



# January FORERUNNER

A publication of St. John Lutheran Church Williston, Ohio

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## Ask the Pastor Water and Blood

In my devotional reading (based on John 19:28-37) it said that **when Jesus' side was pierced and blood and water flowed out, it was a representation of water of Holy Baptism and the blood of Christ in the Holy Supper.** Is this true?

The most basic explanation is that this is what actually happened. Some theories say that the spear could have punctured **the heart (blood) and lungs ('water' from the pericardial sac).** So blood and water came out. **Being John's gospel, this likely also has theological significance.** Water of baptism and blood of Holy Communion is not an unprecedented way to "spiritualize" the event.

Here are some other ideas I found scouring commentaries/**internet...**

This is perhaps related to 1 John 5:6, **"This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood."** The "spiritualized" idea is that Jesus is both human (blood) and spirit (water). In John 19 we see the divine/eternal life and the human/mortal life flowing out of Jesus.

The blood and water signify how even when Jesus was already dead, he continued to pour himself out for us. Jesus suffered **tremendously for humanity and died, but his death wasn't the end of his total gift to the human race.** (Mike Lewis, Catholic?)

If the reference to blood and water from Jesus' side can be understood as in harmony with the metaphor from John that "temple = Jesus' body", we might see John 18:34 as an allusion to Ezekiel 47:1 where the restored temple of Ezekiel's vision has a stream of living water flowing from the south side. (Keener)

Commenting on those words, Luther once wrote: **"Thus St. John pictures our dear baptism for us in this way, so that we shall not regard and look only at the clear Water, for, he says, Christ comes "not with water only...but with the water and the blood".**

### 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!

Continued from Page 1

Through such words he desires to admonish us to see with spiritual eyes and see in baptism the beautiful, rosy-red blood of Christ, which flowed and poured from his holy side. And therefore he calls those who have been baptized none other than those who have been bathed and cleansed in this same rosy-red blood of Christ.” (Paul Rydecki, Lutheran)

Tangentially related, but I thought this was **both strange and interesting...**

The spear that pierced the side of Jesus Christ became shrouded in legend. It was said to wield great mystical power. It was given many names, including the Holy Lance, the Holy Spear, the Spear of Destiny, and the Spear of Longinus (named for Gaius Cassius Longinus, the Roman soldier who allegedly pierced the side of Christ and later became a Christian). Today, the spear is said to reside in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome... also in Armenia, Turkey, Poland, and Austria. Many believe that Hitler invaded Austria in 1938 to retrieve the Sword of Destiny before pursuing his dreams of global domination and a Thousand-Year Third Reich. Historically, this much is **certain: After invading Austria, one of Hitler’s first actions was to take the spear from the Hapsburg Palace.** (Annette Kuehne)

Rev. Shawn O’Brien

*If you would like to submit a question for “Ask the Pastor”, Biblical, theological, church related, anything you have been dying to ask a pastor, you can hand me a note, send an e-mail, or 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.*



## 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.

If anyone interested in joining the bell choir and/or singing with the choir this year, please contact Beckie Goldstein or see her after church services. Practices are after **Sunday’s service.**



### 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.

## Faith Practice #3 Readings

# Job

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



**In Memory of Jay Meyer**  
Dorothy Ward  
**In Memory of Kenny Wolf**  
Al and Traci Brown  
Darryl and Diane Traver, Rose and Kevin  
Gary and Janet Berger  
**In Memory of Richard Harmeyer**  
Lenore Harmeyer  
**In Memory of Church Members**  
Lenore Harmeyer



**Congregation of St. John,**  
The Ottawa County Holiday Bureau has provided services to the Genoa/Elmore area residents for over 65 years. The St. John Lutheran Church community demonstrated remarkable generosity this holiday season. The Quilting Circle donated 40 beautiful quilts which were distributed to local seniors in need. Furthermore, the congregation donated 114 sets of pajamas. The Christian Community Life Committee deserves special recognition for organizing and wrapping the pajama gifts. The congregation's contribution to the Ottawa County Holiday Bureau make the world and better place and your dedication in expressing God's love is truly inspiring. Your kindness reminds me of how God's love show in everyone to care for others in need. May God's blessings continue to be with you all.  
*Diana Lambert,*  
*Treasurer*  
*Ottawa County*  
*Holiday Bureau*  
*Allen/Clay/Harris Township Unit*

**Thank You for Serving!**  
Thank you to all the "Bell Ringers" who made our day at Miller's a success for the Salvation Army!  
RoseMarie Dickinson  
Diane and Bob Kapp  
John Mazur, Ron Gerkenmeyer  
Jack Mathews, Pam LaRue  
Tim, Jacob, and Luke Titgemeyer  
Robin and Ben Perkins  
Jane Phillips and  
Holly Delventhal

**Family of St. John,**  
We cannot express enough gratitude for the support you have shown the LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry at Elliston Zion UMC. The ladies of St. John have made and served several wonderful meals to our monthly visitors. Church members purchased hundreds of dollars of fresh fruits and vegetables to assure our visitors had good food for Christmas. Other members donated their Thrivent Charitable giving funds to purchase much needed paper products, food and personal hygiene items. And, the response to the Reverse Advent Calendar was overwhelming! Thank you for helping us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to serve HIS people in need. Blessings to all of you!  
*LisaAnne and Gary Gregg*

**St. John,**  
Thank you for caring for our families at Nightingale's Harvest. We are blessed by your generosity and kindness. And, I would like to thank everyone for praying for me. I was so touched to see my name in your bulletin. And I am not even a member, WOW! I love coming to your services and want to say "Thank You."  
*Kathy Varga*

**Thank You!**  
Thank you to Pastor and all my church family for the prayers this past year for my recovery from emergency surgery a year ago in August. After 15 months, my trac was finally removed and I truly feel blessed. I still have a way to go, but with faith and determination, I'll make it! Thanks again and God's blessing to all of you.  
*Phyllis Haefl*

*God, Thank you for blessing us with the spiritual gift of generosity.*  
*Romans 12.6-8*

The *Forerunner* is published monthly by St. John Lutheran Church  
21140 W. Toledo Street  
Williston, Ohio 43468  
Corner of Main and Toledo Street  
Telephone: 419-836-5514  
e-mail:  
office@stjohnwilliston.org

**Pastor Shawn O'Brien**  
Cell Telephone:  
419-378-1112  
pastorobrien@stjohnwilliston.org

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

Deadline for the February Forerunner is Monday, January 20th 9 AM  
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.oh



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

**January/February Circle Meetings**

**Esther Circle**

Jan. 7 2 PM

Bible Study— Margaret Berger

Feb. 4 2 PM

Bible Study— Doris Titgemeyer

**Rebekah Circle**

Jan. 7 7 PM Book review

Feb. 4 7 PM Book review

**2025 WELCA Executive Board**

Diane Dickinson-President

JoElaine Schimming-Vice President

Margaret Berger-Secretary

Carole Beamer-Treasurer

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..



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.®*

Thrivent Thanks

Many thanks to the St. John Thrivent members who reached out for their Thrivent Action Team Dollars. Our Thrivent contributions for 2024 totaled more than \$5,000. These dollars were given to assist our St. John family in various ways, along with contributions to neighboring and local charities. Thanks so much to those Thrivent insurance and investment policy holders who participated in this program. These Thrivent Action Team Dollars are available on an annual basis. They will renew as of January 1, 2025. Please let me know if I can help in applying in 2025. Also, please let me know if you are applying so I can track the various projects -- so we don't have duplications for the same purpose. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks for your participation in this program.

Diane Gerkenmeyer



The St. John Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 19th following morning worship (11:00 AM). All St. John members are invited and encouraged to attend.

This annual meeting is in accordance with our St. John Constitution and is a time of voting for new church officers and conducting the necessary business of the church.

The Annual Budget Review and Discussion will be held on the Sunday before the Annual Meeting (January 12th) following worship. Finance committee members will be on hand to answer any questions you may have in regards to the 2025 budget.

Thank you to those who have filled the needed roles on Church Council and in our various committees! And, thank you to those who will be stepping into those rolls in 2025!

Anyone is invited to be a part of one of our important and hard working committees! Committee Nights are held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 PM and all are welcome!



## 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

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!

### **January Games**

Jan. 7 7:30PM at Genoa St. John

Jan. 14 7:30PM at Mount Carmel

Jan. 21 7:30 PM HOME vs St. Peter-Millbury

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



## **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 Sandroek and Ron and Diane Gerkenmeyer and those who donate items every week! Thank you for helping us serve our neighbors!

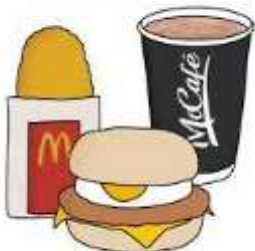


### **The "Blanket Ladies" gather to make quilts on Tuesday mornings at 9:00 am.**

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!





# JANUARY *Stewardship*

## Time for a Faith-Lift?

January is traditionally the time for New Year's resolutions. It is a time for new beginnings. It's a ideal time for the Christian disciple to take stock, reassess and recommit to a life lived for and in Jesus Christ. Here are a few suggestions for the important areas of our faith life:

**\*Stewardship of Family:** How often in our busy lives does time with family get short shrift? Resolve to find a special time with each family member each week. Make sure that family meals are celebrated frequently. Plan a special family outing once or twice a month, and go to worship together. Resolve that when your spouse and child speak, you will look at them and truly listen.

**\*Stewardship of Health:** Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. Without good health, we lack the energy to serve the Lord well. Resolve to make that doctor or dentist appointment. Make one healthy change in your eating habits. Add a few minutes of extra exercise to each day's routine.

**\*Stewardship of Possessions:** Want less. Live more simply. Do you own your possessions, or do they own you? Challenge yourself to sacrifice something you like but that you know another person needs more than you.

**\*Stewardship of the Parish Family:** Offer your service to the liturgy or a ministry of your church in the New Year. Enrich your church and your church experience by becoming involved.

**\*Stewardship of Money:** Take charge of your budget and your checkbook. Reprioritize your financial goals to ensure that the Lord is coming first in the expenditure of your wealth. Plan your spending and don't spend reactively or impulsively.

**\*Stewardship of Work:** Do your best at your chosen profession. Be honest and faithful. Resolve to find a class or other forum that will strengthen your knowledge and expertise. Bring a prayerful attitude to your job.

**\*Stewardship of Mind:** Resolve to read something regularly that enhances your faith life. Resolve to learn more about your faith, the Bible and the life of Jesus.

**\*Stewardship of Neighbor:** Be aware of those around you, whether it be your co-workers, fellow parishioners, neighbors, restaurant workers or store employees. Everyone needs a smile and Christian kindness.

**\*Stewardship of the Poor:** Resolve to give support and aid to the poor in some specific way this year. Bring them into your prayer life as well.

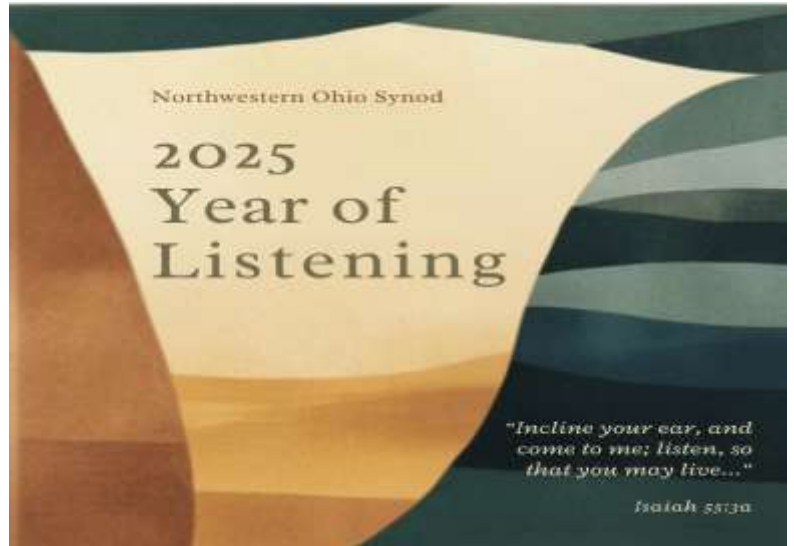
**\*Stewardship of Prayer:** Nothing is more important than cultivating a closer, deeper relationship with God. Make a new commitment to a time each day to listen to God's voice.





From the Bishop

*Daniel Blecker*



Dear Friends in Christ,

***“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior”*** (Luke 1:47)

During the Fourth Sunday in Advent, we always hear **The Magnificat**: Mary’s Song of Praise from Luke chapter one. During the Fourth Sunday in Advent, we always hear The Magnificat: Mary’s Song of Praise from Luke chapter one. Mary’s beautiful and powerful words always move me. Listen to the Monks of Fontgombault Abbey chant Mary’s Magnificat (3:30).

Mary’s beautiful and powerful words always move me.

Here is the link to listen to the **Monks of Fontgombault Abbey** chant Mary’s Magnificat

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wKSY8j4ZdY>

During 2024, I spent the year dwelling in the Songs of St. Luke from the Gospel of Luke chapters one and two. **The Magnificat**: Mary’s Song of Praise (Luke 1:46-55); **The Benedictus**: Zechariah’s Song of Prophecy (Luke 1:68-79); **The Nunc Dimittis**: Simeon’s Song of Promise (Luke 2:29-32); and the **Christmas Story** (Luke 2:1-14). By the end of 2024, I have learned all these sacred songs and words by heart.

I decided to begin this spiritual journey with St. Luke during my 2023 Sabbatical. While worshiping with the monks and sisters at Gethsemani Abbey, Le Monastère des Augustines, St. Irenaeus Prayer and Retreat House, and St. Meinrad Archabbey, I noted the rhythm of St. Luke’s Songs in the services of daily prayer. Matins (Morning Prayer) always includes Zechariah’s Benedictus. Vespers (Evening Prayer) always includes Mary’s Magnificat. Compline (Night Prayer) always includes Simeon’s Nunc Dimittis. St. Luke’s Songs are also included in the Daily Prayer Services in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (pages 298-327).

It had been a long time since I memorized passages of Scripture, and my ability to memorize is not what it used to be. The practice that helped me the most was to listen to a recording of the Songs of St. Luke. I used my cell phone to record the passages, and then listened to them daily. Through this intentional practice of holy listening, the Songs of St. Luke entered my memory and then my heart. These songs accompany me on long drives and long runs. They dwell in my heart and inhabit my soul. There is great power in holy listening.

As we read in Isaiah 55:3a: ***“Incline your ear and come to me, listen so that you may live”***.

2025 will be the **Year of Listening** in the Northwestern Ohio Synod, and we have put together a variety of awesome resources to help you and your faith community to learn the sacred art of listening together in the new year.

Check out our webpage of 2025 Year of Listening resources that include opportunities for personal and parish exploration, including:

Year of Listening Bible Study (8-Sessions)

New Testament Daily Bible Reading Plan

Weekly Listening Practices

Our book of the year: [The Listening Life: Embracing Attentiveness in a World of Distraction](#) (by Adam S McHugh) and discussion guide and Monthly devotions for use by church councils, committees, staff, etc.

Happy New Year from NWOS!



# Yearlong Bible Reading Plan:

## A-Z Traits of Godly Living

Spend the year in God's Word, exploring key characteristics of a Christ-follower. To guide your Scripture-reading for the next 52 weeks, this plan highlights two Christian traits for every letter of the alphabet. Each week, you'll focus on one trait and its seven daily readings.

Throughout each week, try to live out the assigned trait.

May God, the Alpha and Omega, bless your A-Z journey of biblical habits from January 1 through December 31!



### Week 5: Cheerful

1. Psalm 21
2. Proverbs 15
3. Matthew 5:1-12
4. Luke 2:22-32
5. 2 Corinthians 9:6-15
6. Philippians 2:14-18
7. Philemon 1:4-7

### Week 6: Content

1. Genesis 13
2. Psalm 23
3. Psalm 131
4. Ecclesiastes 3:9-22
5. Luke 12:13-34
6. Philippians 4:10-13
7. 1 Timothy 6:6-10

### Week 11: Faithful

1. Genesis 22:1-18
2. 1 Samuel 16
3. 2 Kings 22 and 23:1-25
4. Matthew 10:32-39
5. Luke 16:1-15
6. Colossians 2:6-19
7. Revelation 2:1-11

### Week 12: Forgiveness & Forgiving

1. Genesis 33
2. Psalm 103:8-19
3. Matthew 18:21-35
4. Matthew 26:17-30
5. Luke 15:11-32
6. John 8:1-11
7. 2 Corinthians 2:5-11

### Week 13: Generous

1. 1 Kings 17:7-16
2. Psalm 112
3. Matthew 27:57-60
4. Luke 21:1-4
5. Acts 9:36-43
6. Philippians 4:10-20
7. 1 Timothy 6:17-19

### Week 14: Grateful

1. Genesis 8
2. 1 Samuel 2:1-10
3. 1 Chronicles 16
4. Psalm 100
5. Psalm 136
6. Luke 17:11-19
7. Colossians 3:15-17

### Week 15: Honest

1. Exodus 20:1-21
2. 1 Kings 21
3. Proverbs 12:17-22
4. Luke 19:1-10
5. Acts 5:1-11
6. Colossians 3:9-10
7. James 3:1-12

### Week 16: Hopeful

1. Genesis 15
2. Joshua 2
3. Lamentations 3:19-26
4. Mark 5:21-43
5. Romans 8:18-30
6. Hebrews 10:19-39
7. 1 Peter 1:3-9

### Week 17: Inquisitive

1. Psalm 1
2. Matthew 2:1-12
3. Matthew 16:13-20
4. Luke 2:8-20, 41-52
5. John 3
6. John 20:24-31
7. Acts 8:26-40

### Week 18: Intentional (in Prayer)

1. Genesis 18:16-33
2. 1 Kings 18
3. 2 Kings 20:1-11
4. Matthew 15:21-28
5. Acts 12:1-19
6. Ephesians 6:18-20
7. James 5:13-18

### Week 19: Joyful

1. 2 Samuel 6
2. Nehemiah 8:1-12
3. Psalm 95:1-7
4. John 20:1-18
5. Luke 15:1-10
6. John 16:16-33
7. Philippians 4

### Week 20: Just

1. Psalm 82
2. Isaiah 1
3. Isaiah 61
4. Micah 6:1-8
5. Amos 5
6. Zechariah 7
7. James 2:8-13

### Week 21: Kind

1. Ruth 2
2. 1 Samuel 25
3. 2 Samuel 9
4. Proverbs 11
5. Matthew 1:18-25
6. Luke 6:27-31
7. Ephesians 4:25-32

### Week 22: Knowledgeable

1. 2 Chronicles 1
2. Psalm 111
3. Proverbs 1
4. Ecclesiastes 7
5. Hosea 4:1-9
6. Matthew 7:24-29
7. James 3:13-18

### Week 23: Loving

1. Deuteronomy 10:12-22
2. Matthew 22:34-40
3. John 13
4. Romans 13:8-10
5. 1 Corinthians 13
6. 1 John 3:11-18
7. 1 John 4:7-21

### Week 24: Loyal

1. Joshua 24
2. 2 Chronicles 16:1-9
3. Hosea 1 & 3
4. John 18:1-27
5. John 19:25-27
6. 1 Corinthians 4
7. Galatians 2

### Week 25: Meek

1. Psalm 37:1-11
2. Zephaniah 3:1-13
3. Matthew 5:5
4. Matthew 18:1-15
5. Luke 18:9-14
6. 1 Peter 5:5-7
7. Titus 3

### Week 26: Merciful

1. Numbers 21:4-9
2. Psalm 145
3. Micah 7:18-20
4. Matthew 5:7
5. Luke 6:32-36
6. Luke 23:20-43
7. Jude 1

### Week 27: Named & New

1. Genesis 17
2. Genesis 32:22-32
3. John 1:35-42
4. Acts 9:1-22
5. Romans 6:1-7
6. 2 Corinthians 5
7. Revelation 3:11-13

### Week 28: Nurtured

1. Exodus 4:1-17
2. Deuteronomy 6
3. Mark 4:1-20
4. Luke 5:1-11
5. 1 Corinthians 1:4-9
6. 1 Corinthians 3
7. 2 Timothy 3:10-17

If you think of more  
*Christ-like traits for a letter,*  
jot them down here:

**Week 29: Obedient**

1. Genesis 3
2. Deuteronomy 11
3. 1 Samuel 15
4. Matthew 28:16-20
5. Luke 11:14-28
6. John 14
7. 1 Peter 1:13-25

**Week 30: Other-Focused**

1. 1 Samuel 20
2. Esther 5
3. Isaiah 53
4. Luke 9:46-48
5. 1 Corinthians 10:23-33
6. Philippians 2:1-8
7. Colossians 1

**Week 31: Patient**

1. Genesis 21:1-7
2. Job 42
3. Psalm 40
4. Galatians 5:16-26
5. Colossians 3:12-14
6. James 5:7-11
7. 2 Peter

**Week 32: Peaceful**

1. Genesis 26:1-31
2. Genesis 50:15-21
3. Numbers 6:22-27
4. John 20:19-23
5. Romans 14:19-23
6. Ephesians 2:14-22
7. Hebrews 12:14

**Week 33: Quick (to listen)**

1. 1 Kings 19
2. Proverbs 18:1-15
3. Ecclesiastes 5:1-7
4. John 10:1-18
5. Romans 10
6. Hebrews 4:1-11
7. James 1:19-27

**Week 34: Quiet/Still**

1. Exodus 14:10-14
2. Psalm 46:10
3. Isaiah 30:15-26
4. Luke 1:5-25
5. 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12
6. 1 Timothy 2
7. 1 Peter 3

**Week 35: Reverent**

1. Leviticus 19:1-18
2. 1 Samuel 12
3. Psalm 33
4. Isaiah 66
5. Luke 12:1-12
6. Hebrews 12:18-29
7. Revelation 5

**Week 36: Righteous**

1. Psalm 11
2. Ezekiel 18
3. Matthew 23
4. Romans 6:8-23
5. Philippians 1:3-11
6. 2 Timothy 2:22-26
7. 1 John 3:1-10

**Week 37: Self-Controlled**

1. Genesis 39
2. 2 Samuel 11
3. Proverbs 25:28
4. Matthew 6:16-18
5. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
6. 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8
7. Titus 2:1-8

**Week 38: Strong**

1. Judges 15
2. Psalm 28
3. Isaiah 41:1-16
4. Daniel 10
5. 2 Corinthians 12:1-10
6. Ephesians 6:10
7. Philippians 4:13

**Week 39: Teachable**

1. 2 Kings 5
2. Proverbs 12:1, 15
3. Matthew 11:25-30
4. Matthew 13:53-58
5. Luke 11:1-13
6. Acts 17
7. Hebrews 5:1-10

**Week 40: Trusting**

1. Exodus 33
2. Psalm 25
3. Proverbs 3:1-18
4. Jeremiah 17:5-18
5. John 9
6. Romans 4
7. Hebrews 6

**Week 41: Unafraid**

1. Deuteronomy 31:1-8
2. Judges 6 & 7
3. Psalm 56
4. Matthew 28:1-10
5. Luke 1:26-38
6. John 6:16-21
7. Romans 8:14-17

**Week 42: United**

1. Psalm 133
2. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12
3. Mark 3:20-35
4. John 17:6-26
5. 1 Corinthians 1:10-31
6. 1 Corinthians 12
7. Ephesians 4:1-16

**Week 43: Virtuous**

1. Proverbs 31:10-31
2. Romans 12:21
3. Galatians 6:1-10
4. Philippians 4:8-9
5. 2 Timothy 2:14-21
6. Titus 1
7. 2 Peter 1:1-11

**Week 44: Victorious**

1. Deuteronomy 20:1-18
2. Zechariah 9:9-17
3. Romans 8:31-39
4. 1 Corinthians 15:35-58
5. 2 Timothy 4:1-8
6. 1 John 5:1-12
7. Revelation 12

**Week 45: Welcoming**

1. 2 Kings 6:8-23
2. Matthew 10:40-42
3. Luke 7:36-50
4. Luke 14:1-24
5. Romans 16:16-27
6. James 2:1-17
7. 3 John 1

**Week 46: Willing**

1. Genesis 12:1-9
2. Exodus 3:1-17
3. 1 Samuel 3
4. Isaiah 6
5. Matthew 9:1-8, 35-38
6. Mark 1:16-20
7. Acts 16:1-15

**Week 47: Xenodochy**

(Greek: Hospitality)

1. Genesis 18:1-8
2. Leviticus 19:1-2, 33-34
3. Matthew 25:31-46
4. Luke 10:25-37
5. Acts 28:1-10
6. Romans 12:13-20
7. 1 Peter 4:7-11

**Week 48: eXalting**

1. 1 Chronicles 29:10-20
2. Ezra 6:13-22
3. Psalm 57
4. Psalm 99
5. Isaiah 25
6. Luke 1:46-55
7. Philippians 2:9-11

**Week 49: Yearning**

1. Ezekiel 36
2. Psalm 42
3. Psalm 119:57-64, 81-88, 97-104
4. Isaiah 55
5. Jeremiah 29:10-14
6. Philippians 1:12-26
7. 1 Thessalonians 3

**Week 50: Yielding**

1. Jonah 1 & 3
2. Matthew 16:21-27
3. Matthew 26:36-46
4. Ephesians 5:21-33
5. Hebrews 13:1-17
6. 1 Peter 2:11-25
7. James 4

**Week 51: Zealous**

1. Numbers 25
2. John 2:13-25
3. Romans 12:9-21
4. 2 Corinthians 8
5. Galatians 4:1-20
6. Titus 2:11-15
7. Revelation 3:14-22

**Week 52: Zesty**

1. 2 Kings 2:1-22
2. Psalm 16
3. Psalm 34:8-14
4. Matthew 5:13-16
5. Acts 2:1-41
6. 2 Corinthians 2:12-17
7. Colossians 4:2-6

CONNECTING KIDS TO CHRIST

# The Connection

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE CARDS



Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.  
Hebrews 13:8



This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.  
Psalm 118:24, ESV

The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.  
Psalm 145:9, NIV



Be strong and courageous... for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.  
Joshua 1:9, ESV



Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.  
Proverbs 3:5, NIV



Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.  
Deuteronomy 6:5, NIV



# Puzzle!

Complete the maze to help people from all directions hear the good news. Then, starting at the N (north) and going clockwise, read John 3:16, NIV.



WHY NOT JOIN US FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL?

**Join us for Sunday School!**  
**Sunday, January 5th @ 8:30 AM**  
**(and the 1st Sunday of every month thru May)**

**Invite a friend to Sunday School and share bible stories, crafts, music and snacks!!**  
**Everybody is welcome! Parents, too!!**



# CHURCH COUNCIL Highlights

**Devotions led by Pastor:** Luke 7

**Pastor's Report: Worship Attendance:** In Person average for November 2024-129.3 compared to November 2023-171.8. Online average for November 2024- 92.5 compared to November 2023-110.8. **Numbers** 15 hospital/home-bound visits/individual or family meeting, 2 committee/group meetings, 8 community/youth/fellowship event, 5 professional/clergy activities, 1 special worship service 1 funeral.

**Funeral** I presided at the funeral of Patsy Ruth Bishop (mother of Julie Fredricksen) on November 23.

**Thanksgiving Worship**-Thank you to everyone who helped with our Community Thanksgiving Worship. And a BIG thank you to Carol, Alice, Marilyn, Carolyn, Donna, and all of their cooking crew. It was a wonderful event!

**Reverse Advent Calendar and Christmas Offering** With our donation of personal needs items and our Christmas offering, we will be supporting Luther Home of Mercy's Advent Center and the LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry at Elliston Zion. Items can be returned to the church and placed under the tree at the back of the sanctuary.

**Annual Meeting**-St John Annual Meeting will be January 19 at 11:00 am **Installation**-Installation of Elected Members, Saturday AND Sunday, January 25/26.

**Financial Secretary, Treasurer & Finance Committee Report:** Income: We are 112% of our monthly budget and 98% of our year-to-date budget. Expenses: We are 94% of the monthly budget and 96% of the year-to-date budget. Motion to approve the 2025 Budget was made by Cheryl Berger. John Mazur 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion passed.

**Christian Community Life:** We finished wrapping our pjs. We had a total of 140 sets! Thank you so much to everyone. We will be pre-packing for the Genoa food pantry on Thursday and serving on Saturday. There have been quite a few who have signed up to help work on both days...Thanks! We talked about to serve for lunch at the annual meeting. WINNER of the Baumann car raffle: Sylvia Burel from Fremont!!! Genoa Food Pantry update for December- Families: 39. Patrons: 92. Total expenses: \$ 3,560.93 from pantry account \$1,057.11, from Meijer \$2,202.48, from Aldi \$201.34. Donations: Baumann \$1,110.00, Vistra (formerly Davis-Besse) \$5,000.00 grant coming, Chippewa golf outing and Band raffle \$3,152.00 plus food donations! Other Donations: \$584.65. We signed and sent out 100 of the Christmas cards to the Veteran's home. We have plenty of cards left over to do it again next year

**Evangelism:** Received good comments on the tree lighting, however the attendance was less than the previous year. Many attended the lighting and left. Thanks to Thrivent Action for giving us the funds to cover the meal cost and the paper and personal products The budget was discussed. Advertising alone this year was \$900. Discussed ways to save money with the

advertising places. Recommended putting an ad in the Comet Communicator for \$60 per square per year rather than the Kiwanis Sports Program. The Communicator is published 4 times a year. Other than the golf basket, all has been donated. Goals were set for 2025 to include a new member class and possibly sending out postcards to those who have not been attending to come back.

**Parish Education:** Two kids were at the December Sunday School. We are going to ask people to fill out a short survey to help determine the future of our Sunday School program

**Stewardship:** December 4 we had the Salvation Army bell ringing at Millers New Market

**Worship Life:** Pastor will not be in church on Dec. 28/29 and we will have a Reading/Carol service. There will be approximately 8-9 songs and individual readings. There will not be communion (so we need to let the communion servers know that they will not be needed that weekend). We will need the following for each service: leader to lead the opening, prayers, etc. - Saturday will be John Keeley (via Tammi). Sunday will be Melissa Lammers. We will need 2 lectors to share the readings. -Saturday will be Jonah Danoff and Nancy Stroscher. Sunday will be Diana Lambert and Kellie Ulrich. Diana and Tim said they would talk with Beckie on Sunday after church to discuss the format of the service for the 28/29.\*\* The leaders and lectors request the 'script'/readings prior to the service so they can review what they need to read. Pastor asked if we have received any feedback in regards to the Christmas Eve service format for the 7:00 service. Tim and Diana were going to, also, ask Beckie Sunday after church and make sure she communicated with Pastor. We will reflect and discuss the format for Christmas Eve services in the future in our January meeting to determine the 'need' to continue with 3 services in the future. The Sunday music director's contract will be updated and some revisions made. The Thanksgiving service was well attended and received many compliments. It was noted and needs to be part of our 'to do' lists for all future events where meals are shared at the church that there must be a sign up sheet for cleaning up after the meal. No one helped with clean up after the Thanksgiving meal. We will add a reminder to our notes to always post a clean up list for volunteers.

**Property:** Fixed the sink in the men's restroom. Fixed the flame sensor on the east side boiler. Discussed the service contract with Dimech and will review

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

Cheryl Berger made a motion to adjourn. John Mazur 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed and the meeting ended at 7:45 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.

# January

## Worship Assistants



# February

## Worship Assistants

Saturdays 5:00pm	Sundays 9:45 am	Saturdays 5:00pm	Sundays 9:45 am
<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Ushers</b>
4- Jack Mathews	5-Jill Kao	1-Jack Mathews	2- Jill Kao
11-Ron Gerkenmeyer	11- Jim Vogelbacher	8-Ron Gerkenmeyer	9- Jim Vogelbacher
18-Donnelly Family	18-The Titgemeyers	15-Donnelly Family	16-The Titgemeyers
25-Buhrow Family	26-Diana Lambert	22-Buhrow Family	23-Diana Lambert
<b>Lectors</b>	<b>Lectors</b>	<b>Lectors</b>	<b>Lectors</b>
4-Sandy Toth	5- Jerry Goldstein	1-Amy Schloegl	2- Kellie Ulrich
11-Nancy Strohscher	12- Cebie Titgemeyer	8-Sandy Toth	9-Diana Lambert
18-Beverly Harder	19-Tim Titgemeyer	15-Jonah D.	16-Deanna Neuman
25-Jonah D.	26-Melissa Lammers	22-Beverly Harder	23-Melissa Lammers
<b>Acolytes</b>	<b>Acolytes</b>	<b>Acolytes</b>	<b>Acolytes</b>
4-Jacob H.	5- Mila	1-Trenton	2- Rylie C.
11-Liam D.	12- Makenna	8-Liam D.	9-Lauren H.
18-Jonah D.	19- Rylan	15-Nolan D.	16-Mila
25-Nolan D.	26-Lauren	22-Jonah D.	23-Makenna
<b>Communion</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Communion</b>
4-Alice Witt	5-Roland Sandrock	1-JoElaine Schimming	2-Tim Titgemeyer
11- Carol Vargo	12- Margaret Berger	8-Nancy Strohscher	9-Margaret Berger
18-Ron Gerkenmeyer	19- Cebie Titgemeyer	15-Ron Gerkenmeyer	16-Robin Perkins
25- Al & Traci Brown	26-Robin Perkins	22- Al & Traci Brown	23-Pam LaRue



*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.*



# St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

21140 W. Toledo Street

P. O. Box 235

Williston, Ohio 43468-0235

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Volume 0720 Issue 345

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January 2025



## 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

**Pastor Shawn O'Brien**

419-378-1112 cell

E-mail address:

[pastorobrien@stjohnwilliston.org](mailto: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](mailto:office@stjohnwilliston.org)

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