

The Forerunner

A publication of St. John Lutheran Church—Williston, OH

Volume 0721 Issue 345

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Ask the Pastor

"It seems like the problems of the world are so great. I want to help, but how do I know if I'm making a difference?" I love the quote by Mother Teresa, "Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time and always start with the person nearest you."

And a related quote from Helen Barry, "Helping one person might not change the whole world, but it could change the world for one person"

A couple of quotes probably don't answer your question, but it does reveal a greater truth. We shouldn't let the immensity of the world's problems paralyze our compassion. We can't help everybody, but we can all help somebody.

A several months ago we read Peter's confession (John 6)... the crowd was abandoning Jesus because his teaching were too hard. Jesus asked his core group of disciples, "do you want to leave too?" Peter replied, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life." With his "Yes!" to Jesus, the rest of the apostles echoed his "Yes!" I like to imagine that Peter's words held the group together at that crucial moment. He said just the right thing at just the right time. Peter pushed them in the right direction...

I like to imagine it played out that way because it holds an important lesson... I'm a rather ordinary person and I'm guessing you are too. I'm not disparaging your (or my worth); what I mean is, not many of us will find our way into history books. Not many of us will leave a legacy that will be remembered outside our family and friends. Because we are ordinary people, we might think we don't have much influence. We don't think our voice counts for much.

Peter shows us that's not necessarily true. He shows us how a few words, spoken from heartfelt conviction at the right time, can make a tremendous difference. He shows us how a person of faith can strengthen the faith of others. He shows us that one person can change lives.

Following Jesus can be uncomfortable sometimes... loving one another is hard work... eating of his flesh, perhaps we've sanitized that... but deeply partaking of Jesus so that he becomes part of who we are, and we become more like him... that can be challenging... sometimes it makes us want to go home... We want Jesus to comfort us when we are afflicted, and sometimes he does... But he also afflicts us when we are comfortable, and that's not always fun... But Jesus calls us to be faithful to him in the face of the world's opposition. Peter's "yes" shows us that we too can make a difference. We too can help people to know God's love and find new life. Our powerful "yes" can make all the difference for us and for someone else.

As Christians, we have a calling to love, support, and care for one another. Maybe we won't change the world, but we all have the power to change at least one person's life – with a kind word, with a listening ear, with a prayer, by modeling faith, or simply by standing with someone through a difficult time, we can change a life.

And perhaps that love, care, and support that makes one person's life just a little bit better is where the Kingdom of God is found.

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, 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.

Pastor Shawn





TACKLE

HUNGER

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING Feb. 8 & 9

Super Bowl of Caring is a youth-inspired movement working to tackle hunger in our nation. St. John will participate in this event by collecting money for the **Genoa Food Pantry**. There will be a soup kettle for donations in the church sanctuary on

February 8th and 9th

You can also drop off or mail your donation to the church office.

Checks may be made payable to St. John.

We will also be taking donations of non-perishable, non-expired food items. They may be placed in the SOUPER BOWL OF CARING Donation boxes located near the office.

These donations will be shared between the Blessing Box at St. John and the LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry at Elliston Zion—a free choice pantry serving all of Ottawa County.

The greatest needs are: Peanut Butter, Hearty Canned Soup, Canned Pasta (like Ravioli or Spaghetti-Os, side dishes (Lipton sides, stuffing mix), canned fruit, ramen noodles, and kid friendly boxes of cereal. Thank you for being a blessing!

PACK 342 INVITES ST JOHN WILLISTON

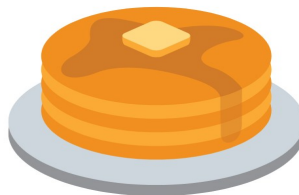
PANCAKE BREAKFAST

WHEN: FEB 2, 2025

TIME: 8:30AM - 9:30AM

WHERE: CHURCH BASEMENT

JOIN US FOR PANCAKES, EGGS, SAUSAGE, COFFEE, & ORANGE JUICE BEFORE SERVICE AS A THANK YOU FOR BEING OUR CHARTERED ORGANIZATION



The Forerunner
is published monthly
by St. John Lutheran Church
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Fall/Winter Worship

Saturday at 5:00 PM

Sunday School for the whole family 8:30 AM on the first Sunday of the Month

Sunday Worship 9:45 AM

Deadline for the March 2024 newsletter is Monday, February 17th
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 Admin.

9am—3pm

M-T-W

Thurs. hours may vary

Office closed on Friday₂

Gifts & Memorials

In Memory of Kenny Wolf

Elaine Gruetter
 Cliff and Madonna Bury
 John Harmeyer-Harmeyer Farms
 Bob and Diane Kapp
 Carolyn Sleek
 Ann Carr
 Kevin and Ashley Schutte
 Caryl Turnow
 Kevin and Kathy Fox
 Robert and Linda Wolf
 David and Barb Wolf
 Bruce, Tammy and Tim Wolf
 Mitchell Myers
 Ivan and Amie Myers
 Larry and Marge DeVerna
 Deb Lofquist
 Frank and Sharon Wasserman
 Janice Sheahan
 Jim and Jenny Hauter
 Dennis and Rosemarie Dickinson
 Todd and Holli Hecht
 Tom and LuAnn Schuffenecker
 Joe and Marcia Wagner
 Ed and Katie Kuhn
 John and Leslie Vogelpohl
 James and Mona Vogelbacher
 Karl and Roberta Orians
 Roland and Janice Sandrock
 John Gradel and Sons Farms
 Bob and Kathy Bench
 Allison and Bill Potter
 Brad and Pam LaRue
 Doris Titgemeyer
 Mike and Tracy Donnelly
 Quinton and Margaret St. John
 Bradley and Melissa Pope
 Ron and Diane Gerkenmeyer
 Margie Bringe

In Memory of Jane Lammers

Doris Titgemeyer

In Memory of David Witty

Margaret Berger
 Ron and Diane Gerkenmeyer
 Lowell and Diane Hartman

If your gift was inadvertently left off the list, please contact the office.

THANKS from the HEART

Dear Congregation of St. John,
 Thank you to Pastor and church members for your prayers for our husband, father and Papa, Ken Wolf. It has brought great comfort knowing you have lifted our family up in prayer. Also, that you to those who have graciously given memorial gifts in memory of Ken. We deeply appreciate the kindness and support you have shown during this difficult time.

The Family of Ken Wolf



Thank you to Todd Kapp and Paul Fredericksen for keeping our parking lot and sidewalks clear in this winter season!

WINTER Worship



*If Ottawa County is under a **Level 3** Snow Emergency, we will **not** have worship or any other church related activities until the emergency has been cancelled.
 *If Ottawa County is under a **Level 2 or Level 1** Snow Emergency, we will still hold worship and activities for those who can travel safely. Please consider your safety and the safety of others on the road when you decide to venture out into the weather. Your wellbeing is our number one concern.
 Please be careful out there this winter season!

Circle and Board Meetings

FEBRUARY 2023

ESTHER CIRCLE: Tuesday, February 4, 2:00 p.m.
Bible Study: Doris Titgemeyer

REBEKAH CIRCLE: Tuesday, February 4, 7:00 p.m.
Bible Study: Group discussion

Coming Up!

WELCA Board will be serving the Lenten Lunch on
Weds. March 12th

The Esther Circle will be serving the Lenten Lunch on
Weds. March 19th

The Rebekah Circle will be serving the Lenten Lunch
on March 26th



**Baking
Party
and
Bake Sale!**



Sat. February 8th
Sun. February 9th
(before and after services)

**Surprise your
Valentine with
something sweet
and/or treat him/her to
dinner!**

**Valentine
Bake Sale!**

St. John WELCA is sponsoring a bake sale the weekend of **February 8th and 9th!** We will have pies (by-the-piece), cookies (including heart sugar cookies), breads, individual servings of lasagna, mostaccioli, macaroni and cheese and **MORE**. Tables will be in the cloister and by the parking lot doors. Buy now - eat now or freeze for later.

The Thrivent Action Team program is underwriting costs. Part of the proceeds will be shared with local charities.

Baking Party and Bake Sale
Ladies, please join us on
Friday, February 7th, 9:00 AM
for our baking party!

WELCA (both Esther and Rebekah Circles) will be sponsoring a congregational *bake sale* on Feb. 8th and 9th (before and after services).

In preparation for this sale all women of St. John are invited to help bake in the church kitchen at **9 am on Friday, February 7th.**

Come and join the fun!

We'd love to have a big group baking – we have five ovens available.

All baking supplies will be furnished.

Lunch will be provided.

The Thrivent Action Team program is sponsoring this project. Part of the profits will be shared with a variety of local charities.

Ladies, please join us for this fun and enjoyable event.

Please call Diane Gerkenmeyer (419-836-7052) if you have any questions.

Souper Bowl of Caring Chili and Soup Lunch and Annual Ping-Pong Tournament!

Bring your friends and family for an afternoon of fun, food and fellowship...and a great way to support the **LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry at Elliston Zion!**
Sunday, February 9th at 11 AM

Elliston Zion UMC 18045 W. William St-Graytown (Elliston)
off Elliston-Trowbridge Rd.

Help us change the game
and tackle hunger!

We are always accepting donations of non perishable-un expired, unopened food items! There is a donation box at the front door. Thanks!



You need CHILI!

If you are hosting a Super Bowl Watch Party
You are gonna need some CHILI!

Some lady Pastor over there (lol) is making chili and cornbread which will be available between **11 AM and 1 PM.** (or until sold out). Simply watch for the signs and drive thru!! Suggested donations: Small (16 oz.) \$5.00 Large (32 oz) \$10.00 with fresh cornbread included!

Elliston Zion UMC- We are located off Elliston Trowbridge Rd N of Hellwig.

We will be taking pre-orders...the link is: <https://forms.gle/EnpLFcdTXYESopT7>

All proceeds benefit the LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry and will help offset the cost of installing a new \$12K HVAC unit on the "pantry end" of our building. Thank you, St. John Family!!

The need for blood
doesn't take a snow day.

HELP PREVENT A
WINTER BLOOD
SHORTAGE

DONORS
NEEDED
ALL BLOOD TYPES

Church & Community Blood Drive

St. John Lutheran Church
21140 W. Toledo St. (SR 579)
Williston, Ohio 43468

Friday March 7, 2025 * 11 AM to 5 PM

Appointments are encouraged! Please make your appointment today
at www.redcrossblood.org

Or by calling 1-800-RED CROSS

This will be a POWER RED Collection site!

Power Red: A Power Red donation collects the red cells but returns most of the plasma and platelets to the donor. These donors must meet specific eligibility requirements and have type A Neg, B Neg, or O blood.

Volunteers to help man the blood drive are also needed!

We can use help in the kitchen, help preparing a light meal or snacks and people to escort and greet our donors. Please see or call LisaAnne in the church office for more details.

News around St. John!

Join us for **SUNDAY SCHOOL!**

We host Sunday School for the **WHOLE FAMILY**
on the 1st Sunday of the month at 8:30 AM

Come join us and enjoy music, bible stories, crafts and videos!

It is fun and learning for everyone!

For February, we will meet to have breakfast with the Scouts.

We will see you in Sunday School on March 2nd!



McDonalds Breakfast

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



February 2 and 9 and 23

March 9 and 23

April 6 and 20

We will gather following
Sunday worship (11:00ish)
and have pizza while we watch!

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-chosen>

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 phone 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!



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. 419-224-2374

Upcoming games:

Tues. Feb. 4 at HOME vs. St John Rocky Ridge

Tues. Feb. 11 at Millbury St. Paul UMC (Rt 795)

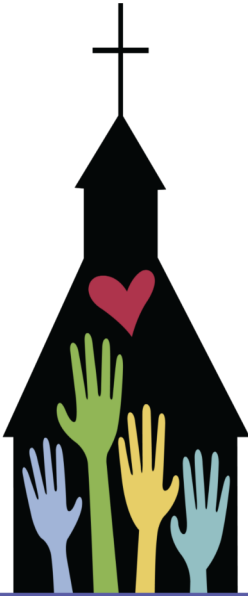
Tues. Feb. 18 at Elliston Zion UMC

Tues. 25th at Elmore St. Paul

Tues. March 4 at HOME vs Elliston Trinity UCC

Faith Practice
#3 Readings
Job

February 3 – Job 26	March 17 – Job 32	April 28 – Job 38
February 10 – Job 27	March 24 – Job 33	May 5 – Job 39
February 17 – Job 28	March 31 – Job 34	May 12 – Job 40
February 24 – Job 29	April 7 – Job 35	May 19 – Job 41
March 3 – Job 30	April 14 – Job 36	May 26- Job 42
March 10 – Job 31	April 21 – Job 37	



We need your
Input!

The Parish Education Committee is re-evaluating our congregation's needs for Sunday School. We have re-vamped the format in an effort to better meet the needs of our congregation's children, but attendance continues to drop. Please take a few moments to answer a four-question survey about how likely you would be to take advantage of a couple different ideas for your children or grandchildren. If you don't currently have children or grandchildren that are of Sunday School age, please feel free to participate in the survey in order to offer any suggestions you may have for the future of Christian education here at St. John. The survey can be accessed with the QR code. Please complete the survey by Feb 17th.

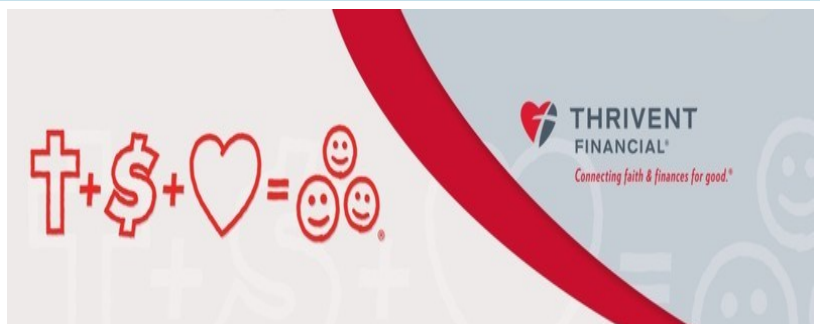


Our church has been granted the MEIJER WINTER SIMPLY GIVE program !!! It is going on NOW thru March 29th. DOUBLE MATCH DAYS are March 1st and March 22nd. Please shop MEIJER and help the Genoa Food Pantry by purchasing a Simply Give card in increments of \$10.00.

Any questions, call Cheryl Berger 419-345-3941.

Attention Thrivent Members:

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.



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



You are invited to Join the Choir!

If anyone interested in joining the bell choir and/or singing with the choir this year, please contact Beckie Goldstein or see her after Sunday church services. Practices are after Sunday's service. We also need Saturday Singers! See Tami after Saturday Services.

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!

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!

**WORSHIP
ASSISTANTS
NEEDED!**



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!



Scholarships for continuing education are available from St. John Lutheran Church. Applications may be picked up from the church office and are also available on the church's website.

The application deadline for all scholarships is March 31st, 2025

The applications can be found online at
www.stjohnwilliston.org

Link:

https://stjohnwilliston.org/news_publications/combined-scholarship-descriptions.html

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the scholarship committee:

Pastor O'Brien, Deanna Neuman, Carol Jensen and Al Brown.

Below is a brief summary of the scholarships available. The scholarship committee recommends that anyone that has graduated high school within the last five years take a close look at the application requirements. All eligible students are encouraged to apply.

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

Tank Scholarship Fund

This scholarship fund was established in 1997 by a gift to St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Williston, Ohio by the late Carol L. Tank and Robert M. Tank.

Any high school graduate who is a three-year confirmed active member of St. John may receive one grant in their first or second year during their attendance at a four-year accredited college or university. Students attending Capital University, Columbus, Ohio may receive a second grant during their fourth year there. The scholarship value will be \$500.

Phyllis Parks Endowed Scholarship Fund

The Phyllis Parks Scholarship Fund was established in August 2016 from the estate of Martin Parks bequeathed to St. John Lutheran Church.

The scholarship principal and interest distributions of the funds shall be made annually over twenty (20) years with approximately one twentieth (1/20) distributed each year. The maximum individual scholarship will be \$1,000. The applicant must be a confirmed St. John member and active in the life of the church.

Special preference will be given to the applicant's church worship attendance. The applicant must attend an accredited four (4) year college or university seeking a bachelor's degree. The applicant must be a recent high school graduate. Recent shall be defined as within five years of the school year's start date.

Scholarships will be for one year. Prior recipients may reapply.

Earl Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund

The Earl Johnson Scholarship Fund was established in January 2016 from a portion of Earl's estate bequeathed to St. John Lutheran Church.

The applicant must be a confirmed St. John member and active in the life of the church during their high school years.

Scholarship value will be up to \$1,000 and determined by the applicant's church worship attendance as well as church and community activities.

While the applicant's GPA will be requested and is important, the activities noted above will carry more emphasis in the decision process.

The applicant must attend either a public or private accredited college or university and be degree seeking.

The applicant must be a recent high school graduate. Recent shall be defined as within five years of the school year's start date.

Recipients can apply more than once but can only receive the scholarship once.

Yunker Scholarship Fund

This scholarship is funded by an annual gift from Marlin and Linda Yunker. Awards are contingent upon receiving these funds.

The applicant will be a confirmed St. John member who is actively involved in the life of the church and who demonstrates their faith.

The opportunity to receive this scholarship is enhanced by the student working at least summers, but also preferably in a part-time position during the school year. Exceptions can be made.

The applicant should maintain at least a "C" or 2.0 grade average.

The applicant will attend either a public or private accredited college or university and be degree seeking.

The applicant must be a recent high school graduate. Recent shall be defined as within five years of the school year's start date.

Recipient of the Yunker Scholarship is not eligible for any other church scholarship in the same year.

St. John ELCA Scholarship Fund

Applicant must be a member of St. John Lutheran Church.

The scholarship will be available to all students meeting the requirements of attending an ELCA owned college. The scholarship is \$500 each year and will be considered each additional year up to and including four years. Awards are contingent on fund availability with preference given to first year applicants.

february stewardship



The core of stewardship is
love

**At St. John
we now have
simple
and
secure**

**Online
Giving**



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.

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

Thank you for being a blessing to St. John!

Caring for My Neighbor



If any of the Ten Commandments might tempt us to think that keeping the Law is easy, it would be the Fifth Commandment. After all, how hard is it to get through life without murdering somebody? The vast majority of people can handle that!

But Jesus famously blows up this notion by pointing out that the command, "you shall not murder," goes much deeper — down to the heart.

You have heard that it was said to those of old, "You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment." But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, "You fool!" will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matt. 5:21–22)

Hatred and disdain come from the same sort of crookedness of heart as murder. With both murder and hatred, you look down on another person and think them of little worth.

In the Small Catechism, Luther also points out that every "do not" in the commandments also includes a "do this:" "We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but *help and support him in every physical need*" (SC, Fifth Commandment, emphasis added).

We are not called merely to avoid evil; we must also do positive good.

So when Jesus drew near to us and became our neighbor by taking up our humanity, He came not only to avoid harming us, but He came to positively help us, bless us and serve us.

We are now called to show the love to our neighbors that Christ showed to us. Your neighbor is yet another gift that God has given you that requires your stewardship. We are called to show mercy, to be kind, to love and serve our neighbor. One aspect of this stewardship is financial: our neighbors need us to support the church's work so that they can hear the Gospel and come to faith. Our neighbors need the church's alms and mercy work. Our neighbors need our faithful service in all we do in the name of Christ.

From LCMS-Stewardship Doc. Library 2024



Kindness kickbacks!

Random Acts of Kindness Day, observed each year on February 17, is a reminder of the power of altruism. Followers of Jesus express kindness selflessly, out of love for God and our neighbors. Yet in return, we reap emotional — and even physical — benefits. Researchers have identified a "helper's high"

that can ease anxiety and depression. Spontaneous or planned acts of "pro-social spending" have been shown to reduce blood pressure, improve heart health, reduce pain and even extend longevity.

For maximum impact, experts recommend getting creative with random acts of kindness and mixing them up. But no matter how you spread kindness, you're bound to experience blessings in return! **Happy Random Acts of Kindness Day!**



St. John Lenten Schedule



Shrove Tuesday

Pancake Supper

St. John Lutheran Church-Williston

Tuesday, March 4 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Carry-out available*Free Will Offering

Proceeds will benefit the Blessing Box

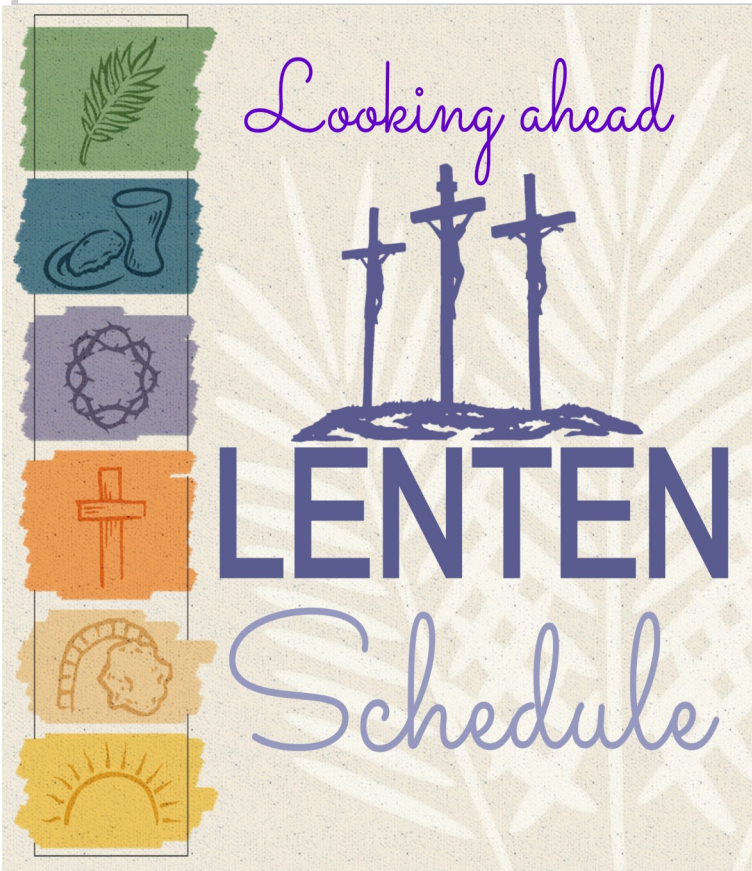


Ash Wednesday

March 5th

Services at 11:00 am

& 7:00 pm at St. John



Our Community

Lenten Worship and Lunch Schedule begins

Wednesday, March 12th

at 11:00 am.

Every Wednesday during Lent, we will meet

for a time of worship and then

join for a time of food & fellowship in the

basement.

More details will be announced soon.

Here are the groups responsible for each lunch.

March 12– WELCA Board

March 19– Esther Circle

March 26– Rebekah Circle

April 2– Church Council

April 9– Worship Life and Parish Education

St. John Kid's Page



Draw a picture of what God's love means to you

Puzzle!

Use the clues to fill in the boxes. Then write those letters on the correct numbered lines below to complete 1 John 4:16 (NIV).

A place to live

1	2	3	4	5

Opposite of dark

6	7	8	9	10	

Companion

11	12	13	14	15	16	

Hand greeting

17	18	19	20

Male adult

21	22	23



8 2 16 13 4 6 2 19 5

17 9 2 5 19 5 12 6 7 19 5 4

13 15 6 2 19 20 6 7 19 14 4

13 15 8 2 16 18 15 16

8 2 16 13 23 10 1 14 21

1 John 4:16, NIV

Answers: house, light, friend, warm, man, God is love, Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them, 1 John 4:16, NIV

Love one another.
1 JOHN 4:7





Northwestern Ohio Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

David Breker



Northwestern Ohio Synod

2025 Year of Listening

Devotion for February

February

Opening Activity

Identify together areas in your life where people gather to listen to each other. For example, the breakfast diner, the coffee shop, the kitchen or dinner table, etc. Where do you spend time in deep listening to others? Next, as a council, talk about what listening spaces exist in your life together in community. How might you listen more deeply in those moments? Are there other listening spaces you might adopt?

Memory Verse

Isaiah 55:3a *"Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live."*

Scripture Verse

James 1:19 *"You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger."*

Reflection

I remember when my youngest child began to learn to drive. The state law had changed and as it is now, teens had to clock in 50 hours of driving with the parent. 50 hours? I panicked. I remember thinking, "what a burden this would be. I would never have time for all this. I was working full time; how would I ever get this done?"

Those 50 hours of being in the car with Brian turned out to be wonderful moments of sharing. They were unexpected gifts of time of listening and enjoying each other. He learned to drive; I learned to listen. We shared as we never had before. The time together created opportunities to pay attention and to hear one another. Amazing holy ground even inside of an automobile.

Learning to listen is priceless and worth the time and effort. Slowing down and being attentive to God opens our hearts gradually, nourishing us deeply and connecting us to God in new ways.

This one on one with another helps us hear God in deep and rich ways. As the Native Americans wisely said, "Speak only half as much as you listen."

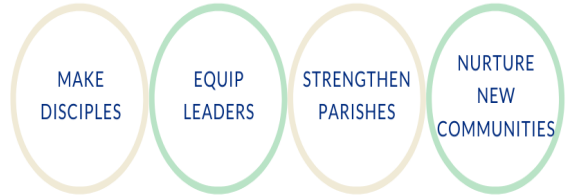
Discussion Questions

1. How will you slow down, spend time, and pay attention to God this week?
2. What helps you hear God in deeper ways?

Prayer

Slow us down, Lord. When we rush through life, we fail to hear you. We don't stop to notice you. We pay more attention to our doings than being with you. Help us to listen more deeply to you. Amen

Sent by the crucified and Risen Jesus together we:



for the renewal of Northwestern Ohio & the world.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Lutheran Social Services of Northwestern Ohio needs your help!

Our Food Pantry serves individuals on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and your assistance is needed to help our pantry run smoothly.

Location: Lutheran Social Services
2149 Collingwood Blvd.
Toledo, OH 43620

Times: Tuesday 9:30 – 12:00
Thursday 9:00 – 12:00

Commitment: Preferably twice a month

Contact: Debbie Lisk at 419-243-9178 or email dlisk@lssnwo.org

Want a fun and rewarding experience while serving in the community?
Contact me today!



GOOD PROCLAMATION:

A Three-Part Course for Lay People
on Preaching the Gospel
with Rev. Dr. Laura L.H. Barbins, Bishop

Tuesday, February 18: 6-9pm on Zoom

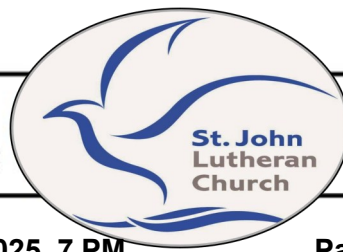
Tuesday, March 4: 6-9pm on Zoom

Saturday, March 15: 9am-4pm
in Person - Peace Lutheran, Ashland

Cost: \$65/person

growinginfaithohio.org

Register
Now!



Council Meeting– January 16, 2025 7 PM

Meeting Opened: At 7:00 pm, by Tim Titgemeyer

Devotions led by Pastor: 99 Psalm.

Pastor's Report: Worship Attendance: In Person average for December 2024-113.8 compared to December 2023-189.4. Online average for December 2024- 94.2 compared to December 2023-109.6. **Numbers:** 12 hospital/home-bound visits/individual or family meeting. 3 committee/group meetings. 7 community/youth/fellowship events. 5 professional/clergy activities. 3 special worship service. 1 baptism

Baptism-I presided at the baptism of Annabelle Marie Hill (daughter of Tony and Stefanie Hill) on December 22. **Annual Meeting-**St. John Annual Meeting will be January 19, 2025 at 11:00 am

Installation-Installation of Elected Members, Saturday AND Sunday, January 25/26.

Lent-Lent is late this year. Ash Wednesday is March 5th. Ash Wednesday worship (11a & 7p) will be in the sanctuary. Midweek Lenten worship (11:00a) is still being planned.

Financial Secretary, Treasurer & Finance

Committee Report: Income: We are 103% of our monthly budget and 98% of our year-to-date budget. Expenses: We are 100% of the monthly budget and 96% of the year-to-date budget. End-of-year reports are available for pickup at the Annual Meeting. Suggestion to have the budget reports sent out quarterly to the committees

Christian Community Life: Menu for the Annual Meeting on Jan. 19th has been planned. Plan to serve the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner on March 4th. Hoping to get the dinner advertised better to have a better turn out than last year. Genoa Food Pantry Minutes: Served 35 Families for 77 Patrons, \$2884.97 Expenses, \$10,154.47 total Donations. Meijer Simply Give Program is going on now until March 29th. Our church is the recipient of the Winter Program. ***Double Days are on March 1st and March 22nd***

Evangelism: Christmas tree lights were turned off the day after Epiphany. Dan Berger will undecorate the tree when weather permits. Robin Perkins will be sending out cards to members who have illness, death or new babies in their families.

Parish Education: There were five kids in Sunday School on January 5th. The Cub Scouts will be having a pancake breakfast on the next scheduled Sunday School so we will be attending the breakfast on February 2nd. We have put together a short survey about Christian Education to help make decisions about the future of the Sunday School program. A QR code will be in the bulletin, etc. for people to access it.

Worship Life: We discussed attendance of our Christmas Eve Services this year (2024). We had attendance: 4:00- 220, 7:00- 60 and 11:00- 62. We discussed combining the latter two services, but to keep the time the same at 7:00pm. This is something that 3 to 4 committee members agreed to try for next year to see how it goes. One member of the committee is opposed and would like to keep both 7 and 11. There were lots of good comments about having candlelight at both 7 and 11. If we go to 7:00 only, it would be a candlelight service. Would like to have more input from council. Lenten season begins with Ash Wednesday on March 5th. Services will be at 11am and 7pm. Weekly Wednesday Lenten services are in planning stages. Maundy Thursday will be April 17th. We will be doing the Living Last Supper and will need 12 to 13 men volunteers to read the parts of the disciples/Jesus. Easter Sunday is April 20th. Confirmation will be Saturday May 17th, we have 3 confirmands. Church piano is due for tuning. Kellie will schedule this.

Property: Thank you to Todd Kapp for plowing our church parking lot during the winter season. Nativity Scene was put away for the year. The wooden boards of the scene are starting to fall apart and are in need of repair or replacement.

Old Business: None

New Business: We discussed attendance of our Christmas Eve Services this year (2024). There were lots of good comments about having candlelight at both 7 and 11. If we go to 7:00 only, it would be a candlelight service. Council members decided to revisit this item for the keeping the three services more in May and discuss it again then and see about getting more feedback from the members of the congregation.

Jennifer Nelson made a motion to adjourn. Deanna Neuman 2nd. Motion passed. Meeting ended at 8:02 pm.

Submitted by: Diana Lambert, Council Secretary 14

ELECTRONIC GIVING AUTHORIZATION FORM

St. John Lutheran Church PO Box 235 Williston, OH 43468
www.stjohnwilliston.org (419)836-5144 email: office@stjohnwilliston.org



FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	ENVELOPE/DONOR #	DATE
Effective date of authorization: ____/____/____		
Type of authorization: <input type="checkbox"/> New authorization <input type="checkbox"/> Change donation amount <input type="checkbox"/> Change donation date <input type="checkbox"/> Change banking information <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue electronic donation		
Last Name		First Name
Address		
City		State Zip
Email Address		Phone #
DATE OF FIRST DONATION: ____/____/____	FREQUENCY OF DONATION: <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly – DAY _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Monthly – 1 st and 15 th <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 1 st <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 15 th	FUNDS: <input type="checkbox"/> General/Operating <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify below) <input type="checkbox"/> Add'l donation to offset fees <div style="text-align: right;">Total \$ _____</div>
AMOUNTS: \$ _____ \$ _____ \$ _____		
If you would like to designate your giving to another fund not listed: please state your desire here. Thank You.		
CHECKING / SAVINGS	Please debit my donation from my (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Savings Account (contact your financial institution for Routing #) <input type="checkbox"/> Checking Account (attach a voided check below)	Routing Number: _____ <i>Valid Routing # must start with 0, 1, 2, or 3</i> Account Number: _____
	I authorize the above organization to process debit entries to my account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization. Authorized Signature: _____ Date: _____	
CREDIT / DEBIT CARD	Card Brand (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/> American Express <input type="checkbox"/> Discover Card	
	Card Number:	Expiration Date:
	Name on Card:	
	Billing Address (if different from above):	
	I authorize the above organization to process transactions in accordance with the information above. Signature (as it appears on the card): _____ Date: _____	

If using a checking account, please attach a voided check over the credit/debit card section above. We do urge you to use a checking or savings account as opposed to a credit card to save transaction fees. Thank you. Please allow 2-3 business days for processing. Thank you for being a blessing to St. John Lutheran Church.



Saturdays 5:00pm	Sundays 9:45 am
Ushers	Ushers
1-Jack Mathews	2-Jill Kao
8-Ron Gerkenmeyer	9-Jim Vogelbacher
15-Donnelly Family	16-The Titgemeyers
22-Buhrow Family	23-Diana Lambert
Lectors	Lectors
1-Amy Schloegl	2-Kellie Ulrich
8-Sandy Toth	9-Diana Lambert
15-Jonah D.	16-Deanna Neuman
22-Beverly Harder	23-Melissa Lammers
Acolytes	Acolytes
1-Jacob H.	2-Rylie C.
8-Liam D.	9-Mila
15-Nolan D.	16-Lauren
22-Jonah D.	23-Makenna
Communion	Communion
1-JoElaine Schimming	2-Tim Titgemeyer
8-Nancy Strohscher	9-Margaret Berger
15-Ron Gerkenmeyer	16-Robin Perkins
22- Al & Traci Brown	23-Pam LaRue



Saturdays 5:00pm	Sundays 9:45 am
Ushers	Ushers
1-Jack Mathews	2-Jill Kao
8-Ron Gerkenmeyer	9-Jim Vogelbacher
15-Donnelly Family	16-The Titgemeyers
22-Buhrow Family	23-Diana Lambert
29- Jack Mathews	30-Jim Vogelbacher
Lectors	Lectors
1-Nancy Strohscher	2-Cebie Titgemeyer
8-Tracy Orians	9-Jerry Goldstein
15-Beverly Harder	16-Tim Titgemeyer
22-Amy Schloegl	23-Melissa Lammers
29-Jonah D.	30- Deanna Neuman
Acolytes	Acolytes
1-Trenton	2-Lauren
8-Liam D.	9-Makenna
15-Nolan D.	16-Mila
22-Jonah D.	23-Rylan
29- Jacob H.	30-Rylie
Communion	Communion
1-Ron Gerkenmeyer	2-Kellie Ulrich
8-Alice Witt	9-Margaret Berger
15-Carol Vargo	16-Diana Lambert
22- JoElaine Schimming	23-Roland Sandrock
29-Al & Traci Brown	30-Dave Neuman



*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. Thank you!*

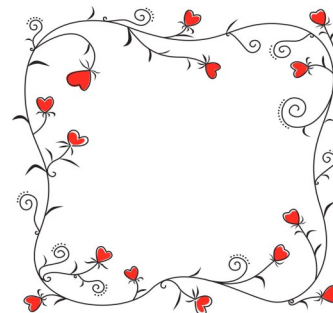
FEBRUARY



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>26 Installation of Church Officers/Worship The Chosen Movie 11AM 8:30am –9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am –10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am –12:00pm Choir practice 5:00pm –6:30pm Scouts</p>	<p>27 Faith Practice Reading- Job 25</p>	<p>28 Dartball HOME vs Oak Harbor St Paul 7:30 PM 9:00am Blankets</p>	<p>29  Knit's for Breakfast 7:00am No Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31 Office closed</p>	<p>1 5:00pm Contemporary Worship 6:00pm –8:00pm Cub Scouts Committee Meeting (B)</p>
<p>2  Pancake Breakfast 8:00am –9:30am Cub Scout Pancake Breakfast 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 11:00am –1:00pm The Chosen Movie 5:00pm –6:30pm Scouts</p>	<p></p>	<p>4  Women's Circles Esther Circle 2 pm Rachel Circle 7 PM 9:00am Blankets</p>	<p>5  Knit's for Breakfast 7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds 6:30pm –8:30pm Scout Committee Meeting (B)</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 Office closed</p>	<p>8  Goodies for Sale Valentine's Bake Sale 5:00pm Contemporary Worship</p>
<p>9  Goodies for Sale Valentine's Bake Sale 8:30am –9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am –10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am –12:00pm Choir practice 11:00am –1:00pm The Chosen Movie 4:00pm –6:00pm Scout Den Meeting (B) 4:00 pm Livestock Unlimited 4-H</p>	<p>10 7:00pm –8:00pm Scout Committee Meeting (B)</p>	<p>11 9:00am Blankets</p>	<p>12  Knit's for Breakfast 7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds</p>	<p>13  COMMITTEE meetings 7:00pm –8:00pm Committee Night</p>	<p>14 Office closed</p>	<p>15 5:00pm Contemporary Worship</p>
<p>16 8:30am –9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am –10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am –12:00pm Choir practice 5:00pm –6:30pm Scouts</p>	<p>17  RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS DAY FEBRUARY 17</p>	<p>18 9:00am Blankets</p>	<p>19  Knit's for Breakfast 7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds</p>	<p>20  Church COUNCIL 7:00pm –8:00pm Church Council Meeting</p>	<p>21 Office closed</p>	<p>22 5:00pm Contemporary Worship</p>
<p>23 8:30am –9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am –10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am –12:00pm Choir practice 11:00am –1:00pm The Chosen Movie 5:00pm –6:30pm Scouts</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 9:00am Blankets</p>	<p>26  Knit's for Breakfast 7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 Office closed</p>	<p>1 5:00pm Contemporary Worship 6:00pm –8:00pm Cub Scouts Committee Meeting (B) 6:00pm –8:00pm Scouts-Community Pinewood Derby</p>

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Williston, Ohio 43468-0235
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Volume 721 Issue 345
February 2025



February 2025



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419-378-1112 cell ph

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pastorobrien@stjohnwilliston.org

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LisaAnne Gregg
Office Administrators
Church: 419-836-5514
E-mail address:
office@stjohnwilliston.org

*Visit us on Facebook

Worship Hours at St. John
Saturday Contemporary Worship 5:00 PM
Sunday School for the whole family
8:30 AM 1st Sunday of the month.
Sunday Traditional Worship 9:45 AM