



JANUARY

FORERUNNER

2026



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Just a winter reminder...

Policy update....

Worship and activities at St. John will be cancelled if there is a LEVEL 2 or LEVEL 3 Snow Emergency declared in Ottawa County. We will hold worship and activities if there is a Level 1, 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!

Be careful out there this winter!

Ask the Pastor

When will our new Faith Practice Readings start for the New Year?



The Book of Isaiah spans a time of political crisis, moral decline, and looming judgment, but also carries a profound message of hope, redemption, and God's ultimate plan for salvation. Although Jewish and Christian tradition attributes the whole book to the prophet Isaiah of Jerusalem (8th century BCE), many scholars believe Isaiah was written by multiple authors over different periods. Isaiah can be divided into three main sections or eras...

1. First Isaiah (Chapters 1-39) - "Isaiah of Jerusalem"
This is traditionally attributed to the historical prophet Isaiah, who lived in Judah in the 8th century BCE. It focuses on warning Judah and Jerusalem about social injustice, idolatry, and the threat of Assyria.
2. Second Isaiah (Chapters 40-55) - "Deutero-Isaiah"
This section was likely written during the Babylonian exile (6th century BCE), centuries after Isaiah's lifetime. These chapters emphasize comfort, hope, and restoration, addressing exiled Israelites. Here we find the Suffering Servant and the promise of return from exile.
3. Third Isaiah (Chapters 56-66) - "Trito-Isaiah"
These chapters seem to have been written after the exile (late 6th century BCE or early 5th century BCE). They focus on life in the restored community, social justice, worship, and the future glory of God's kingdom.

Our reading schedule is as follows: *for the week starting...*

January 5 – Isaiah 1
January 12 – Isaiah 2
January 19 – Isaiah 3
January 26 – Isaiah 4
February 2 – Isaiah 5
February 9 – Isaiah 6
February 16 – Isaiah 7
February 23 – Isaiah 8
March 2 – Isaiah 9
March 9 – Isaiah 10
March 16 – Isaiah 11
March 23 – Isaiah 12

March 30 – Isaiah 13
April 6 – Isaiah 14
April 13 – Isaiah 15
April 20 – Isaiah 16
April 27 – Isaiah 17
May 3 – Isaiah 18
May 11 – Isaiah 19
May 18 – Isaiah 20
May 25 – Isaiah 21
June 1 – Isaiah 22
June 8 – Isaiah 23
June 15 – Isaiah 24



In Memory of Emory Lasseter
Carolyn Lasseter and Marilyn Sandrock

In Memory of Madonna Bury
Janice Sheahan
M/M Denny Dickinson
Rose and Bill Kusian
Doris Titgemeyer
Zion, Synek & Associates,
Independence, Ohio

Julie Marsh
Donna Mathews
Barb Ritzenhaler
Jim and Judy Pilewski
Deborah Joehlin-Bach
Veretta Whitaker

In Honor of Lowell and Diane Hartman
Stephen and Katherine Wegman



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 need Saturday Singers, too! If you love to sing, please see Tami Tailford after worship.

New Members Gathering

We're excited to welcome you! On **January 5th at 7 PM**, we'll be hosting a **New Member Gathering**—a special opportunity to meet our church family, learn more about St. John, and discover ways to grow in faith and serve together.

Whether you're new to the area, exploring your faith, or seeking a spiritual home, you'll find a warm and inviting community here.

Please let us know you will be there by signing up on the list next to the Pastor's office or by contacting the church office.

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

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.



The North Central Conference (the local group of Lutheran churches that we are part of) is coming together for worship on the **Festival of the Epiphany**,

Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

We will gather at Solomon Lutheran Church (305 W Main St, Woodville) to worship, give thanks, and rejoice in the light of Christ revealed to all nations.



With Gratitude

You Shine!

Thank you to all who contributed to "Shopping with the Stars" for the Luther Home of Mercy. Your efforts make such a wonderful difference in the lives of our neighbors there!

Jane Phillips

To the Blanket Ladies,

Thank you for the quilt!
I really like it.

Jeff Schimming

St. John Ladies,

Thank you for the beautiful quilts. Your time and efforts to sew each quilt is so special. Ruth Ann House residents appreciate your kindness. Once again, thank you so very much!

The Staff of Ruth Ann's House

Dear Friends,

We at Claver House (St Martin DePorres) thank you so much for the gifts of quilts. They are so appreciated by our clients. With the cold weather approaching, they will be put to good use. We minister with food, friendship, a listening ear and a gentle hug and by being disciples of God...like all of you!

Blessings and Gratitude...
Thank You again!

Marin Schutt
Volunteer
Claver House

To our anonymous bakers...

Thank you for making cookies for all the shut-ins! It was such a "sweet" gesture. Thank You!

Rebekah Circle Ladies
Franny, Nancy, Ann, Carole and Sue

Thank You!

A heartfelt thanks for all the prayers and cards I received while I was down and out. I had no idea how many people cared. I'd like to thank Pastor O'Brien for the many visits. They really saw me through some tough times.

Jill Mathews

St. John Family,

We are so grateful to everyone who joined us for the 8th Annual Christmas Tree Lighting and Dinner. It was truly a beautiful evening filled with delicious food, joyful fellowship, and the spirit of the season.

A special thank you to John M. for his help with clean-up, to Judy Y. for her assistance setting up, and to her niece for generously sharing that amazing homemade pumpkin roll—it was a treat!

Events like this remind us how blessed we are to have such a caring and supportive church family. None of this would be possible without each of you. Thank you for making this celebration so special!

The Evangelism Committee

St. John Family,

Thank you so much for your continuous support of the LIGHT Neighborhood Pantry at Elliston Zion! Several members of St. John came forward with Thrivent Charitable Donations, many participated in the Reverse Advent Calendar, the ladies of the church served dinner and other members helped our visitors on pantry night. We are so appreciative of your financial donations and we are also very appreciative of your continued prayers and encouraging support of this ministry!

Blessings to you this New Year!

LisaAnne Gregg



The *Forerunner* is published monthly by St. John Lutheran Church 21140 W. Toledo Street Williston, Ohio 43446 Corner of Main and Toledo Street

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Fall/Winter Worship

Saturday at 5:00 PM

Sunday Worship 9:45 AM

Deadline for the
February Forerunner is
Monday, January 19th 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.org



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



January/February Circle Meetings

Esther Circle

Jan. 6 2 PM

Bible Study— Margaret Berger

Feb. 3 2 PM

Bible Study— Evalyn Witty

Rebekah Circle

Jan. 6— Holiday Outing

Feb. 3 7 PM

Book Study-Nancy

2026 WELCA Executive Board

Diane Dickenson -President

JoElaine Schimming-Vice President

Margaret Berger-Secretary

Carole Beamer-Treasurer



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 \$30.00

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!



If you have a need for prayer, for you or someone you know, the prayer warriors of St. John are only a phone call away. To activate the chain, you may call Margaret, the church office or Pastor O'Brien.

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..



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. 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, 2026. Please let me know if I can help in applying in 2026. 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 Gerkensmeyer

Annual Congregational meeting

The St. John Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 18th 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 11th) following worship. Finance committee members will be on hand to answer any questions you may have in regards to the 2026 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 2026!

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
THE ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS MEETS EVERY SUNDAY MORNING AT 8:30.

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>



Thanks to everyone who donated to our Sack 4 A Sack campaign this fall!

We are able to send a \$1000 donation to the Genoa Food Pantry with your donations and contributions from the Good Samaritan Fund. Way to Go Comets!



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. 6 7:30PM at Elliston Trinity

Jan. 20 7:30PM at HOME

Jan. 27 7:30 PM Elliston Zion

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 Sandrock and Ron and Diane Gerkensmeyer 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!

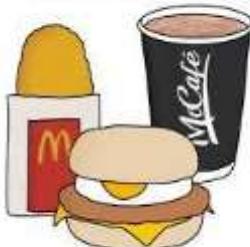
Any size bed sheets are needed for quilt backings. Donations may be left in the box outside the church office. All are welcome to join us and the coffee is always on!

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!





Stewardship Corner: Living Simply



We Pray that We Will Make Stewardship a Way of Life in 2026

Eternal God, we pray that we will make stewardship a way of Life.

We acknowledge you as the source of all we have and all we are.

Help us to place you, our loving Creator, first in our lives by becoming more prayerful, more focused on loving and caring for our families and our neighbors in need, and by becoming less preoccupied with material things.

Help us to hear your call to be good stewards, caretakers, and managers of all your gifts by sharing them for your purposes.

Help us make your priorities our priorities and to put our faith into action.

Help us plan to "give back" the talents, treasures and time with which we have been blessed.

Help us plan to serve our church, our community, and our world with your gifts.

May we serve you and pray with a joyful spirit of mind and heart.

Amen.

Scripture Keys to a Joyful New Year

Hold fast to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)

Assemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)

Pray earnestly every day (1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18)

Pray for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)

Yield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Negelect not your talents and opportunities (Galatians 6:10)

Examine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)

Work diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Yield your members to righteousness (Romans 6:11,16)

Exercise yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)

Aim at sinless perfection (Hebrews 6:1)

Redeem the time (Ephesians 5:15, 16)

— Gus Nichols

Stewardship is caring for all that God has given us—ourselves, our time, our possessions, the earth and all creation, our community both close and worldwide. We know this very well; we hear it in church repeatedly. But too often God's call to stewardship is lost in the hustle and bustle of our everyday lives. We are overwhelmed with what's going on in the world, in our community, in our church, in our families, and in ourselves.

And we're caught up in the contemporary cultural passion to possess. Indeed,

70% of the US Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is buying stuff. Our economy depends on our fetish that "more is better." We're so caught up in it all, that we don't know how to exit the rollercoaster and reclaim a slower, more purposeful life journey together with God.

"Christian simplicity frees us from this modern mania. It brings sanity to our compulsive extravagance, and peace to our frantic spirit...People once again become more important than possessions, enabling us to live lives of integrity in the face of the terrible realities of our global village."

Simplicity is eliminating the noise in our lives to allow us to focus on the important role that God calls us to be—caring stewards of our lives and our world. Simplicity is a grace, because it is a gift from God. Simplicity is a discipline, because we are called to do something. But simplicity isn't simple. It takes time, effort, and balance. The potential result, however, is restoration of soul and relationship with others and with the environment.

Let's make our 2026 theme for Stewardship "Living Simply." Each month, let's consider a

different aspect of simplicity, starting with inward characteristics—like prayer and solitude—and moving to outward characteristics—like consumerism and wellness. You'll be challenged to accept God's gift of simplicity and practice the discipline as well.

As individuals and as a congregation, we can be better stewards of what God has given us.

We just need to try, simply.

"The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak." —

Quote from "Freedom of Simplicity,"
Richard J. Foster, 2005, p3



Welcome to 2026: The Way of Love!

As our scripture verse for this year reminds us,

"We love because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19).

As we journey together with Jesus, we have the great opportunity to encourage each other to grow in both our appreciation for, and reflection of, the love of God.

WHAT IS LOVE Bishop Daniel Beaudoin

We love because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19)

What is Love? Love is a gift from God that calls us to imitate the self-giving love of Jesus, which transforms us, to transform the community and the world!

In July, 2000, I was blessed to gather with over 35,000 young people for the ELCA Youth Gathering in St. Louis, Missouri. One of the main speakers was Archbishop Desmond Tutu from South Africa. It was at this gathering where I first heard about the South African principle of "Ubuntu" which is translated, "I am because we are." Archbishop Tutu taught us that when the love of God is combined with the power of "we," the result is the healing and transformation of the community and the world. The Apostle John understands both the gift of God's love and the power of "we".

In 1 John 4:7-19, John teaches the community of faith that God is love, and as followers of Jesus we are called to imitate God's self-giving love, not only as individuals, but also as a community of faith. Notice that 1 John 4:19, does not begin with a "me", but with a "we". "We" are called to love, in the same way that God, in Christ Jesus, loves us. The love that John writes about is a love that begins with God, a love that we are called to imitate: a love that changes the community and the world.

In his book, *Love Is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times*, Episcopal Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, helps us to put God's self-giving love into perspective. He simply asks, "Is this love about me, or is it about we?" Does the decision that I am about to make serve my own self-interest, or might this decision serve the greater good?

If the answer is "me, myself, and I," the way of love calls us to reconsider our next step. According to Presiding Bishop Curry, Archbishop Tutu, the Apostle John, and Jesus, we embrace the "we" before the "me," for that is the way of love. And it can be that simple... and also that challenging.

But at the end of the day, love is the only way. "We love because He first loved us".

1. In 1 John 4:7-19, the writer reminds the church about the self-giving love of God. How is this self-giving love lived out in your community of faith?

2. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Apostle John, and Jesus all call us to a love that puts the "we" before the "me". Why do you think this self-giving love is so challenging for us to live out? Can you share a story of a time you experienced this kind of love in your life? In the life of your parish?

Let us pray: Gracious and Loving God, we thank you for the gift of Your love, and we seek Your forgiveness, when we fail to love as we are loved. Fill us with Your gentle and self-giving love, so that we might share it with others. Empower us to forgive, to serve, and to follow you in the way of love. Lead us to share Your love with our neighbor and the world, transforming us from who we are, into the people You long for us to be. In the name of Jesus, crucified and risen for the world. Amen.

Bishop Daniel Beaudoin is a Minister of Word and Sacrament, serving the people of God of Northwestern Ohio as Bishop of the Northwestern Ohio Synod.



one-year Bible Reading Plan

WEEKS 1 - 26

WEEK 1: Creation	<input type="radio"/> Genesis 1 & 2 <input type="radio"/> Psalm 33:6-9 <input type="radio"/> Jeremiah 32:17 <input type="radio"/> John 1:1-5 <input type="radio"/> Romans 1:20	WEEK 10: Sacrifices	<input type="radio"/> Hebrews 10:1-23 <input type="radio"/> Exodus 12:21-28 <input type="radio"/> Psalm 51:16-17 <input type="radio"/> Romans 12:1 <input type="radio"/> Hebrews 4:14-16	WEEK 19: Holy Spirit	<input type="radio"/> Acts 2:1-21 <input type="radio"/> Joel 2:28-32 <input type="radio"/> Romans 8:26-27 <input type="radio"/> 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 <input type="radio"/> Galatians 5:16, 22-25
WEEK 2: Sin & Solution	<input type="radio"/> Genesis 3 <input type="radio"/> Psalm 51:3-5 <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 53:5-12 <input type="radio"/> John 3:16-18 <input type="radio"/> Romans 6:22-23	WEEK 11: Confession & Forgiveness	<input type="radio"/> Psalm 51:1-12 <input type="radio"/> Proverbs 28:13 <input type="radio"/> Matthew 9:1-8 <input type="radio"/> Acts 3:19 <input type="radio"/> 1 John 1:8-9	WEEK 20: Worries	<input type="radio"/> Matthew 6:25-34 <input type="radio"/> Psalm 94:19 <input type="radio"/> Matthew 11:28-30 <input type="radio"/> Philippians 4:6-7 <input type="radio"/> 1 Peter 5:6-7
WEEK 3: Covenants & Promises	<input type="radio"/> Psalm 105 <input type="radio"/> Genesis 9:12-17 <input type="radio"/> Genesis 12:1-3 <input type="radio"/> 2 Corinthians 1:20 <input type="radio"/> Hebrews 9:15	WEEK 12: Crucifixion	<input type="radio"/> Luke 23:26-47 <input type="radio"/> Numbers 21:4-9 <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 53:3-10 <input type="radio"/> 1 Corinthians 1:18, 22-23 <input type="radio"/> Galatians 2:20-21	WEEK 21: Prayer	<input type="radio"/> Daniel 9 <input type="radio"/> 2 Chronicles 7:14 <input type="radio"/> Jeremiah 33:2-3 <input type="radio"/> Matthew 6:5-13 <input type="radio"/> James 5:13-16
WEEK 4: God's Calling	<input type="radio"/> Jeremiah 1:4-19 <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 6:8 <input type="radio"/> 1 Corinthians 7:17 <input type="radio"/> 2 Timothy 1:8-10 <input type="radio"/> 1 Peter 2:9-10	WEEK 13: Resurrection	<input type="radio"/> John 20:1-18 <input type="radio"/> Daniel 12:2-3 <input type="radio"/> John 11:25-26 <input type="radio"/> 1 Corinthians 15:20-22 <input type="radio"/> Philippians 3:10-11	WEEK 22: Friendship	<input type="radio"/> Ruth 1:1-18 <input type="radio"/> 1 Samuel 18:1-5 <input type="radio"/> Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 <input type="radio"/> Proverbs 18:24 <input type="radio"/> John 15:12-15
WEEK 5: God's Commands	<input type="radio"/> Exodus 20:1-17 <input type="radio"/> Psalm 103:17-18 <input type="radio"/> Matthew 22:34-40 <input type="radio"/> John 15:14-15 <input type="radio"/> James 1:22-25	WEEK 14: Evangelism	<input type="radio"/> Acts 8:26-40 <input type="radio"/> Deuteronomy 32:3-4 <input type="radio"/> Matthew 28:19-20 <input type="radio"/> Romans 10:10-17 <input type="radio"/> Colossians 4:2-6	WEEK 23: Salvation	<input type="radio"/> Acts 16:22-34 <input type="radio"/> 2 Samuel 22:1-4 <input type="radio"/> Psalm 37:39-40 <input type="radio"/> Acts 4:8-12 <input type="radio"/> 1 Peter 1:8-9
WEEK 6: Love	<input type="radio"/> 1 Corinthians 13 <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 54:10 <input type="radio"/> Romans 8:35-39 <input type="radio"/> 1 Peter 4:8 <input type="radio"/> 1 John 4:7-12	WEEK 15: God's Word	<input type="radio"/> Psalm 119:9-16, 103-105, 114, 129-131 <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 40:8 <input type="radio"/> Romans 1:16-17 <input type="radio"/> 2 Timothy 3:16-17 <input type="radio"/> Hebrews 4:12	WEEK 24: Baptism	<input type="radio"/> Matthew 3 <input type="radio"/> Genesis 7:17-18; <input type="radio"/> 1 Peter 3:18-22 John 3:3-6 <input type="radio"/> Acts 2:38-39 <input type="radio"/> Romans 6:1-4
WEEK 7: Purpose & Plan	<input type="radio"/> Ephesians 1:3-14 <input type="radio"/> Job 42:1-2 <input type="radio"/> Proverbs 19:21 <input type="radio"/> Jeremiah 29:10-13 <input type="radio"/> Romans 8:28-30	WEEK 16: One Body	<input type="radio"/> 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 <input type="radio"/> Proverbs 27:17 <input type="radio"/> Acts 2:42-47 <input type="radio"/> Romans 12:1-8 <input type="radio"/> Ephesians 4:11-13	WEEK 25: Protection	<input type="radio"/> Psalm 91 <input type="radio"/> Psalm 46:1-3, 7 <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 41:10 <input type="radio"/> Mark 4:35-41 <input type="radio"/> 2 Corinthians 4:7-10
WEEK 8: Praise	<input type="radio"/> Psalm 96 <input type="radio"/> Exodus 15:2 <input type="radio"/> Psalm 71:14-16 <input type="radio"/> Luke 1:46-55 <input type="radio"/> Hebrews 13:15	WEEK 17: Faith & Faithfulness	<input type="radio"/> Hebrews 11 <input type="radio"/> Lamentations 3:22-23 <input type="radio"/> Mark 11:22-24 <input type="radio"/> Luke 16:10-12 <input type="radio"/> 2 Corinthians 5:7	WEEK 26: Honesty & Truth	<input type="radio"/> Acts 5:1-11 <input type="radio"/> Proverbs 12:22 <input type="radio"/> John 14:6 <input type="radio"/> Colossians 3:9-10 <input type="radio"/> 3 John 1:3-4
WEEK 9: Temptation	<input type="radio"/> Luke 4:1-13 <input type="radio"/> Deuteronomy 8:2 <input type="radio"/> 1 Corinthians 10:12-13 <input type="radio"/> Hebrews 2:18 <input type="radio"/> James 1:2-4, 12-15	WEEK 18: Father & Son	<input type="radio"/> John 14:6-17, 23-24 <input type="radio"/> Psalm 2:6-7 <input type="radio"/> Matthew 11:25-27 <input type="radio"/> John 17:1-5 <input type="radio"/> Colossians 1:15-20		

one-year Bible Reading Plan

WEEKS 27 - 52

WEEK 27: Freedom	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 14 <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 61:1 <input type="checkbox"/> John 8:31-36 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Corinthians 3:17 <input type="checkbox"/> Galatians 5:1, 13	WEEK 36: Kindness	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 10:25-37 <input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 2:1-16 <input type="checkbox"/> Jeremiah 31:3 <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 5:43-48 <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 4:32	WEEK 45: Endurance	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 24:9-14 <input type="checkbox"/> Romans 5:3-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 <input type="checkbox"/> James 1:2-4
WEEK 28: Sabbath	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 31:12-17 <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 58:13-14 <input type="checkbox"/> Mark 2:23-28 <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 13:10-17 <input type="checkbox"/> Hebrews 4:9-11	WEEK 37: Good Shepherd	<input type="checkbox"/> John 10:1-18 <input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 23 <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 15:1-7 <input type="checkbox"/> Hebrews 13:20-21 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Peter 2:25	WEEK 46: Light	<input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 17:1-13 <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 60:1-3 <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 5:14-16 <input type="checkbox"/> John 8:12 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 John 1:5-7
WEEK 29: Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 150 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chronicles 5:13-14 <input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 59:16-17 <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 1:46-55 <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 5:18-20	WEEK 38: Lord's Supper	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 22:7-20 <input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 12:1-8 <input type="checkbox"/> John 6:52-58 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Corinthians 10:14-17 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Corinthians 11:23-29	WEEK 47: Thanksgiving	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 17:11-19 <input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 4:19-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chronicles 16:34 <input type="checkbox"/> Colossians 3:15-17 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
WEEK 30: Good Works	<input type="checkbox"/> James 2:14-26 <input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 7:17-20 <input type="checkbox"/> John 15:1-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Colossians 1:9-10	WEEK 39: Humility	<input type="checkbox"/> Philippians 2:3-11 <input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 11:2 <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 20:26-28 <input type="checkbox"/> John 13:1-9 <input type="checkbox"/> James 4:10	WEEK 48: Hope	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 2:25-38 <input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 33:20-22 <input type="checkbox"/> Romans 15:13 <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 1:18-21 <input type="checkbox"/> Hebrews 6:13-20
WEEK 31: Patience & Perseverance	<input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7 <input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 37:5-9 <input type="checkbox"/> Galatians 6:9-10 <input type="checkbox"/> James 1:12 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Peter 3:8-9	WEEK 40: Strength	<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 6:10-20 <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 40:28-31 <input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 1:9 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 <input type="checkbox"/> Philippians 4:13	WEEK 49: Peace	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Samuel 24 <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 26:3 <input type="checkbox"/> John 14:27 <input type="checkbox"/> Philippians 4:7 <input type="checkbox"/> James 3:17-18
WEEK 32: Unity	<input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 33 <input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 133 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Corinthians 1:10 <input type="checkbox"/> Galatians 3:26-29 <input type="checkbox"/> Philippians 2:1-2	WEEK 41: Grace	<input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 103:1-12 <input type="checkbox"/> Romans 6:14 <input type="checkbox"/> John 1:16-17 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Corinthians 15:9-10 <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 2:8-9	WEEK 50: Joy	<input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 16 <input type="checkbox"/> Nehemiah 8:10 <input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 17:22 <input type="checkbox"/> John 16:19-24 <input type="checkbox"/> Philippians 4:4
WEEK 33: Mercy	<input type="checkbox"/> Jonah 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 145:8-9 <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 5:7 <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 6:36-38 <input type="checkbox"/> Titus 3:3-8	WEEK 42: Saints	<input type="checkbox"/> Revelation 7:9-17 <input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 37:28-29 <input type="checkbox"/> Daniel 7:27 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Corinthians 1:2-3 <input type="checkbox"/> Hebrews 12:1-3	WEEK 51: Christmas	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 2:1-21 <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 9:6-7 <input type="checkbox"/> Micah 5:2-4 <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 2:9-11 <input type="checkbox"/> Titus 2:13-14
WEEK 34: Parables	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 15:11-32 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 12:1-10 <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 13:31-35	WEEK 43: Redemption	<input type="checkbox"/> Romans 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Job 19:25-27 <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 44:21-22	WEEK 52: Heaven & Eternal Life	<input type="checkbox"/> Revelation 21:1-7 <input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 65:17-25 <input type="checkbox"/> John 14:1-4

CONNECTING KIDS TO CHRIST

The Connection



**Join us for Sunday School!
Kids age 3 through Grade 5
are welcome to join us!
EVERY SUNDAY
From 9:00 to 9:30 AM!**

**Crafts, bible lessons,
songs, FUN!!**



Celebrate the beauty of winter with these fun snowflake-inspired treats!

What you need:

- Graham cracker squares or sugar cookies
- White frosting or marshmallow fluff
- Pretzel sticks (snowflake arms)
- Shredded coconut or white sprinkles
- Mini marshmallows or candy pearls



What you do:

1. Frost each cracker or cookie.
2. Arrange pretzel sticks in a crisscross for the snowflake base.
3. Sprinkle with coconut or sprinkles for snow.
4. Add marshmallows or candy pearls to the ends for detail.





Church Council Highlights

December 18, 2025 7 PM

Members Present:

Pastor O'Brien Dan Kessler, John Mazur, Diana Lambert, Cheryl Berger, Dave Neuman, Deanna Neuman, Robin Perkins, Jennifer Nelson, Rick Buhrow, Jack Mathews.

Meeting Opened: At 7:00 pm, by Dave Neuman

Devotions – Pastor O'Brien shared Matthew 1 for devotions

Council Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes as corrected from 11/20/2025 was from Robin Perkins and Cheryl Berger 2nd the motion. Motion passed.

Pastor's Report: Worship Attendance: In Person average for November 2025-116.7 compared to November 2024-129.3. Online average for November 2025- 69.4 compared to November 2024- 92.5. **Numbers-** 14 hospital/home-bound visits/individual or family meeting. 2 committee/group meetings. 6 community/youth/fellowship events. 4 professional/clergy activities. 1 special worship service.

Community Thanksgiving Worship- Estimated 90 people attended our Community Thanksgiving Worship. Thank you to everyone who participated in the service and thank you to everyone who prepared, served, and cleaned up the meal following worship. There were many positive comments. It was a very good 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 food pantry at Zion Elliston. 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 18 at 11:00 a.m.,

Installation-Installation of Elected Members will be Saturday and Sunday, January 24 & 25.

Lent- Ash Wednesday is February 18. Ash Wednesday worship (11a and 7p) will be in the sanctuary. Midweek Lenten worship (11a) is still being planned.

Financial Secretary, Treasurer & Finance Committee

Report: Income: We are at 103% of our monthly budget and 100% of our year-to-date budget. Expenses: We are at 102% of the monthly budget and 101% of the year-to-date budget. Actual Expenses are year-to-date (9293).

Jennifer Nelson made a motion to recommend the proposed 2026 Budget of \$324,000 to the congregation at the 2026 Annual Meeting. John Mazur 2nd. Motion passed. CD certificates have been renewed.

Christian Community Life: We took 100 Christmas cards to the residents of the Genoa Care Center. We collected 102 pairs of PJs and 88 books for the Ottawa County Bureau. We

provided cookies and refreshments after church for the Children's Christmas Program. Food for the Annual Meeting has been planned.

Evangelism: The Christmas tree lighting had 23 people in attendance. Thank you to Judy Yockey for helping to organize this event and to John Mazur for staying to help clean up.

Parish Education: The Children's Christmas Program had over 80 people in attendance. Catechism will not meet on December 28 and January 4, but regular Sunday school will meet.

Worship Life: Poinsettias will be delivered on December 18th. We have a plan for a watering schedule, and the flowers will be kept in the catechism room. Christmas Eve services will be 4, 7, and 11. Worship assistants will be needed. The weekend after Christmas will be lessons and carols. Looking ahead, mid-week Lenten services may be different this year. Pastor will most likely be doing services each week rather than having a different pastor each week

Property: Thank you to Sophia Kruse for the repairs and repainting of the outside Nativity Scene. The toilet in the west -end bathroom has been repaired. The sink in the east boiler room has been repaired. Thank you to Dimech for donating their time and labor to repairing the valve in the boiler room. Thank you to the Kapp family for their continued donation of time and labor during the winter season with their plowing and removal of the snow.

Old Business: Rick Buhrow made a motion to recommend the 2026 slate of Nominees for Church Officers and Board Member to the congregation at the Annual Meeting on January 18th. Dave Neuman 2nd. Motion passed. Thank you to all four members of the Nominating Committee for their hard work in filling this year's slate of nominations.

New Business: On Monday, January 5, 2026, we will be having a new member class for anyone wishing to join our church at 7:00 p.m. Then, on Saturday, January 10th at 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, January 11th at 9:45 a.m., we will welcome new members into our church family at both services.

packets for the new members will be put together for the new member class on January 5th.

We discussed and reviewed the Ottawa County snow cancellation policy during Level 2 and Level 3 alerts and what would be most safety for our church members. Pastor O'Brien made a motion to have church closed when Ottawa County issues a Level 2 alert. Deanna Neuman 2nd. Motion passed.

Jennifer Nelson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. 2nd by Robin Perkins. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Diana Lambert, Council Secretary



The Annual St. John Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 18 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 2026 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.

2026 Nominees for Church Officers and Board Members

Church Officers	New Nominee 2026	Still Serving till Jan 2027	Thank you for serving!
President		David Neuman '23	
Vice-President		Rick Buhrow '25	
Secretary	Diana Lambert '24		
Financial Secretary	Joni Hillman '26		Kristina Wildman '22
Treasurer		Dan Kessler '23	

Board Members	New Nominee 2025	Still Serving till Jan 2026	Thank you for serving!
Finance	Shelley Snider '26		Jennifer Nelson '22
Christian Community Life	Holly Delventhal '24 Judy Encheff '24	Cheryl Berger '23 Deb Wehner '23	
Evangelism	Ben Perkins '24 Robin Perkins '24	Carol Beamer '25 Linda Schlievert '25	
Parish Education	Melissa Lammers '26 Breanna Hodnet '26	Carol Jensen '23 Victoria Kiss '25	Deanna Neuman '22 Kelly Morse '24
Stewardship	Jack Mathews '24 Ron Sandrock '26	Heather Cashen '25 Marty Schloegl '23	Jane Philips '24
Property	Eric Horvath '26 ⁽¹⁾ Ron Sandrock '24	Dave Huber '23 John Mazur '23	
Worship Life	Kellie Ulrich '24 ⁽²⁾ Kelsey Miller '26	Tracy Donnelly '23 Cebie Titgemeyer '25	Amy Schloegl '22
Nominating Committee	Lori Buhrow Rosemarie Dickinson Pam LaRue Kris Lee		Pam LaRue Lori Buhrow Rosemarie Dickinson Kris Lee
Lutheran Ministries of Mercy	Lee Wehner and Deb Wehner		
Lutheran Homes Society Representatives	Karolyn Jansen and Owen Jansen		
NW Ohio Synod Representatives	Kent Delventhal and Evie Zimmerman		

'26 new nominee for 2-year term

'25 middle of 1st 2-year term

'24 nominee for a 2nd 2-year term

'23 middle of final term

'22 completed final term

⁽¹⁾ Eric started in '25 but is filling a term that began in '24; eligible to serve 2nd term starting '28

⁽²⁾ Kellie started in '23 but is filling a term that began in '22; eligible to serve a 2nd term starting '26

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
Ushers	Ushers	Ushers	Ushers
3- Jack Mathews	4-Diana Lambert	1-Buhrow Family	2-Jim Vogelbacher
10-Buhrow Family	11-Jim Vogelbacher	8-Ron Gerkensmeyer	9- The Titgemeyers
17-Ron Gerkensmeyer	18-The Titgemeyer's	15-Donnelly Family	16-Diana Lambert
24-Donnelly Family	25-Diana Lambert	22-Jack Mathews	23-Jim Vogelbacher
31-Jack Mathews		Lectors	Lectors
Lectors	Lectors	1- Beverly Harder	2-Deanna Neuman
3-Beverly Harder	4- Jerry Goldstein	8-Sandy Toth	9-Cebie Titgemeyer
10-Sandra Toth	11- Kellie Ulrich	15-Amy Schloegl	16-Jerry Goldstein
17-Amy Schloegl	18-Tim Titgemeyer	22-Nancy Strohscher	23-Diana Pfaff
24-Jonah D.	25-Melissa Lammers	Acolytes	Acolytes
31-Nancy Strohscher		1-Liam D.	2-Rylie C.
Acolytes	Acolytes	8-Pierce	9-Makenna
3- Liam D.	4- Rylie	15-Jonah D.	16-Rylan
10-Pierce	11- Makenna	22-Nolan	23-Ellie
17-Jonah D.	18- Rylan	Communion	Communion
24-Nolan D.	25-Ellie	1- Nancy Strohscher	2-Dave Neuman
31-Trenton		8-Carol Vargo	9-Margaret Berger
Communion	Communion	15-Ron Gerkensmeyer	16-Robin Perkins
3- Nancy Strohscher	4-Roland Sandrock	22- Al & Traci Brown	23-Pam LaRue
10- Carol Vargo	11- Margaret Berger		
17-Ron Gerkensmeyer	18- Cebie Titgemeyer		
24- JoElaine Schimming	25-Robin Perkins		
31-Al & Traci Brown			



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.

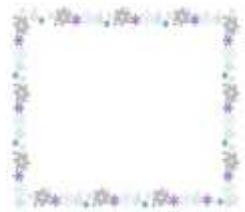


JANUARY

at St. John-Williston

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 Last weekend for 2025 Offering Envelopes 8:30am -9:30am Adult Sunday School-The Chosen 8:30am -9:30am Confirmation Class 9:00am -9:30am Sunday School 11:00am -12:00pm Choir practice	29	30 9:00am -12:00pm Blankets	31  7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds	1 6:00pm -8:00pm Cub Scouts Committee Meeting (B)	2 Office closed	3  5:00pm -6:00pm Annie Hyde Baptism 5:00pm Contemporary Worship
4 8:30am -9:30am Adult Sunday School-The Chosen 8:30am -9:30am Confirmation Class 9:00am -9:30am Sunday School 11:00am -12:00pm Choir practice	5  Faith Practice Reading- Isaiah 1 New Member Gathering 7 PM 7:00pm -8:00pm Scout Committee Meeting (B)	6  Esther Circle 2 pm Festival of the Epiphany @ Solomon -Woodville 7 PM Rebekah Circle 7 PM 9:00am -12:00pm Blankets 7:30pm -9:30pm Dartball@Elliston Trinity UCC	7  7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds 7:00pm -8:00pm Wildflower Association Meeting (B)	8  Committee Night 7 PM	9 Office closed	10  New Member Saturday 5:00pm Contemporary Worship
11  New Member Sunday! 8:30am -9:30am Adult Sunday School-The Chosen 8:30am -9:30am Confirmation Class 9:00am -9:30am Sunday School 11:00am -12:00pm Annual Budget Review 11:00am -12:00pm Choir practice	12 Faith Practice Reading- Isaiah 2	13 9:00am -12:00pm Blankets 7:30pm -9:30pm Dartball-HOME	14  7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds	15  Church Council Meeting 7 PM	16 Office closed	17 5:00pm Contemporary Worship
18  8:30am -9:30am Adult Sunday School-The Chosen 8:30am -9:30am Confirmation Class 9:00am -9:30am Sunday School 11:00am -12:00pm Annual Congregational Meeting 11:00am -12:00pm Choir practice	19 Faith Practice Reading- Isaiah 3	20 7:30am -9:30am Dartball-HOME 9:00am -12:00pm Blankets	21  7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds	22	23 Office closed	24 5:00pm Contemporary Worship
25 8:30am -9:30am Adult Sunday School-The Chosen 8:30am -9:30am Confirmation Class 9:00am -9:30am Sunday School 11:00am -12:00pm Choir practice	26 Faith Practice Reading- Isaiah 4	27 9:00am -12:00pm Blankets 7:30pm -9:30pm Dartball at Elliston Zion UMC	28  7:00am Breakfast Gathering at GENOA McDonalds	29	30 Office closed	31 5:00pm Contemporary Worship

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
21140 W. Toledo Street
P. O. Box 235
Williston, Ohio 43468-0235



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In person and online!

Winter Worship Hours at St. John
Saturday- Contemporary Worship 5:00 PM
Confirmation Class- Sunday 8:30 AM
Adult Sunday School—8:30 AM
Sunday School- age 3-5th grade 9:00
Sunday- Traditional Worship 9:45 AM

Pastor Shawn O'Brien
419-378-1112 cell

E-mail address:
pastorobrien@stjohnwilliston.org

Church Office
LisaAnne Gregg
Office Administrator
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

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services YouTube!