office with your payment.

Altar flowers are $25.00
Chancel flowers are $20.00

Please submit your order/blue slip as soon as possible before the order date as orders are placed several days in advance.

Flowers will not be ordered without a blue slip and payment.

We are using Hirzel Bros. Florists again this year.
They do such a nice job and are very customer friendly.

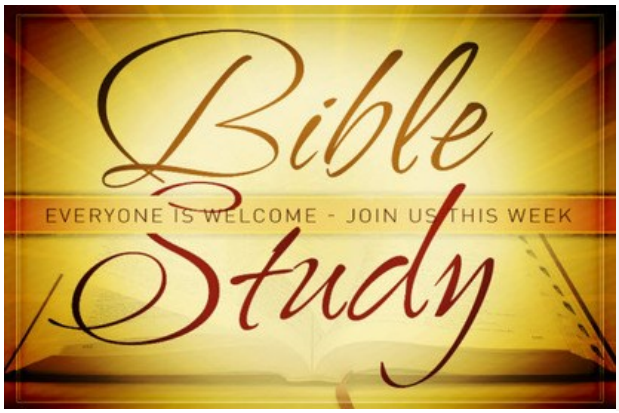
St. John Prayer Chain is there for you....

"Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive." Matthew 21:22

When there is illness, a special need, or a time of thanksgiving in your family, or among friends or neighbors, you may wish to ask for the prayers of your sisters and brothers at St. John. If such a need arises, call Pastor O'Brien (cell 419-378-1112) or the church office (419-836-5514) who will begin the prayer chain.

Please keep your message to the minimum to avoid any errors in passing it on. Thank you!

WEEKLY EVENTS @ST.JOHN WILLISTON



Did you know….
There is an Adult Bible study class that meets
Mondays at 10:00 am?
This study is lead by Pastor O'Brien and concentrates on the lectionary lessons for the upcoming week.
Just bring a bible...No experience needed!
You are welcome to join us!

The "Blanket Ladies" gather to make quilts on
Tuesday mornings at 10:00 am.

These beautiful blankets are then distributed to those in need all over the country! Come join us! No experience needed! Bed sheets (preferably queen size) are needed for quilt backings. Donations may be left in the box outside the church office. Join us! You only need to know how to tie a knot!

McDonalds Breakfast

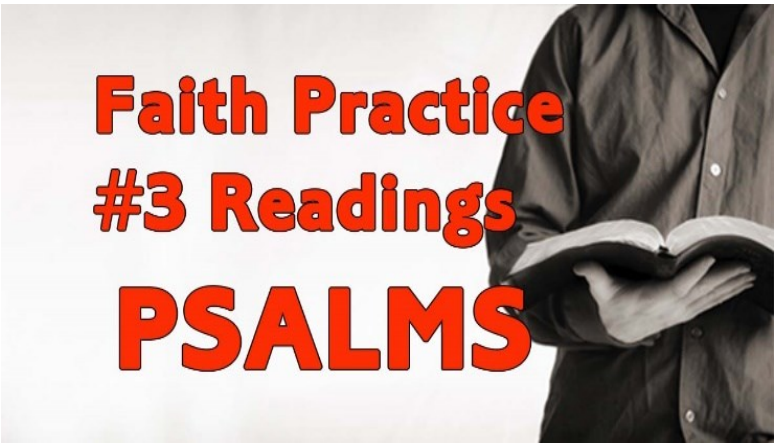
Join us for breakfast and fellowship at the Northwood McDonald's. We will gather starting at 7:00 AM and if you are available, I would like to invite you to stop by and have breakfast with your St. John friends.

Join the St. John Dartball Team!

Get those pitching arms ready! Join us for fun on Tuesday nights at 7:30 PM as the Western Ottawa County Dartball League continues its season.
All are welcome. No experience is 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

Upcoming games:
Dec. 6 7:30 PM at Home
Dec. 13 7:30 PM at Rocky Ridge St. John
Jan. 3 7:30 PM at Home
Jan. 10 7:30 PM at Genoa St John UCC
Jan. 17 7:30 PM at Elliston Trinity UCC

CHURCH DARTBALL LEAGUE



Dec 5 – Psalm 87
Dec 12 – Psalm 88
Dec 19 – Psalm 90
Dec 26– Psalm 91
Jan 2– Psalm 92
Jan 9– Psalm 93
Jan 16– Psalm 94
Jan 23– Psalm 95
Jan 30– Psalm 96

Communion Helpers Needed

There will be a communion training before the service this Saturday, December 3 at 4:00pm and on Sunday, December 4 following the service. Please join us!

(We would also like to populate a list of volunteers to create a rotation, so please let me know if you are willing to be added as a volunteer by call the church office or speaking with Pastor.)

The person who sets up communion and the server **can** be the same person, but that is not required. When volunteering (or being added to the rotation) please indicate if you are willing to help with one job or the other, or both.

Communion Set-Up

The Communion Set-Up person will need to arrive 10-15 minutes prior to worship and stay late for clean-up. The setup job includes filling the flagon and chalice (pitcher and cup) with wine; adding wafers, a host wafter, and 6-8 pre-sealed communion cups to the paten (plate); and placing the elements on the altar. The volunteer will also need to place a tray of empty Communion cups on the front pew on each side; also cover the bottom of the baskets for empty cups with a napkin and place them at the opposite end of the front pews.

Clean-up includes returning the communion items to the sacristy (room adjacent to the altar area) to be cleaned and put away. Used cups will need to be thrown away and baskets returned to the sacristy. This is not a difficult job, but it does take some time to prepare the altar or worship. Many have found this simple act of service to be joy and a boost to their spirit as they help their church family prepare for worship.

A guided walkthrough of the process and a more detailed list of instructions can be made available.

Communion Server

The Communion server will assist the pastor by pouring the wine from the chalice into the individual communion cups as worshipers come forward to receive Communion. The server will also help the pastor in recognizing anyone who is not able to come to the front of the sanctuary for Communion. This is not a difficult job and being the means by which someone receives the blood of Christ is a wonderful way to feed your soul.

December Stewardship Page

GIFT
Growing In Faith Together
Growing to Serve

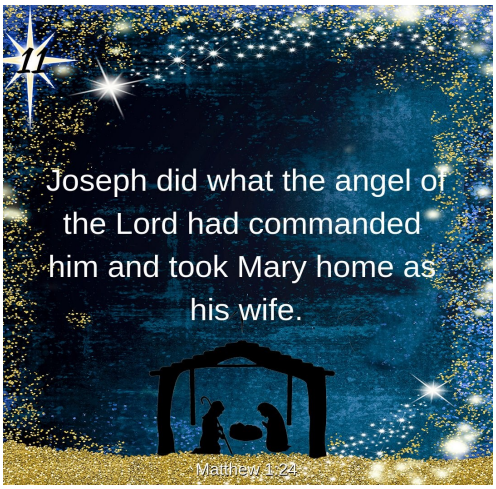
The inn was full... There are many of you who think to yourselves: "If only I had been there! How quick I would have been to help the baby!"
Why don't you do it now? You have Christ in your neighbor. You ought to serve your neighbor, for what you do to your neighbor in need you do to the Lord Christ himself.

MARTIN LUTHER
CHRISTMAS SERMON 1543

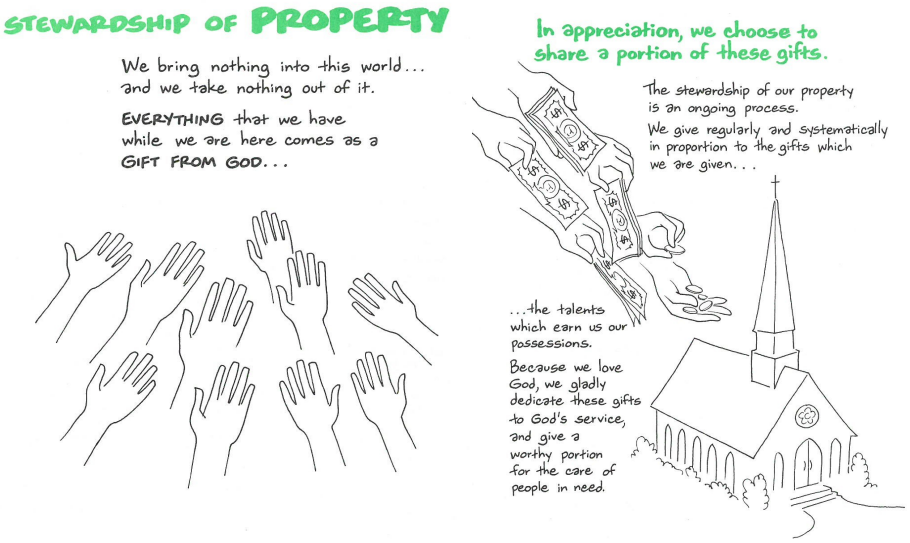
December Stewardship Prayer

Gracious Lord,
Let your goodness reveal itself to us, that we, made in your image, may conform ourselves to it. We cannot imagine your majesty, power and wonder on our own; nor is it fitting for us to try. But your kindness and mercy reach from the heavens, through the clouds, to the earth below to show us the fruits of your Incarnation. You have come to us as a small child, but you have brought us the greatest of all gifts, the gift of your eternal love. Caress us with your tiny hands, embrace us with your tiny arms, and soften our hearts with your tender voice so that we might respond as humble stewards of your active presence in the world. We pray this through Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen. *Adapted from a prayer by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux*

You have special gifts!
And you can use them to serve in worship at St. John!
There are several opportunities to serve at both Saturday and Sunday worship services.
Sign up today to be an usher, communion server, lector or greeter! See Pastor or the office for details!



Putting our complete trust in the Lord without expecting anything in return. Stewards strive to put God first in all things and follow Him wherever He may led us. As we prepare for the birth of our Lord, pray for the strength and courage to be a model of discipleship, just as Joseph was.



Sack 4 Sack

The Genoa Comets had 12 sacks this year in football for a total of $300.00. We also had donations of $775.50. We will be donating $1,075.50 to the Genoa Food Pantry. Thank you to everyone who donated to this great cause!

SHOPPING WITH THE STARS!

Help us celebrate the spirit of Christmas as we provide wonderful gifts for the residents of the Luther Home of Mercy.
Simply pick a star from the tree …and shop!
Then, bring your **unwrapped** gift back to church and place it under the tree.

All gifts must be at church by Dec. 5th.

We are in need of ushers, lectors, acolytes, communion set up and servers for Christmas Eve services at 4pm, 7pm and 11pm and Christmas Day 9:45am service. If you are willing to help out, please see the sign up sheet in the narthex or call the church office at (419) 836-5514 or email office@stjohnwilliston.org . Thank you!!

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

We are looking for members to help serve as Salvation Army bell ringers for Saturday, December 10, at Miller's in Genoa. We need someone for the 2pm or the 4pm shift. Each shift is two hours. Bell ringers will be at the front of the store. If you would like to volunteer, please see the sign-up sheet located by the office.

St. John Lutheran Church
Williston, Ohio

Christmas

Bundle up and bring your family to worship with us while we celebrate the gift of God's perfect love.

Saturday, December 3 | Christmas Tree Lighting

When: 6:00pm | Where: St. John Lutheran Church

Following worship we will gather in the church basement for food, fellowship, and singing carols. Afterwards we will gather around the Christmas tree located to the east of the parsonage along SR 579 for the tree lighting.

Sunday, December 18 | Christmas Program

When: 6:00pm | Where: St. John Lutheran Church

St. John youth share the story of the birth of Jesus in our annual Christmas pageant. The Advent Tea will follow with food and refreshments.

Saturday, December 24 | Christmas Eve Worship

Christmas Eve Family Service | 4 00pm

Join us for this spirited time of worship celebrating the birth of Jesus as Emmanuel, God with us; featuring the singing of Christmas songs old and new, a joyful chorus of voices, and proclamation of the Nativity Gospel.

Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols | 7:00pm

Join us for this service with all the traditional elements of worship; we will sing favorite Christmas Carols, hear the Gospel story, and listen to a special Christmas message. In this time of worship we will see and hear and join the chorus of the heavenly host announcing the birth of Jesus as a sign of peace to all people of good will.

Christmas Eve Christ Mass | 11:00pm

Join us for this peaceful and reflective time of worship where we gather to hear the Good News of the angels proclaimed and then share the light of Christ with each other before taking it into the world. This service includes the powerful experience of singing Silent Night with candlelight.

Sunday December 25 | Christmas Morning Worship

Hymns and Christmas Pajamas | 9:45a

Our Christmas Day celebration includes singing of carols, sharing the Lord's Supper, and giving thanks to God for the gift of Jesus. Christmas Pajamas are encouraged.

December 31 and January 1 | New Year's Eve and Day

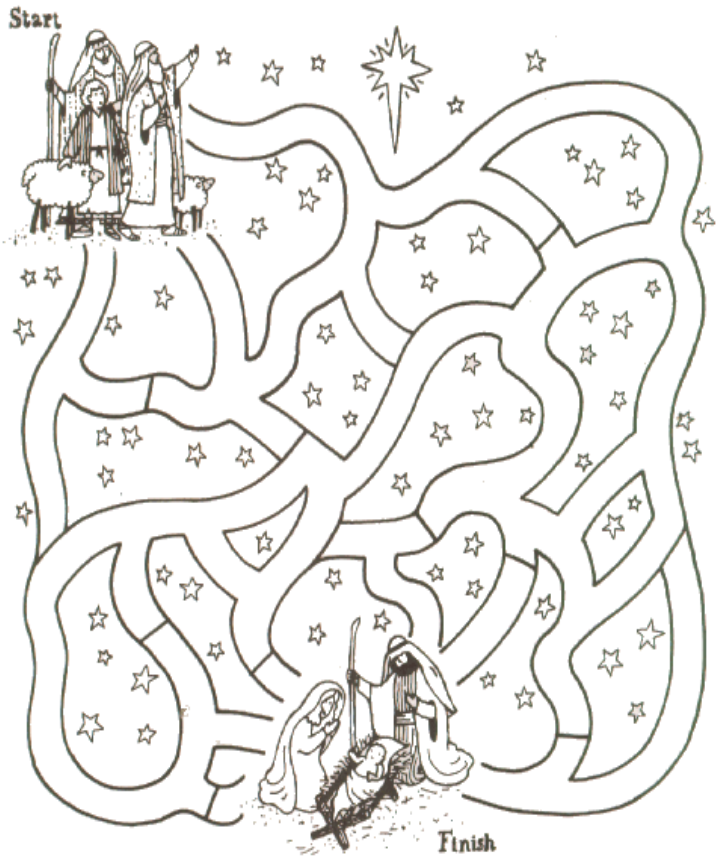
We return to our "regular" worship schedule this weekend; 5:00pm on Saturday evening and 9:45am on Sunday morning. Sunday school for all ages will resume on January 9 at 8:30am

Please visit our website at stjohnwilliston.org or call 419.836.5514 for more information.
Worship is also available on Facebook Live and YouTube

CONNECTING KIDS TO CHRIST

The Connection

Help the shepherds find the path to Jesus.



Jesus, Gentle Shepherd
This cane of red and white
Proclaims the sweet
love story,
Born on Christmas night.

This cane, you see,
when turned around
Begins your name of Love;
And now becomes
a symbol
Of peace proclaimed above.

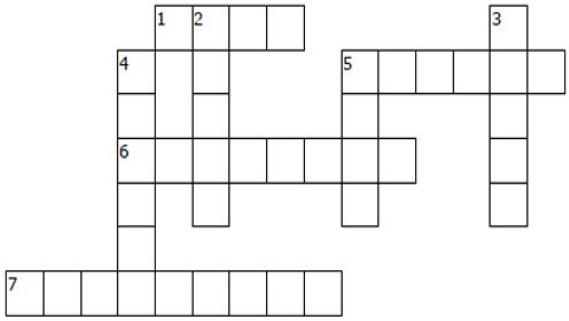
The lively peppermint flavor
is the regal gift of spice,
The white is Your purity
And the red Your sacrifice.

And so this cane
reminds us
Of just how much You care,
And like Your Christmas
gift to us,
It's meant for all to share.

The Birth of Jesus

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:7 (KJV)

Puzzle is based on Luke 2:1-20



ACROSS
1. An infant or very young child
5. The place where Mary laid the baby Jesus
6. A person who takes care of sheep
7. The city where Jesus was born

DOWN
2. Heavenly being that told the shepherds about Jesus' birth
3. The savior of the world
4. The earthly father of Jesus
5. The mother of Jesus

JOSEPH	ANGEL	BETHLEHEM	BABY
MARY	SHEPHERD	JESUS	MANGER

Copyright Sermons4Kids, Inc.

Dear Friends in Christ,

"Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you" (Matthew 7:7).

Jesus asks a lot of questions. I once read that Jesus asks over 300 questions. Often Jesus answers a question with a question. What's up with that? Why so many questions, Jesus? Is it because questions help us to pause and to ponder? Is it because questions help us dig just a bit deeper? Is it because questions have a way of leading us to a new place in a new way?

Late last week, I was looking for a blessing to offer at a prayer retreat. I didn't find the blessing I was looking for, but I did find a series of questions by Father John O'Donohue. He calls his questions, *A Mirror of Questions*, to be asked in prayer at the end of the day. These are rich questions to pray and to ponder. Give these questions a try this week and see where your soul may be stirred and strengthened.

What dreams did I create last night?
Where did my eyes linger today?
Where was I blind?
Where was I hurt without anyone noticing?
What did I learn today?
What did I read?
What new thoughts visited me?
What differences did I notice in those closest to me?
Whom did I neglect?
Where did I neglect myself?
What did I begin today that might endure?
How were my conversations?
What did I do today for the poor and the excluded?
Did I remember the dead today?
When could I have exposed myself to the risk of something different?
Where did I allow myself to receive love?
With whom today did I feel most myself?
What reached me today? How did it imprint?
Who saw me today?
What visitations had I from the past and from the future?
What did I avoid today?
From the evidence – why was I given this day?

Credit: John O'Donohue, *To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Blessings*, page 98.

2022: The Year of Vision Memory Verse

Revelation 21:5a ***"And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new."***

God's Global Barnyard

An animal can make a world of a difference for a family in need. Animals provide food to eat, fertilizer to grow crops and offspring to sell at the market. With one gift, you can help a family escape the cycle of hunger and poverty for good.

Cow

A cow's milk, meat, fertilizer and calves can quickly strengthen a family's financial security.

Chicks

Chicks begin laying eggs at just a few months old, offering nutritious, protein rich meals for families who are hungry.

Goat

Fresh milk from a goat is very nutritious and can be used to make products like yogurt and cheese to sell at the market.

Honeybees

Bees pollinate plants and boost crop growth – helping the wider community. Soaps and candles can be made from their wax and sold at the local market.

Pig

Within months after birth, piglets grow to weigh over 200 pounds – bringing a big payoff at the market.

Fish Farm

A fish farm and training in good business economics can provide a lifetime of meals for a community.

Oxen and plow

A pair of oxen will help create record-breaking harvests, provide natural fertilizer for the fields and give families the gift of time.

Give through your congregation, by visiting ELCA.org/goodgifts or by sending a check to ELCA Good Gifts, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009. Please indicate your gift in the memo line of your check.

ELCA.org/goodgifts

With the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, save yourself a little time and give online. It's Simple, Safe and Just a Click Away!

Start the new year with one less worry!

Online giving is now available at St. John.
Simply visit our web site at www.stjohnwillistion.org
and click on the "online giving"
link at the top of the page.

You may give one time or set up reoccurring donations to automatically give from your checking or savings account. (We suggest using your checking or savings account as credit cards are charged an additional transaction fee. There are no fees associated with checking/savings accounts through VANCO, our online processor.)

Not online? See LisaAnne in the office to set up an account or fill out an "Authorization Form" (located in the Narthex) and return it to the office.

Thank you for being a blessing to St. John!

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

AmazonSmile donates 0.5% of your purchase (before taxes and rebates) on all eligible products to your charity of choice. This may not sound like a lot, but if you're like many others who prefer the convenience of ordering gifts and necessary items online, imagine how quickly it could add up!

5nd Annual
Community Christmas Tree Lighting
At St. John -Williston

Saturday, December 3, 2022
6:00 PM

Join us for a light meal followed by singing of Christmas Carols and wonderful fellowship.

The Lighting of the Community Christmas Tree will follow the meal and take place in the lot to the east of the Parsonage– along SR 579.

Please brings items for the Ottawa County Holiday Bureau. (socks, mittens, scarves, toys, hygiene items, paper products, cleaning items and non perishable food items)

.

St. John's Annual Children's Christmas Pageant

"Christmas Unwrapped"

December 18, 2022 at 6:00PM

Practice will be on Saturday, December 17, 2022 from 9:00am to 12:00pm and during the Sunday School hour on December18th. Any Catechism student that is not in the Pageant will be having class during practice on Sunday.

Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share for the Advent Tea.

Deadline to order is Dec. 7th!

ORDER DEADLINE -December 7th!

Please place this order form and payment in an envelope marked with your name and "Poinsettia" in the offering plate, or drop your payment off at the church office.
Please make checks out to St. John.
The deadline to order is Thursday, December 7th.
Poinsettias will be red or white.

Quantity

____ $ 10.00 each

In Loving Memory of: _____
Or In Honor of: _____
Color: Red White

In Loving Memory of: _____
Or In Honor of: _____
Color: Red White

In Loving Memory of: _____
Or In Honor of: _____
Color: Red White

In Loving Memory of: _____
Or In Honor of: _____
Color: Red White

Purchaser's name _____

Phone_____

Total Ordered

_____plants at $10.00 = _____ (amount enclosed)

Unwrap the best Gift this Christmas!

Come and Celebrate Christmas
with us at St. John Lutheran Church

Christmas Eve Services at
4:00 and 7:00 PM
Candlelight Christmas Eve Service
at 11:00 PM

Care of Souls Retreat Day

All rostered ministers are invited to the Care of Souls Retreat!

December 13 @ Lial Renewal Center, Whitehouse (9 a.m. - 2 p.m.)

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28-30

Bishop Daniel Beaudoin invites all rostered ministers to a day of care, rest, and renewal at two of northwest Ohio's beautiful retreat spaces. This free event will feature grounding and contemplative spiritual practices, fellowship with colleagues, and time for group or individual retreat. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

All rostered ministers are welcome to attend one or both retreat days.
Questions? Email Caroline.guy@nwos-elca.org.

CHURCH COUNCIL

St. John Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes – 10.20.22

Members Present: Pastor O'Brien, Diana Pfaff, Tim Titgemeyer, Tracy Orians, Ron Gerkensmeyer, Susie Mathews, Kim Sommers, Rosemarie Dickinson, Kristina Wildman, Kent Delventhal and Margaret Berger
Members Absent: Donna Mathews, Melissa Hayes, Kellie Ulrich, Gary Johnson, and Jennifer Nelson
Guest: Lily Sondergeld
Meeting Opened: At 7:00pm, by Diana Pfaff
Devotions led by Pastor: Psalm 84
September secretary minutes approved: Motion made by Susie Mathews: & Motion seconded by: Rosemarie Dickinson
Pastor's Report:

Worship Attendance:
- In person average for September 2022 - 101.3 compared to September 2021 - 96
- Online average for September 2022 - 67.5 compared to September 2021 - 106.8

Numbers:
- 13 hospital/homebound visit/individual or family meetings
- 6 committee/group meetings
- 4 community/youth/fellowship events
- 6 professional/clergy activities
- 2 classes/Bible studies
- 1 funeral

Funeral:
- I presided at the funeral of Dean Traver on September 10th.

Matriarch
- Edna Rideout was named out 11th Matriarch (9/15).

Patriach
- Ray Fredericksen, our Patriarch, died on September 22. His funeral is delayed until Shirley is able to attend. A new Patriarch will be named following Rays funeral.

Financial Secretary, Treasurer and Finance Committee Report: (report included in packet)
- Expenses: We are 95% of the monthly budget and 96% of the year-to-date budget.
- Income: We are 104% of our monthly budget and 96% of our year-to-date budget.
- Income over expenses: On a year-to-date basis, we are currently negative $2,568 compared to our budget of negative $3,471.
- Kristina Wildman - Sending out up to date reports to the congregation next week and we are starting the budget next month.
- Kent Delventhal - We are over budget in operating expenses because water, electricity and gas were higher and contract services were higher because we had a service call.

Christian Community Life: Susie Mathews
- There is no Food Pantry Report.
- We served hot dogs, chips, cookies, popcorn and water at Trunk or Treat. We served about 70 hot dogs.
- Sack for a sack will give around $300 to the food pantry.

Evangelism: Margaret Berger
- Finished the basket for trunk or treat and finalized plans. Brayden from Williston won the basket!
- Decided on a menu for Christmas Tree Lighting.
- Received $250 from Thrivent to cover food costs.
- We are asking for paper products and toiletries for Nightingale's Harvest.

Parish Education: Kim Sommers
- Trunk or Treat was Oct 16. We had 13 decorated cars passing out candy with approximately 100 people attending the event. Thank you to everyone who volunteered, donated and /or participated in the event this year.
- We will be working on the plans for a Christmas program next.

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Stewardship: Ron Gerkensmeyer/Rosemarie Dickinson

● The golf outing was very successful. We had 13 teams-our income was $5780, expenses $2680, net profit $3100. We had 25 hole sponsorships. We want to thank all who participated and all our sponsors and workers. Next year's date is September 23, 2023, see you there.

Worship Life: Kellie Ulrich (not in attendance)

● Working to update the Christmas flier to include all Christmas activities. We want to encourage everyone who uses social media to share and some hard copies will be posted.
● December 3rd - Christmas Tree Lighting
● December 18th - Children's Christmas Program
● December 24th - Three Christmas Eve Services (4pm, 7pm, an 11pm)
● December 25h - Christmas Morning Worship at 9:45am
● Thanksgiving Eve Service will continue as it has in the past. Mt.Carmel will host this year
● Shopping with the Stars will be happening again this year. Stars will be placed on a table rather than a tree. Jane Phillips is making the preparations. Items purchased will go to the Lutheran Home of Mercy.

Property:

● No report

Old Business:

● Waiting for an update on the defibrillator check/review.
● Conversations about offering the Chosen One series and Chris Everett speaker event.
● Dead evergreen tree by rental property and talking about the removal of that.
● Refill first aid kits in the kitchen.
● Two windows in the social hall need attention.
● Air conditioning people are finishing up.

New Business:

● We are streaming our services online and collecting online giving. We discussed setting up pay pal or Venmo and looking into see if this can work, including logistics and having its on banking account.
● New office hours M-F 9-2!
● Every year we need 2 people to go to food pantry board meetings, once a month to bring back info to the church council. The meetings are held at the ARC (old junior high building in Genoa) at the food pantry. Our church is also responsible for getting people to work it twice a year.
● Christmas offering ideas suggested were American Red Cross Ohio and Lutheran Disaster Relief but decision has not been made.
● Nominating committee just needs one more nominee for both stewardship and worship life.
● Constitutional Committee received suggestions from the Synod and they made revisions and sent in. Most changes were in regard to format. The hope is to email the updated Constitution and bylaws to members within the next 1-2 weeks. Please review and contact any of the committee members with questions. The plan is to vote at the November Council meeting to recommend this document to the Congregation for adoption at the January 2023 Annual Meeting

● **Next Committee Mtg**: Thursday, November 10, 2022, 7pm
● **Next Council Mtg:** Thursday, November 17, 2022, 7pm

Minutes submitted by: Tracy Orians, Council Secretary

December
Worship Volunteers

Ushers
3 Wayne Bauman
10 Jack Mathews
17 The Gerkensmeyer's
31 Alice Witt/Carol Vargo

Lectors
3 Amy Schloegl
10 Nancy Strohscher
17 Tracy Orians
31 Beverly Harder

Acolytes
3 Benjamin Sommers
10 Olivia Martin
17 Kennedy Donnelly
31 Lindsay Krumnow

Communion
3 Nancy Strohscher
10 Ron Gerkensmeyer
17 Carol Vargo
31 Alice Witt

Ushers
4 Open
11 Diana Pfaff
18 Jill Kao
1 The Titgemeyer's

Lectors
4 Mina Steinmetz
11 Kelly Ulrich
18 Melissa Lammers
1 Cebie Titgemeyer

Acolytes
4 Logan Hays
11 Lily Sondergeld
18Lauren Hoeft
1 Caleb Hays

Communion
4 Margaret Berger
11 Tim Titgemeyer
18 Deanna Neuman
1 Kellie Ulrich

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.

Watch for the Christmas Eve Services and Christmas Day Worship Assistant Sign Up List in the Narthex!

January
Worship Volunteers

Ushers
7 Donnelly Family
14 Wayne Bauman
21 Jack Mathews
28 Ron Gerkensmeyer

Lectors
7 Amy Schloegl
14 Aidan O'Brien
21 Nancy Strohscher
28 Tracy Orians

Acolytes
7 Emma Morgan
14 Jacob Higginbotham
21 Mila McQueary
28 Lindsay Krumnow

Communion
8 No Communion
14 Nancy Strohscher
21 Ron Gerkensmeyer
28 Carol Vargo

Ushers
8 Jill Kao
15 Diana Pfaff
22 The Titgemeyer's
29 Diana Pfaff

Lectors
8 Roland Sandrock
15 Judy Yockey
22 Fran Cranfield
29 Diana Pfaff

Acolytes
8 Logan Hays
15 Lily Sondergeld
22 Lauren Hoeft
29 Caleb Hays

Communion
8 No Communion
15 Dave Neuman
22 Cebie Titgemeyer
29 Margaret Berger

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	**2**	**3** **4:00 PM** Communion Lessons **5:00 PM** Contemporary Worship **6:00 PM** Tree Lighting
4 **8:30 AM** Sunday School **9:45 AM** Traditional **10:45 AM** Choir	**5** 10:00 AM Bible Study	**6** **9:00 AM** **Blankets** **Esther Circle** **12PM** Rebekah Circle **6PM**	**7** 7:00 AM Breakfast Gathering Poinsettia Orders Due!	**8** 7:00 PM Committee Night Meeting	**9**	**10** 5:00 PM Contemporary Worship
11 **8:30 AM** Sunday School **9:45 AM** Traditional **10:45 AM** Choir	**12** 10:00 AM Bible Study	**13** **9:00 AM** Blankets	**14** 7:00 AM Breakfast Gathering	**15** 7:00 PM Council Meeting	**16**	**17** 5:00 PM Contemporary Worship
18 **8:30 AM** Sunday School **9:45 AM** Traditional **10:45 AM** Choir Christmas Pageant **6PM**	**19** 9:00 AM Forerunner deadline! 10:00 AM Bible Study	**20** **9:00 AM** Blankets	**21** 7:00 AM Breakfast Gathering	**22**	**23**	**24** ***Christmas Eve Services*** ***4pm*** ***7pm*** ***11pm***
25 ***Merry Christmas!*** ***No Sunday School*** ***9:45 AM Traditional Worship***	**26** NO Bible Study	**27** **9:00 AM** Blankets	**28** NO Breakfast Gathering	**29**	**30**	**31**

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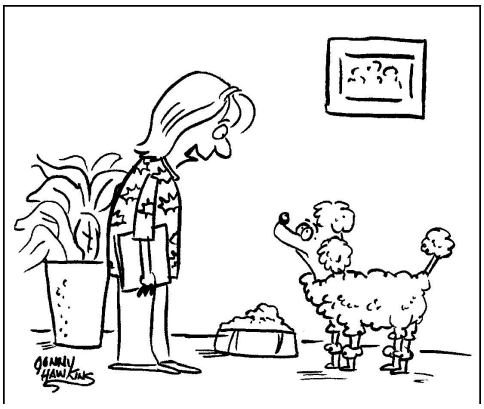
St. John Lutheran Church
Williston, Ohio

December 2022



"Hey, Fancy! Guess who got voted to play the sheep in the Christmas Pageant this year!?

Pastor Shawn O'Brien
419-378-1112 cell

E-mail address:
pastorobrien@stjohnwilliston.org

Church Office Hours
LisaAnne Gregg
Lori Buhrow,
Office Administrators
Monday –Friday
9:00am-2:00pm
Church: 419-836-5514

E-mail address:
office@stjohnwilliston.org

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Worship Hours at St. John
Saturday Contemporary Worship 5:00 PM
Sunday School for all ages 8:30 AM
Sunday Traditional Worship 9:45 AM