

St. John Lutheran Church, Williston, Ohio

# The Forerunner

March 2025

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*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.*

## Ask the Pastor

Recently while discussing Jesus' instructions to turn the other cheek or to give someone your shirt if they ask for your coat (Luke 6:27-38), I wondered about why Jesus would say something so strange. I can't imagine Jesus is telling us to take more abuse or be a bigger victim. I wondered if this would actually be a form of taking power back, refusing to be the victim. You don't have to wait three years for the passage to come up again, I found an article by Rev. Emily Heitzman (<https://musingsfromabricolage.wordpress.com/tag/the-giving-tree/>) that addresses some of these issues. This is her answer edited and paraphrased...

In Matthew's Gospel, when Jesus tells his disciples to turn the other cheek, he specifies which cheek he is talking about, saying: "if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also." (Matthew 5:39)

Heitzman explains that in Jesus' time, the left hand was used for only unclean tasks. (Natural, every day, human bodily tasks, if you get my drift.) And so if you used your left hand for something other than those tasks, you basically would be seen as contaminating whatever or whomever you touched with your unclean hand. Thus, you would be excluded from religious gatherings and would have to do penance. (Sorry lefties.)

So, if you can't use your left hand, to hit someone's right cheek, you would have to use the back of your hand. Here's where it gets interesting... When a person hit someone else during Jesus' time with the back of their hand, they were not doing it to cause injury. Instead, the backhand was a way to insult and humiliate the other person. A backhand slap was not done to someone who was an equal. Slaves would be backhanded by masters; wives would be backhanded by husbands; children would be backhanded by parents.

The purpose of the backhand was to keep a person who was inferior in their place and to make them submit to their superior. So Jesus says that if someone backhands you, then turn the other cheek. Make them do it again.

The thing is, they can't. It's impossible for the person in power to use the backhand again. The recipient's nose is in the way. The only way to hit that person again would be with the front of the right hand or a fist. But the problem with this is that only equals fought with fists, so by striking the other cheek the striker would be acknowledging his victim's equality, thus shaming himself.

Theologian Walter Wink explains in his book *Jesus and Nonviolence*: "This act of defiance makes the master incapable of asserting his dominance in this relationship... By turning the cheek, the 'inferior' is saying: 'I'm a human being, just like you. I refuse to be humiliated any longer. I am your equal. I am a child of God. I won't take it anymore.'"

The instruction to "turn the other cheek" is not Jesus saying that we should roll over and allow people to abuse or take advantage of us. Jesus is saying quite the opposite. He is telling us to stand up to the bully. He is calling us to holy resistance.



Dear Kind and Generous Friends,

We wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for donating your time and effort to ring the bell at Miller's Market for the Salvation Army for the year 2024. Thanks to you and your organization, you alone raised \$300.12 for that day. The money collected will go to help the people of Ottawa County and we couldn't do it without your help. So, thank you again and hopefully we can count on your donation of time again in 2025.

Rufena Hartford  
Cindy Bench  
Claudette Allred  
Salvation Army Port Clinton Service  
Center/serving Ottawa County



### In Memory of David Witty

Elaine Gruetter  
Beth Johnson  
Mary Harmeyer



SPRING FORWARD

MARCH 9, 2025

### In Spite of the Weather.....Valentine Bake Sale a Hugh Success! Many Thanks to All our Donors, Bakers and to the Eager St. John Buyers

Our WELCA Bake Sale for 2025 was another huge success, with many thanks to our St. John Family.. Once again we applied for a grant from the *Thrivent Acton Team*. We were blessed that most of our supplies for baking were donated or they were purchased with these grant dollars. Our expenses were minimal.

On Friday, February 7, twelve (12) ladies gathered in the church kitchen to bake. These ladies were using four ovens -- with lots of buzzers ringing!!!!!! From 9 a.m. until 1:15 p.m. we baked 48 DOZEN cookies and fifteen pies. In addition to the baking, individual servings were boxed up of three large pans of lasagna, two pans of mostaccioli and three pans of macaroni and cheese (which had been previously baked on Thursday by a couple ladies). This entire process created a lot of great socializing and developed 'camaraderie among the group'. After the work was complete, lunch was served and fellowship was enjoyed by all.

In addition to the baking, others brought in many varieties of specialty breads (Hawaiian, zucchini, banana, blueberry, apricot, etc., etc., etc.), cheesecake, bars, brownies, muffins and a variety of candies. We had a total of 26 loaves (various sizes) of bread. We had three eight-foot tables of delicious goodies for sale.

The true success of the bake sale was having so many helpful bakers, donors and purchasers. It was absolutely overwhelming to have such generous members of St. John, and to see the eagerness of the buyers. St. John is truly a wonderful and very giving congregational family. Many thanks to each and every one of you!!!!

In spite of the inclement weather, by the close of the bake sale we had SOLD OUT of EVERYTHING. Many thanks to all for your support and generosity!

Our profits will be shared with a number of local charities, including Helping Hands of St. Louis, Salem Lutheran Church, the LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry at Elliston Zion and others. The balance will be deposited into the WELCA treasury.

Again, thanks to all for your support.

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

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**Home Telephone:**  
**419-378-1112**

pastorobrien  
@stjohnwilliston.org

**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**  
**April 2025 newsletter is**  
**Monday, March 24th**  
**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 Friday<sub>2</sub>

## Circle and Board Meetings March 2025

ESTHER CIRCLE: Tuesday, March 4 2:00 p.m.  
Bible Study: Judy

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

The WELCA Board will be serving the Lenten Lunch on Weds. March 12th 11:00 AM

The Esther Circle will be serving the Lenten Lunch on Weds. March 19th 11:00 AM

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



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

They enjoy a time of fun, fellowship and coffee!

**Come join us! You only need to know how to tie a knot!**

Bed sheets are needed for quilt backings.

Donations may be left in the box outside the church office.



Bold Women's Day—observed the first Sunday of March – celebrates all Lutheran women who have acted or are acting boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. Some women are bold in their unceasing prayers. Other women are bold in their service to those in need. Still other women are bold in their advocacy or through their hospitality. Whether we live out our bold story of faith in the workplace, family home or community, our faith compels us to make a difference in the lives of others. It's all about living out our baptismal call, about being a disciple of Christ. Are you bold?

## LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF—WHERE DID LWR QUILTS & KITS GO IN 2024?



LUTHERAN  
WORLD RELIEF

facebook.com/LuthWorldRelief  
instagram.com/LuthWorldRelief  
youtube.com/LutheranWorldRelief

### WHERE DID LWR QUILTS & KITS GO IN 2024?



**689,814**  
QUILTS & KITS

IN 16 COUNTRIES

**370,818**  
QUILTS

**140,117**  
SCHOOL KITS

**127,621**  
PERSONAL CARE KITS

**45,690**  
BABY CARE KITS

**5,568**  
FABRIC KITS

COUNTRY	SHIPPING WAREHOUSE	QUILTS	SCHOOL KITS	PERSONAL CARE KITS	BABY CARE KITS	FABRIC KITS
ANGOLA	Maryland	30,954	13,650	24,300	4,800	3,200
GEORGIA	Maryland	24,750				
HONDURAS	Maryland		27,300			
LEBANON	Minnesota	21,250	9,280	9,300	3,920	1,080
MALI	Minnesota	47,600	15,225			
MOLDOVA	Maryland	7,856		6,000		
NICARAGUA	Minnesota	3,400	8,700			
NIGER	Minnesota	27,880				
PERU	Minnesota	28,560	26,100	24,366	5,320	1,224
SENEGAL	Minnesota		15,225		7,350	
SOUTH SUDAN	Minnesota	28,560				
TANZANIA	Minnesota	28,560				
TÜRKIYE	Minnesota	28,560		16,275	7,350	
UKRAINE	Maryland	73,854		30,360	6,300	
	Minnesota	5,440		7,750		
UNITED STATES	Maryland	13,794	9,412	9,270	3,300	64
ZAMBIA	Minnesota		15,225		7,350	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>370,818</b>	<b>140,117</b>	<b>127,621</b>	<b>45,690</b>	<b>5,568</b>

This shipping information is from LWR's 2024 fiscal year (Oct 2023 - Sept 2024).





**Rummage  
sale  
items  
needed!**

Help support **NIGHTINGALE'S HARVEST**

(a non profit organization supporting cancer patients)

by collecting items for their Rummage Sale!

*They will be hosting a Rummage Sale on 4/5 and we have been asked to collect items for them.*

**Accepting (in good condition): Clothing, housewares, bathroom accessories, sheets, comforters, lawn tools, or any other usable items.**

**Deadline is March 23rd.**

Please bring your items to St. John and place them in Pre-School Classrooms (down main hall)

**St John WELCA is hosting the  
Spring Assembly of North Central on May 3.**

Registration will begin at

8:30 a.m. with the program starting at 9 a.m.

Cost of registration is \$10 which covers the continental breakfast, speakers and lunch. It will be over about noon.

Lisa Eisenbach, founder of Nightingales

Harvest will speak.

Nightingales Harvest is a food pantry and resource center for families experiencing cancer.

Also speaking will be Kelly Morse, who is a certified genetic counselor with ProMedica Cancer Institute.

You do not need to attend circle meetings to attend this enlightening program.

More information and registration forms will be available in April.

For now we just ask you to save the date, May 3.

*Save the date!  
May 3rd!*

**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 –Williston

Friday March 7, 2025 11 AM to 5 PM

**Lunch and Snacks provided!!**

**Appointments are encouraged!**

**Please make your appointment today at [www.redcrossblood.org](http://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!

March  
2nd!

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! See you on March 2nd!



## McDonalds Breakfast

Join us for breakfast and fellowship at the GENOA McDonald's on Wednesdays. We 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.



March 9th

We will gather following  
Sunday worship (11:00ish) for this last showing of  
The Chosen for this season.

And, we'll 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 Margaret B (419-340-2150) 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. March 4 at HOME vs Elliston Trinity UCC**

**March 11th— any make up games will be played**

**March 15th— TOURNAMENT**





**4:30-6:30 PM**

**St. John Lutheran Church**

**SHROVE TUESDAY &**

*Pancake*

**MARCH 4**

*Supper!*



*Ash  
Wednesday*

Ash Wednesday Worship Services with  
Imposition of the Ashes

Wednesday, March 5, 2025  
Services at 11:00 AM and 7:00 PM

St. John Lutheran Church  
21140 W Toledo Street (SR 579)  
Williston, OH



# St. John Lenten Schedule

Join us every Wednesday at 11:00 AM  
During Lent, we will meet for worship in the  
Sanctuary at St. John led by one of our area Pastors.  
Then we will join for a time of food & fellowship,  
in the basement.

Our services this year are based on the book  
“The Listening Life” by Adam McHugh.  
This also reflects our NWOS 2025 “Year of Listening”  
focus to learn the sacred art of listening-  
listening to God, listening to ourselves,  
listening to others and listening to the community.  
*You may also download the study, order the book or  
Find more resources at  
[www.nwos-elca.church/listening/](http://www.nwos-elca.church/listening/)  
Here are the groups responsible for each lunch.*

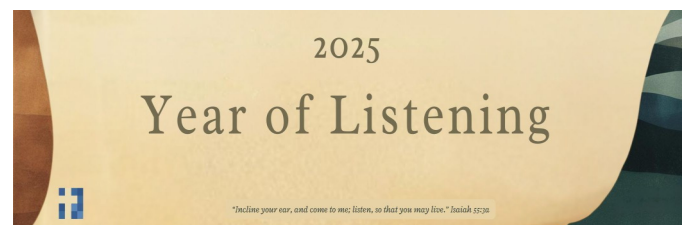
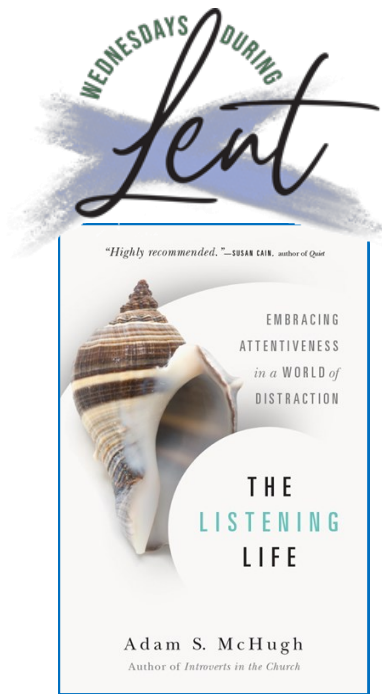
March 12-WELCA Board

March 19 - Esther Circle

March 26– Rebekah Circle

April 2-Church Council

April 9– Worship Life and Parish Ed.



## Weekly Listening Practice for March

For this Year of Listening, we have invited local musicians to select a song for collective reflection each month. We encourage you to explore the monthly scripture and weekly listening practices.

1. Enjoy the song selection video.
2. Read and reflect on the scripture that inspired the song.
3. Explore weekly practices connected to the lyrics throughout your week.
4. Share your experiences on social media using #YearOfListening.

These resources were designed to be inserted into parish newsletters, bulletins or posted on your refrigerator! We invite you to join us in these four unique listening practices each month!

Visit [www.nwos-elca.church/listening](http://www.nwos-elca.church/listening) for “Year of Listening” videos, daily reading plans, discussion guides, devotions and much more!

## Meet Matthew!

Director of Music and Worship at St. Martin's, Archbold

More about Matthew!



“As you can hear, St. Martin's Chancel Choir and congregation sings *God is Truly Present* in resounding 4-part harmony which reflects the radiant text. March 2nd marks the Transfiguration of Our Lord – another ‘radiant’ moment in the Gospel story. Here, Jesus shines brightly, the disciples hear God's voice speak “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” and they respond in an astonished silence. With this hymn, we at St. Martin's invite you to witness that shining Savior, listen for God's voice in your life, and find moments for quiet reflection. ”





# Easter Flowers

**Order by  
April 2nd!**

Order your Easter flowers by Weds. APRIL 2ND (No late orders please!)  
Please fill out a form, attach your payment, and drop it in the offering plate or at the office.  
Please mark "EASTER FLOWERS" on your envelope along with your name.

This year there will be two options:  
White lilies in a 6" pot, containing 5-6 blooms for \$11  
Daffodils in 6" pot for \$11

They will be available for pick up after our Sunday Easter service.

Please remember...the deadline to order is APRIL 2ND!

---

***EASTER FLOWER ORDER FORM***  
**Due Wednesday, April 2nd**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**White lilies:** Qty. \_\_\_\_\_ x \$11 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Daffodils** Qty. \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 11 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

In loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

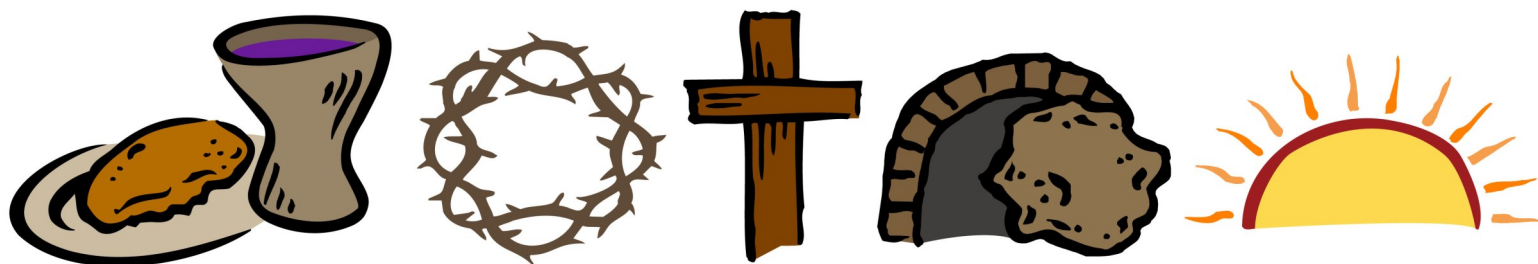
In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Please place this form and payment in an envelope marked "Easter Flowers" and place it in the offering plate or drop it off at the office. Please remember to write your name on the envelope. Thank you!**

*(These flowers are coming from our local florist- Hirzel's Greenhouse)*





# Holy Week at St. John



MAUNDY THURSDAY

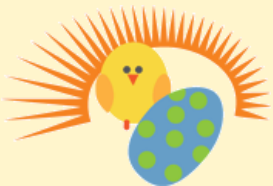
Maundy Thursday Service  
April 17th 7 PM



GOOD FRIDAY

Good Friday Service  
April 18th 7 PM

## Saturday April 19th



Easter Egg Hunt  
Saturday April 19th at **10:30 AM** (*note the new time!*)  
**(we are taking donations of candy to fill the Easter Eggs!  
Please drop your in the box near the office.)**



Holy Saturday  
Worship with Holy Communion 5 PM

## Easter Sunday April 20th



Easter Breakfast  
8:30-9:30 AM  
Scrambled eggs, sausage, fruit, assorted sweet rolls, coffee,  
tea, milk or juice.



Easter Sunday with Holy Communion  
Worship at 9:45

# Easter Egg Hunt

**Saturday, April 19, 2025**  
**10:30 AM**

Join us for our Annual Easter Egg Hunt!  
Meet us at 10:30 AM for fun and prizes.  
(Volunteers, please come early to help!)  
We also need donations of candy to stuff the eggs.

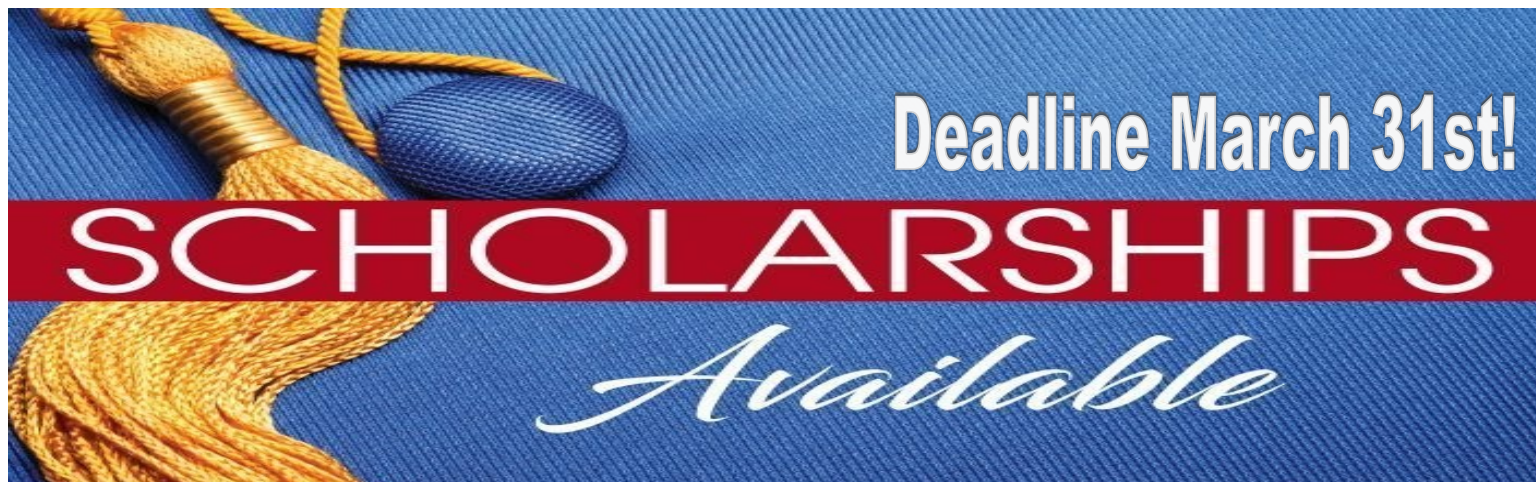
# Easter Breakfast

**Sunday, April 20, 2025**  
**8:30 AM—9:30 AM**

Come as we gather on Easter Morning for breakfast and fellowship before worship. Menu: Scrambled eggs, sausage, fruit, assorted sweet rolls, coffee, tea, milk or juice & sausage gravy and biscuits! Free Will Donation.







**Deadline March 31st!**

# SCHOLARSHIPS

*Available*

Scholarships for continuing education are available from St. John Lutheran Church. Applications are available on the church's website.

[www.stjohnwilliston.org](http://www.stjohnwilliston.org)

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

You may return the completed forms to the church office any time before that date or submit them online.

**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.



# MARCH Stewardship

## Three WAYS to GIVE

### AT ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

PO Box 235  
Williston, OH 43468  
419-836-5514

Visit [www.stjohnwilliston.org](http://www.stjohnwilliston.org)  
for more information.



### Mail-In

Mail in your offering directly to our church office  
at the address below:  
St. John Lutheran Church  
PO Box 235 Williston, OH 43468



### Online Giving

Visit us online at [www.stjohnwilliston.org](http://www.stjohnwilliston.org) and click on the  
"online giving" link to use our giving website directly.  
We process online giving through VANCO, a nationally recognized  
company, specializing in safe and secure church giving.  
We suggest using your checking or savings account for giving to avoid  
credit card fees. If you would like assistance in setting up your online  
account...see LisaAnne in the church office!



### Drop Off In-Person

Visit our church office or use the offering basket at our service  
times. If you would like dated offering envelopes to use through-  
out the year, just ask!



Northwestern Ohio Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



### 5 MINUTES A DAY

If you're not used to reading the Bible daily, start with this easy to use resource to read a chapter of the New Testament in 5 minutes a day. This reading plan will take you through all 260 chapters of the New Testament, one chapter per day.

### 5 DAYS A WEEK

Determine a time and location to spend 5 minutes a day for 5 days a week. It is best to have a consistent time and a quiet place where you can regularly dwell in God's Word.

We have paired this reading plan with an app in which you can listen to the passage for five minutes a day, five days a week. To access the listening recordings online, or to download the Bible.is app, scan the QR codes or go to this link: <https://www.faithcomesbyhearing.com/audio-bible-resources/bible-is-2>



Download for Android



Download for iOS



# MARCH KIDS

## JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

Starting on Ash Wednesday, the church traditionally observes Lent, a 40-day period of repentance and reflection. As we prepare for Easter, families can focus on Jesus' life and ministry, culminating in his death and resurrection.

Use this Lenten Bible Reading Plan, along with a kid-friendly Bible version, for family devotions. With older kids, you can expand the readings to the surrounding paragraph or chapter. Discuss how each reference to Christ ties into God's plan of salvation.



Day	Bible Reference
DAY 1	Genesis 3:15
DAY 2	Isaiah 7:14
DAY 3	Matthew 1:20-21
DAY 4	Luke 2:11
DAY 5	Luke 2:52
DAY 6	Mark 1:9-11
DAY 7	Matthew 4:10
DAY 8	Matthew 4:18-20
DAY 9	Luke 6:27-31
DAY 10	Matthew 11:28-30
DAY 11	Luke 4:40-41
DAY 12	Luke 8:24-25
DAY 13	Matthew 12:8
DAY 14	Mark 6:41-42
DAY 15	Luke 9:20-22
DAY 16	John 3:16-17
DAY 17	John 6:35
DAY 18	John 8:12
DAY 19	John 10:14-15
DAY 20	Mark 10:13-16
DAY 21	Mark 9:2-3
DAY 22	Matthew 20:17-19
DAY 23	Luke 19:9-10
DAY 24	Matthew 14:25-27
DAY 25	Luke 10:36-37
DAY 26	John 11:25-27, 43
DAY 27	John 12:3
DAY 28	Matthew 21:8-9
DAY 29	Mark 11:15-16
DAY 30	John 17:17-19
DAY 31	Luke 22:3-6
DAY 32	Mark 14:22-24
DAY 33	John 13:3-5
DAY 34	Matthew 26:39
DAY 35	Luke 22:63-65
DAY 36	Mark 15:22-26
DAY 37	Matthew 27:50-54
DAY 38	John 19:40-42
DAY 39	Luke 24:1-8
DAY 40	Matthew 28:19-20

## Springing to LIFE



New life defines the season of spring. Make this Easter craft that symbolizes rebirth.

### What you need:

- Brown paper lunch bag
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Glue stick
- Jellybeans



### What you do:

1. From the bag's bottom, cut two 2-inch circles. Set aside.
2. From the sides, cut two 10-inch circles.
3. Draw a thin spiral on each large circle and cut along the lines. Crinkle spirals gently.
4. Starting at the center, wrap one spiral into a nest. Glue every few inches to hold it.
5. Glue one small circle to the bottom of the nest.
6. Repeat with the other spiral. Fill nests with jellybeans and give to a friend!

## EASTER Egg Hunt!

Sat. April 19 10:30 AM





# Northwestern Ohio Synod

## Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*David Blecker*



**Deacon Sherry Krieger reflects on the recent 2025 Lutheran Ethicists' Network Gathering.**

### **Grace...Bountifully given to us...ALL of us**

We Lutheran Christians know this as our Lutheran credo of Justification by Grace through Faith that was handed down to us through our faithful pastors, Sunday School Teachers, parents and ancestors who took seriously the words and works of a priest who lived more than 500 years ago, Martin Luther. Luther's theology helped move us into a new way of understanding God's ultimate love, salvation, and work among us as most fully known through the life, death and resurrection of God's son Jesus Christ...We are loved because of Jesus (John 3:16), we are saved because of Jesus (Romans 3:22-26), God's Holy Spirit is moving among us because of Jesus (Acts 1:8).

But what does this knowledge, understanding and faith stance mean for us in everyday life? What does it do to and for our behaviors as we live each day interacting with others?

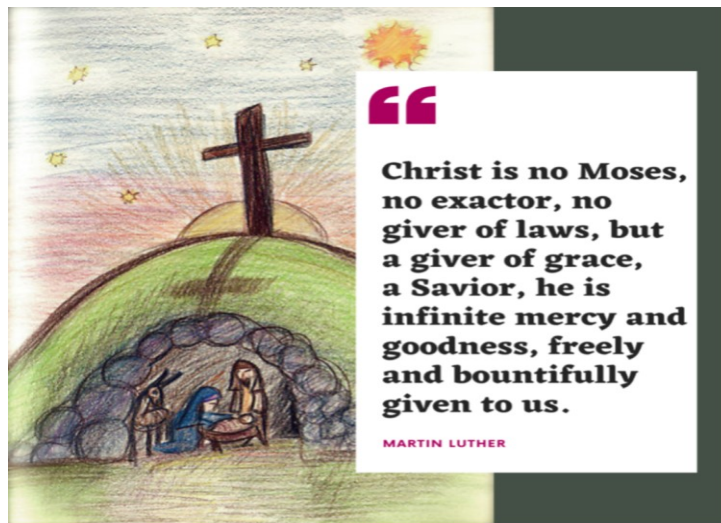
As you may be aware, we are living in some challenging times. Although not new to humanity, it may seem like division, disconnect and polarization are ramping up and changing some behaviors – ours and other people's – as we seek to figure out how best to live in these days of unrest.

As synod staff we are hearing and experiencing more than ever the frustrations, challenges and deep concern expressed in parishes throughout Northwest Ohio, from leaders, members, seekers and community stakeholders who are fearful and sensing an inability and sometimes unwillingness to speak to one another across deep divisions regarding urgent social and political issues. What do we do? What can we do?

I had the privilege of attending the 2025 Lutheran Ethicists' Network Gathering earlier this month on **Polarization: Discerning a Path Forward**. The following are opportunities this group practiced that allowed us to "do" something different under God's grace given freely in Jesus.

### **REFLECT and PRAY**

1. Reflect on these days of rapid communication and media saturation, and how this affects you and the state of your own spirit right now. How might the themes of rest, release, and consolation from God received in nightly prayer be a form of response to that frenzy?
2. Bring to your attention someone with whom your relationship has been especially strained because of polarized political opinions, and with whom you wish to receive an opening for communication and/or healing.
3. Raise this person, your relationship and your concerns to God, asking for grace, wisdom, and open hearts, that through patience and gentleness like Jesus, God's love, mercy and forgiveness might enter into this situation for you both.



*In a modified Service of Night Prayer, Pr. Ole Schenk provided our group with this confession. How might you use it in your community? Share it with your pastoral leader, Sunday school teacher, Bible study group, or gather some friends together.*

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another. With our weight of sin, let us also bring up to God our longings for open and new paths of relationship.

**Holy and gracious God, I confess that I have sinned against you this day, this week, this year.**

**Some of the sin I carry is only my own: the thought, word and deed that cuts me off from you and from my neighbor. Other sin I suffer: it has been done to me, echoes still within me, and I carry its pain further. In the name of Jesus Christ, I turn to you: I ask you to forgive and heal me For those ones I bring in petition before you now, I ask for an open space: for them for me, and for the sake of your truth.**

By the mercy of God, You are, we are, united with Jesus Christ in whose saving death we are forgiven. In the tender compassion of God, your petitions are known and received. By the breath of the Holy Spirit, Receive rest in the peace of Christ.



**Deacon Sherry Krieger**  
**Assistant to the Bishop for**  
**Strengthening Parishes &**  
**Parish Development**

Sherry provides oversight for parish relations with a focus on Ministry of Presence and Preventative Health. She guides leadership for parish transition and transformation through mission and vision conversations, and the Call Process in tandem with Call Facilitators and Transformational Pastors. Sherry is responsible for congregational care in matters of transition and conflict, providing resourcing, consultation and leadership development and is assisting the Bishop in staff and synodical development.





## 2/20/2025-St. John Lutheran Church Council Meeting Highlights

**Meeting Opened:** At 7:01 pm, by Dave Neuman

**Devotions led by Pastor:** Bread of the Day -Book of Jeremiah

**Council Meeting Minutes:** Motion to approve the minutes from January 16, 2025 was made by Cheryl Berger and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rick Buhrow. Motion passed.

### Pastor's Report:

#### Worship Attendance:

In Person average for January 2025-117.8 compared to January 2024-190.5 Online average for January 2025- 109.5 compared to January 2024-105.0

#### Numbers

9 hospital/home-bound visits/individual or family meeting  
4 committee/group meetings  
3 community/youth/fellowship events  
3 professional/clergy activities

#### Installation

We installed our elected officers, committee members, and representatives on Saturday and Sunday, January 25/26.

**Ash Wednesday** -Lent is late this year. Ash Wednesday is March 5<sup>th</sup>. Ash Wednesday worship (11 am and 7 pm) will be in the sanctuary

**Midweek Lent-** Midweek Lenten worship (11:00 am), we will be using the theme of listening

### Financial Secretary, Treasurer and Finance

#### Committee Report: Dan Kessler

- Income: We are 85% of our monthly budget and 85% of our year-to-date budget.
- Expenses: We are 96% of the monthly budget and 96% of the year-to-date budget.
- Pastor made a motion to donate Lenten Offering to the Elliston- Zion Light Neighborhood Pantry, Deanna Neuman 2<sup>nd</sup> Motion passed.

### Christian Community Life: Cheryl Berger

Plans for the Pancake Supper are ready. Ideas for Mother's and Father's Day gifts are being planned. Considering what other projects for the year that can be put together

### Evangelism: Robin Perkins

We talked about the events we donate a basket to (Easter basket, golf outing, Truck-or-Treat) and what we do for the tree lighting. We talked about taking turns filling prayer cards, envelopes, and pens in the pews as well as sending sympathy, get well and new baby cards to members.

We talked about advertising and agreed to put an ad in the Comet Communicator for \$60/yr., instead of the Kiwanis Sports Program. Robin will reach out to LisaAnne to discuss.

We agree to continue partnering with Nightengale's Harvest for donations.

Robin to talk with Pastor Shawn about scheduling a new member class.

### Parish Education: Deanna Neuman

Easter Egg Hunt will be at 10:30 on Saturday, April 19. There will be an Easter Breakfast on Easter morning. We have begun initial planning for VBS.

Sunday School Survey not well received. Only one response.

### Worship Life: Kellie Ulrich

Welcome Cebie Titgemeyer to worship life committee.

Lenten services begin on March 5<sup>th</sup> with Ash Wednesday at 11am and 7p.

Weekly Wednesday Lenten services will be in the sanctuary this year with a luncheon after the service. A volunteer will be needed to be worship leader/assisting the minister during the services for the 5 weeks. Council members will be responsible for lunch on April 2. Worship Life, together with Parish Ed will be hosting on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

Diana and Beckie are working on a Cantata for Maundy Thursday service. Will talk with Diana about what is needed. Will be doing a Living Last Supper, volunteers will be needed to sit at the table and read a few lines.

Piano tuning is scheduled for February 19<sup>th</sup> and was completed.

We discussed the return of sharing of peace during services, we would like to speak with other members to see how they feel about doing this.

### Property: John Mazur- Absent

Put new faucet in basement kitchen.

Repaired the faucet in the men's upstairs restroom.

Installed new light in the boiler rooms.

Lubed heater motors in sanctuary.

Flushed water tanks.

Property is going to label zone pumps and thermostats in the church.

### Old Business: none

### New Business:

- Money is needed for the Lenten Luncheon from the Council Members. Please bring to the next Committee Meeting or March Council Meeting.
- A committee is forming for the courtyard renovations with a starting date in March. Please contact Al Brown or Tim Titgemeyer if interested in planning and assisting with this project.

Deanna Neuman made a motion to adjourn. Cheryl Berger 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed. Meeting ended at 7:30 pm.

Next Council Meeting: Thurs. March 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM

Minutes submitted by: Diana Lambert, Council Secretary





## *Worship Assistants*

<b>Saturdays 5:00pm</b>	<b>Sundays 9:45 am</b>
<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Ushers</b>
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
<b>Lectors</b>	<b>Lectors</b>
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
<b>Acolytes</b>	<b>Acolytes</b>
1-Trenton	2-Lauren
8-Liam D.	9-Makenna
15-Nolan D.	16-Mila
22-Jonah D.	23-Rylan
29- Jacob H.	30-Rylie
<b>Communion</b>	<b>Communion</b>
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






















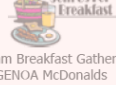
## *Worship Assistants*

<b>Saturdays 5:00pm</b>	<b>Sundays 9:45am</b>
<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Ushers</b>
5- Ron Gerkenseyer	6- The Titgemeyers
12- Donnelly Family	13-Diana Lambert
19-Buhrow Family	20- Jill Kao
26-Jack Mathews	27-Jim Vogelbacher
<b>Lectors</b>	<b>Lectors</b>
5- Nancy Strohscher	6-Jill Kao
12-Sandy Toth	13-Diana Lambert
19- Amy Schloegl	20-Kellie Ulrich
26-Beverly Harder	27-Melissa Lammers
<b>Acolytes</b>	<b>Acolytes</b>
5- Liam D.	6-Lauren H.
12-Nolan D.	13-Mila M.
19-Jonah D.	20-Makenna C.
26-Trenton K.	27- Rylie C.
<b>Communion</b>	<b>Communion</b>
5-Nancy Strohscher	6-Robin Perkins
12-Ron Gerkenmeyer	13-Pam LaRue
19-Carol Vargo	20-Dave Neuman
26-Al & Traci Brown	27- Margaret Berger



Worship Assistants will be needed for Ash. Weds, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. Please sign up today on the list next to the Pastor's office.

# March at St. John-Williston

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>23</b> 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	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Dartball @ Elmore St Paul 7:30 PM 9:00am Blankets	<b>26</b>  7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Office closed	<b>1</b> 5:00pm Contemporary Worship 6:00pm –8:00pm Cub Scouts Committee Meeting (B) 6:00pm –8:00pm Scouts- Community Pinewood Derby
<b>2</b>  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	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>  Esther Circle 2 pm Rebekah Circle 7 PM 9:00am Blankets 4:30pm –6:30pm Shrove Tuesday Pancakes 7:30pm –9:00pm Dartball vs Trinity-HOME	<b>5</b>   Ash Weds Services 11 AM and 7 PM 7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>  Blood Drive 11-5 Office closed	<b>8</b> 5:00pm Contemporary Worship
<b>9</b>  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 3:00pm –5:00pm Livestock Unlimited 4-H (B) 4:00pm –6:00pm CubScout Den Meeting (B) 5:00pm –6:30pm Scouts	<b>10</b> 2:00pm –4:00pm Lutheran Ministry of Mercy Annual Meeting @ The Pinnacle 7:00pm –8:00pm Scouts Committee Meeting (B)	<b>11</b> 9:00am Blankets	<b>12</b>   7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds 11:00am –1:00pm Lenten Worship and Lunch	<b>13</b>  Committee Night 7 PM	<b>14</b> Office closed	<b>15</b> 5:00pm Contemporary Worship
<b>16</b> 8:30am –9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am –10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am –12:00pm Choir practice 5:00pm –6:30pm Scouts	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 9:00am Blankets	<b>19</b>   7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds 11:00am –1:00pm Lenten Worship and Lunch	<b>20</b>  Council Meeting 7 PM	<b>21</b> Office closed	<b>22</b> 5:00pm Contemporary Worship
<b>23</b> 8:30am –9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am –10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am –12:00pm Choir practice 5:00pm –7:00pm Scouts (B)	<b>24</b>  Forerunner deadline 9 AM	<b>25</b> 9:00am Blankets	<b>26</b>   7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds 11:00am –1:00pm Lenten Worship and Lunch	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Office closed	<b>29</b> 5:00pm Contemporary Worship
<b>30</b> 8:30am –9:30am Confirmation Class 9:45am –10:45am Traditional Worship 11:00am –12:00pm Choir practice 5:00pm –6:30pm Scouts	<b>31</b>  Scholarship Application Deadline	<b>1</b> 9:00am Blankets 6:00pm –8:00pm Cub Scouts Committee Meeting (B) 	<b>2</b>   7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds 11:00am –1:00pm Lenten Worship and Lunch 6:30pm –8:30pm Scout Committee Meeting (B)	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Office closed	<b>5</b> 5:00pm Contemporary Worship

# St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

21140 W. Toledo Street

P. O. Box 235

Williston, Ohio 43468-0235

**Volume 722 Issue 346**  
**March 2025**



**March 2025**



**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**

**Pastor Shawn O'Brien**  
419-378-1112 cell ph

**E-mail address:**  
pastorobrien@stjohnwilliston.org

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

\*Visit us on Facebook

## ***Our Seven Faith Practices***

I will strive to...

1. **PRAY** daily
2. **WORSHIP** weekly
3. **READ** and study the Bible
4. **SERVE** at and beyond St. John
5. **INVITE** others into a loving relationship with Jesus
6. **GIVE** of my time, talents, and resources
7. **ENCOURAGE** spiritual growth in others