



The Epistle

Newsletter of St. John Lutheran Church and School, Defiance, Ohio 43512

Vol. 85 #1

Pastor Luhring and Pastor Mews

Pastor Luhring

I Samuel 17:47: “Everyone assembled here will know that the Lord rescues His people, but not with sword and spear. This is the Lord’s battle, and He will give you to us.” In the story of David in I Samuel, he actually had to fight four other giants before he got to Goliath. They weren’t physical giants, but they were giants in his mind.

You are far more likely to have to face those giants than a Goliath, but they can be just as big and intimidating and can keep you from becoming who God wants you to be and from fulfilling the dream that God has put in your heart.

1. The first giant in facing your dream is DELAY. No dream is fulfilled instantly. God gives you the dream on one day, but He doesn’t fulfill it the next day. It may be years before you see the fulfillment of your life dream. There is always a waiting period. In David’s case, his dad held him back from the dream. After Samuel anointed David as king, Jesse told David to get back to tending the sheep! When God’s plan contradicts somebody else’s plan, there is going to be a delay, and people are going to try to hold you back. Sometimes even the people who love you most. But God is faithful, and He will complete His work in you in His time.
2. The second giant you may face is DISCOURAGEMENT. Goliath created a climate of fear in Israel, and everybody was convinced they were going to lose the battle. Who are you listening to who says it can’t be done? Who is putting down your dreams, saying it won’t ever happen? Sometimes you just need a fresh voice, a kid from the village with fresh eyes who says, “This guy’s nothing. We can take him down.”
3. The third giant standing in your way is DISAPPROVAL. In David’s case, his own brother questioned his motives and disapproved of him going after Goliath. When God gives you a dream that other people are afraid of and you go for it anyway, you will be misjudged, and misunderstood. You have to decide what matters more to you, the approval of other people or the approval of God.
4. The fourth giant you may have to ace is DOUBT. There was nobody who was a greater expert on war than King Saul, and he told David he was crazy for thinking a boy could fight a warrior like Goliath. Maybe the expert is saying you can’t do it either. That is enough to make you start doubting yourself.



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*****NOTE NEW SERVICE
TIME FOR SATURDAY
SERVICE*****

Church Service Times

Traditional Services
5:30 p.m. Saturday
8:00 and 9:00 a.m. Sunday



Contemporary Service
Sunday 11:00 a.m.

PASTOR MEWS EPISTLE ARTICLE– JANUARY 2020

“And Jesus kept on increasing in wisdom and stature with God and with Man.” Luke 2:42.

As we just celebrated the birth of Christ, Scripture shares very little about our Lord’s childhood and formative years. What we do know is that Jesus, “Had to be in His Father’s House,” and he stunned, amazed and perplexed the learned men there when he was 12. Yet Luke summarized Jesus’ formative years as one of growth, and one of winning favor with all as Jesus grew as a whole person, mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. But this is a never ending process, notice the words, “Kept on!”

“Kept on increasing.” Our walk and growth with Christ only ends when we are called to our eternal home. St. Paul, the great defender of the faith, in humility shares, “Not I have already obtained this, but I press on toward the goal.” St. Paul’s journey was that of growing and maturing daily.

I want to share with you two examples of the blessings of maturity and I’m sure that you can share similar ones. At 8 years old I played T-ball for The Memorial Park Bearcats. Never playing organized ball before, our opening game was more like The Key Stone cops, than that as a team, and we lost bad! I remember all of my teammates trying to rally ourselves into a winning team as each player pretended to be the coach. That next practice, a new coach came, and spent the next few practices teaching us the basics of the game. The results were a really long winning streak with ‘The Bearcats’ losing the Memorial Park Championship ball game 5-2, the 2nd loss of that season. I still have the trophy with the score and date and teams. LOL. Over the decades, it was the lesson of maturity that has stuck with me.

Parson’s Industry is a small factory located 15 miles NE of Peoria, IL. Some of my members worked there. Parsons will always be remembered for what was not lost during a direct hit from an F-2 tornado before my arrival as Pastor in the area. The owner, renowned for his fair treatment of workers, will lovingly be remembered for constructing a sturdy led tornado structure that easily housed all of his workers. In the Spring of 2004, while everything else in its path was levelled, that shelter and an early warning system protected over 75 employees from a direct hit. The owner’s responsible, wise and mature decision blessed others & today his company is viewed as cutting edge and quality!

Jesus calls us to make “disciples” of all nations. We are not called to find, steal, lure or attract disciples.

To make a disciple is really nothing more than Word and Sacrament ministry maturing a believer. In other words, maturity is really a child of God growing in wisdom and stature with God and man.

Mature believers bless God’s Church and others. Just as maturity organizes baseball teams and provides safety in tornado paths, mature believers not only grow in their faith, but bless their families, church and communities. Here are some notable blessings of mature believers.

They make great and wise church leaders.

They create churches with less conflict and are lovingly able to deal with conflict.

They give more and serve more.

Their churches grow. As a matter of fact, research indicates that the greatest determinant of church growth is the % of worshiping adults maturing in their faith in Bible Study.

“BUILT ON THE ROCK,” St. John Lutheran Seminar, to be held on Saturday, February 8, 8:30-3:00 p.m., will equip us to do just that and set our church on a wonderful path and direction the next 1- 5 years.

May we, redeemed by Christ’s cross, led by God’s Law and Gospel, grace and power, “Grow in Wisdom and Stature before God and others.”

In Christ, Pastor Mews.

“BUILT ON THE ROCK”—THE HEALTHY CONGREGATION

This “Built on the Rock”, The Healthy Congregation is presented by Ted Korber, renowned author and leader who has years of experience in church consultation. Real life stories from actual case work inspires and encourage. The ideas, are not just great theory, but practical and fruit bearing. The workshop is presented in 5 one hour sessions:

- A. A Bride Like No Other
- B. Spiritual Heart Disease
- C. Spiritual Leadership
- D. Structuring the Healthy Congregation
- E. What does this mean?



This seminar will be taking place Saturday, February, 8, 2020
from 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

A mailing with more information is coming soon!!!

All the Congregation is welcome.

BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Led by Pastor Mews

1. IN DEPTH BIBLE STUDY 1

“Law and Gospel”. This group gathers on Tuesdays from 2:00—3:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. All is provided, feel free to join at anytime. The next class is January 14, 2020.

2. GENESIS 1-3 THURSDAY A.M. BIBLE STUDY

Class gathers on Thursday mornings from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Room. The topic is the “Book of Genesis”. Bring yourself and all else will be provided. The next class is January 16, 2020.

3. Life with God (LWG) - Winter class starting Monday, January 13 to Monday, March 30, 2020. Classes are held Monday evenings in the Adult Bible Study Room from 6:30-8:30 p.m. This class is taught by both Pastor Luhning and Pastor Mews.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY GROUPS

All welcome to Join any class, anytime!

- ◆ *Sunday - 9:30 a.m.—Fellowship Room* Sandy Gyurnek (A) Jeff Rohlf (B)
- ◆ *Sunday - 9:30 a.m. – Lunch Room (A)* Phil Rohlf
- ◆ *Sundays - 9:30 a.m.– Lunch Room (B)* Faye Luhning
- ◆ *Mondays - 6:30 p.m. - Life with God– Adult Ed Room (A)* Starting January 13, 2020.
- ◆ *Tuesdays @ 10 Bible Study - Adult Ed Room (A)-* Janet Koch Starting January 21, 2020
- ◆ *Wednesdays - 9:00 a.m. at Tim Horton’s* (every other Wednesday) Mom’s In Touch - led by Faye Luhning
- ◆ *Thursday - Noon-2:00 p.m. Fellowship Room;* Knit & Study Bible Study– Judie Zachrich & Sandy Gyurnek the second and fourth Thursday of each month

Winter 2020 St. John Lutheran Church
LIFE WITH GOD: *Starting January 13, 2020*

Does God exist? What happens after death? Why are there so many different religions? Can the Bible be trusted? Why do bad things happen to me? I want to learn more about Lutheranism and become a member of a Christian Church. St. John’s “**Life with God**,” (LWG) explores and answers these questions and more in an informal, enjoyable, yet beneficial way through a 12 weekly session course called “**LWG.**” Sign up below, we ask that participants attend 10/12 classes. There are videos over each class that can be viewed for missed classes. For those who complete this course they can become communicant members if they desire. “**LWG**” will be offered each Winter, Spring and Fall. **St. John members are asked to attend a “life with God,” class once every five years to renew and refresh their faith!**

TOPICS: Evidence for God’s Existence, Saving Faith, Baptism, The Lord’s Supper, The Bible, Law and Gospel, Living a Christian Life, Being a part of the Body of Believers at St. John, Good Works, The Ten Commandments, Worship, Christian Stewardship. Come to learn and grow together.

DATES: Monday, January 13 to Monday, March 30, 2020. Classes are held Monday evenings in the Adult Bible Study Room from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Bring nothing. On the last evening, we will bring refreshments to share. After the 2nd class, no new class members are to join, we will ask for your intention on March 16.

TEACHERS: Pastor Mews and/or Pastor Luhring. Both have extensive experience teaching these classes.

FOR: Adults or High School students desiring to be members of St. John Lutheran Church, or those who want to support those attending. This is also for those who simply desire to renew their faith or explore the basic teachings of Christianity and Lutheranism.

REGISTRATION: To be turned into the church office by Sunday, January 12, 2020 or give to a pastor.

Winter 2020 St. John Lutheran Church “Life with God” (LWG) Registration Form:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____ Email address: _____

Baptized: Circle YES NO Current Church Membership: _____

Check those which apply;

_____ I plan to attend Life with God and my desire is to become a communicant member of St. John

_____ I plan to attend Life with God to renew my faith and/or support a friend attending

_____ I plan to attend Life with God to simply explore and learn about Christianity and Lutheranism.

_____ I plan to attend Life with God and will decide later about possible membership.

Other thoughts or concerns.

THOUGHTS ON MINIMALISM: DISTRACTIONS

Hebrews 12:1-2 “...let us lay aside every weight...”

There are many distractions in life. Physiologic, Mental, and Material to name a few. Some are harder to deal with than others, some can be debilitating, but they are the things that take our minds and hearts off of what is most important. We live **IN** the world, but we are not **OF** the world. We know that these things affect us...it is important that they do not infect us. While we may not be able to control all of these distractions, we can control our response to them and, in the case of material objects, our relationship to them.



Materialism is rampant in our society. If there are any doubts, take one day and count the number of times things are thrust into focus as something required, rather than just a thing. Count the number of advertisements, signs and billboards, emails and letters begging for attention. How old IS your car? Does that new wonderful weight loss, hair replacing, skin loving, relationship healing pill really work? Everybody is trying it, everybody had one, everybody wants one, everybody needs one? Really?

God gives gifts because He loves His children. But He gives them to be used...not to be loved. When someone goes from using things (gifts) to loving things (gifts), that becomes a problem. Love God. Love people. Use things. That tends to fly in the face of our current social scene where God's name is used casually as an emphatic, where people are used as steps to take to move us in the world, where things are treasured and craved. Perhaps this is part of Satan's plan, to divert our attention off of God who provides for us and onto things...or idols.

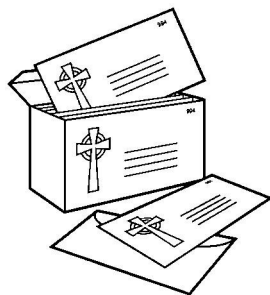
After reading “The More of Less” by Joshua Becker, it was apparent that our possessions can get in our way of our lives, our relationships, and even our walk of faith. Our “things” can become a burden physically and spiritually. An amazing result of removing excess things from a person's life is the feeling of freedom. That is sometimes looked at as if it is just a nice feeling, but perhaps it is deeper than just a feeling. Perhaps removing these things frees us because we are removing idols from our lives. Love God. Love people. Use things.

“Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full at His wonderful face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.” (from “The Heavenly Vision” Helen Howarth Lemmel).

OFFERING ENVELOPES

If anyone is in need of offering envelopes, please put a message on the attendance sheet in church.

Thank you!!



2020 Financial Audits

It was approved at the December Parish Planning Meeting to start monthly audits of our financials. The audits will include all accounts for the church and school that run through the bookkeeper's office and will be completed by Steyer & Company.



Treasuresin heav- en

NAME _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL _____

Please give a description of the items (type, brand, age, year made).

If possible, please include a photo of the item.

Estimated Value of item (if known) _____

Do you need help transporting the item? _____

Periodically, we will auction off your donated items to make for a constant flow of items.

TREASURES IN HEAVEN- An initiative of St. John Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Our Mission Statement:

“To nurture a godly relationship with material possessions while providing for the future needs of St. John Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.”

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Matthew 6: 19-21

“Treasures in Heaven” is a way for people to safeguard St. John in the future as well as to have a more contented and less stressful life today.

Based on Scripture and Christian Minimalism, it is a way to reevaluate and even re-appreciate our possessions. How we view our possessions shows, to some extent, what our faith looks like.

For instance....mentally take every item out of your house and place it on the front lawn. Unwrap or unbox **EVERYTHING!** All of these items demands your attention, your time, your space. Are there any items out there that you do not need or want? Are there duplicates of the same item? Perhaps something that no longer fits your idea of a necessary “treasure?” No items for the next garage sale (the youth will want those) or clothes that don’t fit (please bring those to the Clothes Closet). Perhaps there is a

collection of figurines, fishing lures, or teacups that you once loved but now see as unimportant. Not the family heirlooms (**please talk to your family first**), but things that are just not as high up on your list as previously. When you take those things away, you have less items to clean, less to take your attention and your time, and giving you more space. What a blessing!

What if those items could further the future of St. John Lutheran Church?

With decreasing funding, there may be a time in the future where St. John will need extra help to meet its expenses. This is where “Treasures in Heaven” comes in. Donating those special items to be sold by St. John with monies to go into an emergency fund to help St. John in the future to meet its expenses in an urgent situation. 90% of all monies made from sales will go to the Endowment Committee to be placed in a specific fund for this purpose. What about the other 10%? It will be taken as a tithe and sent to a mission program independent of St. John (Ravens, Crisis Pregnancy Center, foreign missions, etc.) Continuing the blessing to others.

The item received would be catalogued, and promoted on social media and other internet sites. When purchased, the item is sent or picked up by the seller and the monies distributed as described above.



January 2020: Gift Planning Newsletter Article For Gift Planning Counselors and Associates

New Horizons Focus our Hopes and Plans

The new year brings a noteworthy opportunity to focus on what is, and what might be. Some people transition with nostalgia. Others plan, occupied with a purpose. Do you carry regret for ambition unaccomplished or do you see new horizons as open doorways?

We are given and develop emotional capacity. We live in the emotional space navigated by our personalities and psyche. Do you navigate these expressive roads with sensitivity and ease or do you get snagged by triangles and conflicted relationships? God provides constant forgiveness to release tensions and lead us to quieter waters.

Our physical bodies are either in youthful pliability or becoming rigid due to the length of our journey. A new year brings an annual testament to the Creator's wonder. It is ruled by strength or frailty; discipline or dependence. The afflicted are blessed to reflect on mortality, knowing that He who shaped our body, will redeem it someday.

Financial condition holds some without hope, spiraling in unending discouragement from circumstance or past decisions. Do you plan your here and now with an eye to eternity? Wise stewards plan to pass the baton. They will bless loved ones and ministry. This new year offers an occasion to be encouraged that we serve an Owner Who desires our good.

God has planned a future and a hope for us. May this new year be an opportunity to live in the newness that time gives and in a greater communion with He who comes to dwell with us.

For more information contact Eileen Fitzenreiter at Eileen.Fitzenreiter@lfnd.org or 419-822-6461.

****SATURDAY CHURCH SERVICE TIME CHANGE****

That is correct! The Elders have determined to move the Saturday service start time to **5:30 p.m.** beginning January 2020. ***Please share the news!*** This will be on a 6 month trial period so we are able to assess its change across the seasons. Thank you all for your votes, comments and recommendations. **They are appreciated!!!**

YOUTH PARENT MEETING FOR**ALL 6- 8 grade**

Parent meeting for parents of 6-8 graders regarding Confirmation and the Jr. High Gathering is set for **Wednesday, January 15**. This will be part of our family night for Cross Training. Dinner will be provided.

Please let one of the Pastors or Angie know if you cannot attend so we can meet with you

Parent / Youth
Meeting

TUESDAYS AT TEN BIBLE STUDY

This Bible Group will begin their study entitled "Are You A Worry Wart" on Tuesday, January 21, in the Adult Ed Room. Janet Koch, Carolyn Richard and Diana Grim will be leaders of the group. Men and women are invited to join us.

**SCOUTING NEWS JANUARY 2020**

Cub Scouts will continue to work on engaging achievements, specific to each Den, during January, but also look forward to bowling as the monthly activity. With one of the points of the Scout Law being that a Scout is reverent, a number of boys are finishing requirements for their religious awards, which will be presented on Scout Sunday in February.

Cub Scouts, with adult leadership, completed construction of a mounting platform for the Ohio Horseman's Association that will be used on the Rails to Trails route in Williams County. This service project will allow youth and those less mobile to mount and ride horses along the trail. Dedication of the platform took place in late December with Pack members present. Service to others is an important part of the Scouting program.

Troop members will be participating in a Lock-In this month at the Defiance YMCA. In addition, they will compete in the annual Klondike Derby at Camp Lakota on January 18. The Klondike Derby challenges

patrols of 6 to 8 Scouts to use Scout skills to solve problems as their sleds race from one location to another. Approximately 70 sleds from the 13-county Black Swamp Area Council will be competing that day. Snow tubing, snowboarding and skiing at Mad River Mountain as well as its yearly Polar Bear, a 24-hour winter camping experience where Scouts spend an evening in an outside shelter and cook at least 3 meals while there, are also on the agenda.

The Boy Scout Troop has for many years recycled newspapers as a conservation project. Anyone wishing to recycle newspapers can place them in the garage on the east side of the south parking lot. Money made from their sale is used to help pay for Scouts to attend summer camp.

Youth and adults are always welcome to attend pack and troop events to learn more about the program. Questions at any time can be addressed to Mike Saxton, Chartered Organization Representative, at 419.439.2079.



LENTEN MEALS

A Lenten meal is prepared every Wednesday by different groups or organizations serving dinner between 5:30-7:00.

If your group would like to serve a meal for a Lenten service, please contact the church office.

March 18 or March 25 are available for your group to serve!

- February 26– Ladies Aid
- March 4– Boy Scouts
- March 11– Ladies Aid
- Marcy 18-
- March 25-
- April 1– Fellowship Board



PASTORAL ACTS

Baptisms: *Jett John Schafer* was baptized on December 8, 2019. Parents are Justin & Julianne Schafer. 1463 Pinehurst Dr. Defiance, OH 43512. Sponsors are Brian Mark Albright, Jen Joy Albright and Jacquie Jill Honeck.

Matthias David Lomotan was baptized on December 22, 2019. Parents are Matthew & Jayna Lomotan. 735 Circle Way, Jarrell, TX 76537. Sponsors are Emily Lauber and Nathan Kresge.

Elliott David Lauber was baptized on December 22, 2019. Parents are Anthony & Emily Lauber. 4771 Trinity Rd. Defiance, OH 43512. Sponsors are Taylor Sanders and Rylee Sanders.

Marshall Dane Joost was baptized on December 29, 2019. Parents are Ross & Amanda Joost. 11111 Lockwood Rd. Sherwood, OH. Sponsors are Pauline (Sandy) Joost, Margaret Ann Polley, Carol Ann Joost and Bo Lorenz Joost.

Funerals: *Naomi Link*, Schaffer's funeral home December 7. Pastor Mews officiated.

Leona Horstman funeral at St. John Lutheran December 12, 2019. Pastor Luhring officiated

Weddings: *Christopher Mann & Jessie Santos* married Sunday, December 8. Pastor Luhring officiated.

Transfers: *Joyce Meyer* from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Menifee, CA 951.238.8394

Carrie Ohlinger from St. Paul Church, Napoleon, OH 419.789.8553. She lives at 915 Karnes Rd. Defiance, OH 43512

Re-affirmation of Faith: *Marie Culler*, 2 Deville Rd. Defiance, OH 43512 419.439.3535

Adult Confirmation: *Christopher Mann* was confirmed Sunday, December 1, 2019. 821 S. Clinton St. Defiance, OH.



JANUARY 40+ WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- ◇ Dennis & Kathy Ripke (43) January 7
- ◇ Bob & Deb Hastedt (48) January 15

HAPPY
Anniversary

#139360843

80+ JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- ◇ Martha Vaughn (84) January 6
- ◇ Ron Norden (85) January 15
- ◇ Joan Gerken (85) January 20
- ◇ John Oelke (87) January 20
- ◇ Marv Steingass (88) January 22
- ◇ LaVon Speiser (85) January 23



JANUARY SERMONS

- * December 28/29 - “Wardrobes of Heirs” Galatians 4:4-7– Pastor Mews
- * December 31 at 6:30 p.m.- “Godly 20/20 Vision” Romans 8:31-39– Pastor Mews
- * January 4/5 - “ One Month to Live: What Matters Most” James 4:14– Pastor Luhring
- * January 11/12 - “ One Month to Live: Relationships That Matter Most” – Psalm 90: 12 - Pastor Luhring
- * January 19/20 - “ Miracles and Marriages; God’s Glory on Display” John 2; 1-11– Pastor Mews
- * January 25/26 - “Us and We in and I and Me World” 1 Corinthians 12:13a- Pastor Mews



EDUCATION MINISTRY:

LAW AND GOSPEL: Gathers on Tuesdays from 2:00-3:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Room and it discusses C.F.W. Walther’s landmark book, LAW and GOSPEL. The class is currently discussing, ‘salvation, errors in the faith, and proper reception of The Sacraments.’

January, Class Dates:

- Tuesday, January 7, no class, pastor is on vacation.
- Tuesday, January 14, class.
- Tuesday, January 21, class.
- Tuesday, January 28, class.

GENESIS BIBLE STUDY:

Gathers on Thursday morning from 10:00-11:30 in the Fellowship Room, discussing ‘The Book of Genesis,’ The class is currently covering Chapters 12-15, “The Call of Abram.”

January 2020, Class Dates:

- Thursday, January 2, no class, Christmas Break.
- Thursday, January 9, no class, Pastor is in Florida.
- Thursday, January 16, class.
- Thursday, January 23, class.
- Thursday, January 30, class.

CROSS TRAINING MINISTRY: Pastor Mews teaches the 7th grade class.

They will begin discussing The Apostles’ Creed in January.

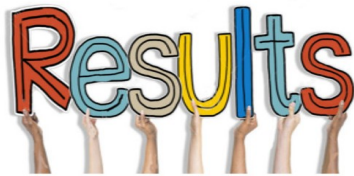
(Check with Angie Morris for the schedule)

- Wednesday, January 1, No class, New Years.
- Wednesday, January 8, Class, 6:30-8:00
- Wednesday, January 15, ****PARENTS’ NIGHT, “BACK TO THE FUTURE!”** Class, 6:30-8:00
- Wednesday, January 22, Class, 6:30-8:00
- Wednesday, January 29, Class, 6:30-8:00

**2019 FOOD PANTRY
YEAR- END STATISTICS**

We served 855 households or 3,127 people.
4066 bags.

*THANK YOU TO ALL WHO
HELPED MAKE THIS
POSSIBLE.*



FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry is open on Tuesday and Thursdays from
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

In December, we served 80 families of 288 people. 467
bags plus the Christmas bags were distributed at a value of
\$5,790.00.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR
SUPPORT OF THIS
MINISTRY!!!

**FOOD PANTRY
MAINTENANCE**

On Wednesday, January 29 from 12:30 to
2:30 p.m. we will need help in the Food
Pantry. We will be looking at expiration
dates on the food items and dusting off the
shelves. Please call the church office if you
can help. Thank you.

CLOTHES CLOSET

Clothes Closet is open on Thursday's from 9:00 a.m. to
4:00 p.m. and on Friday's from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

We offer clean, affordable clothing and small household
items. The sales support many ministries at St. John. We
will always welcome volunteers to help. Please consider
helping if you are able.



YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!!!

The church is in need of your help!!

We are looking for volunteers in the church
to be clickers, greeters, receptionists, sound
board workers, ushers, radio broadcast
helpers and finance board members.

If you feel led by God to fill any of these
positions, please contact the church office.

***WE WOULD REALLY APPRECIATE
YOUR HELP!***



LADIES AID NEWS:

Happy New Year from the Ladies Aid!

We begin a New Year with thanksgiving and praise to our Lord, Jesus Christ. We love because He first loved us.

The newly elected officers for 2020-2022 are Roberta Phlipot, president and Nancy Kemper, treasurer. We thank them for their service in these positions.

Donna VanVlerah, secretary, and Lorna Smith, vice president continue to serve another year in their positions.

All officers will be installed during the January 30 meeting held in the Fellowship Room at 2:00 p.m.. The program for this meeting will be presented by **Mrs. McGhee's first graders**. Samira Stelzer is chair hostess. Hand and body lotions are the suggested food pantry items.



TELECARE

"The Next Best Thing to Being There"

The Telecare Ministry of St. John Lutheran Church is designed to reach out and touch people by offering a friendly "hello" and encouragement from the church. Acting as a liaison to the Pastors and church staff, Telecare Ministry Team members welcome visitors and encourage members and attenders with "hellos and how are you'?" They also offer information about events and classes, ask about prayer needs, and help answer questions. God is always multiplying opportunities at St. John, and while a Telecare Team Member may not know all the answers they will assist in getting your interests and inquiries directed to the right person at the church.



The Telecare Ministry is primarily a lay ministry, offering individuals an opportunity to use their spiritual gifts in Christian service. Frequently those with the gift of encouragement or those desiring to create an atmosphere of acceptance and welcome, join the team. Telecare Team members spend about 2 to 2 ½ hours a month calling people from the church office. These calls prove to be a "reciprocal" blessing to Telecare Team members.

As St. John Lutheran Church continues to grow, fulfilling its mission "to make fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ of the members that need to hear of Jesus' love and forgiveness," more Telecare Team lay ministers are needed. As a Telecare Team lay minister you could be sower of His love.

The TeleCare team will be calling on Monday, January 6 and reaching out to people in our congregation. If this is a time of grief, health concerns or relationship issues "the team" is here to listen and offer a prayer.

If you are looking for a simple and yet profound way to "reach out with the love of Christ", this could be just the ministry for you.

We provide TeleCare training so people are prepared to do this ministry. If you would like to help, please call Penny Mueller at 419.304.4455. Many of our Stephen Ministers participate in this ministry as an extended care ministry to our members. Email: sjl@defnet.com if you are in need of a Stephen Minister. All contacts are confidential.

We invite your prayers for these people as they extend Christ's hand of love to you and others in our congregation.

REALM CONNECT



What is Realm?

Realm is a cloud-based church management solution that combines administration, accounting, and community all in one tool. Users are provided with a mobile app to send messages to community members. The solution provides multiple security layers for financial transactions and registration payments. It allows role-based permissions to limit users that have access to edit financial documents. Realm helps church staff manage their jobs, run reports and accept all types of contributions from community members. Church staff can record and manage.

contributions via automatic posting of online gifts and donations. Users are able to maintain databases by connecting profiles for individuals, families and businesses. Realm provides automatic data backup to users at regular intervals. Other features include dashboards, self-managed profiles, custom fields, church directory, fund management, batch entry and group rosters.

Realm helps you be connected to SJL in ways that make sense to you. Once you log in, you can:

- Update your address, phone, and email (and set privacy settings to determine who can see that information).
- Add your picture to your profile
- Share posts and pictures, and plan events, with your groups
- Find new groups
- Give electronically (by credit card, debit card, checking account, or savings account)

- See your giving history
- Register for church events

Access our church directory

Is my personal information safe and who can see my information?

All of your information is safe and cannot be accessed by anyone that has not been invited to join Realm. You also can set your privacy to limit what members/friends see on the directory. While you can hide the majority of your information from most of the church, you should know that, regardless of your settings, contact data will still be visible to certain members of the church staff.

The church staff, church office volunteers and leaders of groups are invited to training on Friday, January 10, and Saturday, January 11, at St. John Fellowship Room. Thank you to the Endowment Committee in providing the resources for training on this new program. Contact the church office to sign up for the training seminar.

Once we have the program set up information will be shared to the congregation members on how to setup their account, and how to use Realm.

Some photos of the Congregation Christmas dinner served by the youth
 Photos of Dick Bonin's RED LETTER CHALLENGE group doing their service project at Ravens.
 School and church staff at annual Christmas Breakfast Friday, December 20.
 Picture of volunteers helping put the 84 Christmas Bags together
 Thank you to all for their time and dedication to helping our church and school!





CUPCAKE WARS!

St. John Lutheran School 5th Annual Cupcake Wars Competition!

Saturday, February 22

Start: 2:00 PM Set Up - 2:30 PM Contest Begins

Awards: 4:00 PM

Do You Make Amazing Cupcakes?



Judging Categories:

**Taste (Cake & Frosting)
Presentation**

**Texture (Cake & Frosting)
Creativity**

**Location: St. John Lutheran School Lunchroom
655 Wayne Avenue, Defiance, OH**

Rules:

- 1. Bakers must bring 48 Cupcakes (minimum) and a maximum of 2 different types.**
- 2. Cupcakes must be handmade, not store bought. (Store Mixes accepted)**
- 3. A display may be created for presentation of cupcakes.**
- 4. Entry Fee \$20.00 - Payable to SJL School**
- 5. Judging will be conducted by local Chefs & Cupcake "Experts"**
- 6. All cupcakes to be sold and profits to assist SJL. \$10 for 6**



**1st Place wins \$40.00
2nd Place wins \$20.00**



Are you interested in participating in this awesome event? REGISTER at the school by FEBRUARY 14: c/o Shellie Kosmerchock, 655 Wayne Avenue, Defiance, OH with the entry fee.

Name/Business: _____

Email: _____ **Telephone:** _____

Address: _____

For additional information, please call Mrs. K., Principal at 419-782-1751 or email principal.sjl@stjohntigers.com

St. John School News

A Message from the Principal:

As we transition from Christmas into the New Year, I want to take the time to thank all the students and teachers for the wonderful gift of music during the Christmas season. Each and every program was magnificent and the Christmas message shared was done in a special way. Mrs. Lorna Smith thank you for accompanying the children! Job well done everyone!

As we begin our New Year, it is a time for reflection and of course making our New Year's resolutions – a new beginning, a chance to improve ourselves physically, mentally, and spiritually, an opportunity to make things better. It is so much easier to make our resolutions than to keep them throughout the year. I think we all start with the best of intentions, but as the year progresses, we find that we have fallen short of fulfilling our goals. Sometimes in frustration or

disappointment, we mentally cross off a particular resolution that has gone by the wayside and vow to try again to be more successful or maybe better luck next year.

During the school year in chapel and in daily devotions, our students learn that each and every day is a new beginning. Just as we think of the New Year as a clean slate, each day, God gives us a fresh start to become who he would have us be. He knows that we are a work in progress, and He continues to care and love us in spite of our failures and mistakes. He doesn't give up on us. So this year instead of our pages of New Year's resolutions, each morning when you awake, remember Matthew 22 and live by faith in Christ! Fully rejoice in Christ this year!

Mrs. Kosmerchok

Classroom News

Preschool Happenings

Mrs. Debbie Wagner - PreK

Happy New Year to all! As we finish up our "Awesome Animals" unit by mid-January, we will begin one of my favorite units in our new Big Day for PreK curriculum - "Imagine It, Make It." For centuries, people have told stories and expressed themselves through art, dance, dramatic play, and music. The arts start with imagination and we all know that preschoolers have active ones. So the Big Idea for this theme "I can imagine all kinds of things," inspires children to create. And while children explore creativity through the arts, they also develop knowledge, vocabulary, and multicultural awareness. The arts are an excellent means of communication as well as creation.

Families will enjoy the efforts of their budding actors, artists, dancers and music makers. For Jesus time, we will begin January with the Wise Men and Jesus In the Temple. We will then follow up with bible stories about the early ministry of Jesus and his chosen disciples.

Mrs. Cavin – 3 Year Old

Welcome to 2020! We are so excited to come back to school and learn about our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! We learned that God sent an angel to tell Mary that she had been chosen to bring Jesus into our world. We also learned about where Jesus was born, and who came to the stable to visit him. Now, we will be learning about the travels of the Wise Men, and about how Jesus grew up to

The Epistle, January, 2020

spread the Good News of God to all people. We had a lot of fun with our vet clinic, and learning about all kinds of animals. Now we will be building in our Construction Zone! We will continue to learn new letters each week with our Alphafriends. We will enjoy all that December has to offer.

Kindergarten Happenings - Mrs. Stottlemeyer

Winter is always a magical time in kindergarten. There is always "snow" much to learn! I am so proud of the readers and writers my students are becoming. They are reading more and more difficult books as well as writing their own sentences in their journals. In Jesus Time we are learning about the life of Jesus on Earth. Learning about Jesus as a kid is always a favorite story. One other favorite January activity that is coming up is Snowman Math!

First Grade News - Mrs. Jan McGhee

Happy New Year from all of us in first grade. The class will enjoy winter science and craft activities. Our computer skills are progressing. Students are taking pride in doing more on their own. The children love reading their books in a bag. Maybe it's getting into the prize box for every 10 books they read.

Second Grade News - Mrs. Cheryl Yoder

The winter season is in full swing and our classroom has been very busy. The students always love the December stories about the birth of Jesus and all the celebrations that come with the lessons. Returning from our break and family activities, we will move on to learning about the early life of Jesus. In science, we will be learning about simple machines and creating some machines in the classroom by the end of the month. We have also been focusing a lot of our writing on different books and learning how to write complete summaries with details. They are becoming excellent writers!

Third Grade - Mrs. Tiffany Scheurich

It's hard to believe we are already into the year 2020! The third graders have been really busy so

far this school year! We have started learning multiplication! The students already know their 2's and 3's facts! We will be moving onto 4's soon! We have started a 3rd unit in science. We are learning about natural resources! In social studies, we have started a project about cultures around the world in class. We already had presentations about Germany from Hannah, China from Mrs. Eis, and Venezuela from Mrs. Haynar. Students are working on their own presentations about countries they chose! In reading, we are working on main idea and details. We have been writing poetry and will be working on informational writing soon! Finally, in religion we have been talking about how Jesus came to Earth to be our substitute!

Fourth Grade - Miss Carli Rossow

We've had several epiphanies in fourth grade. Multiplication is well underway and division is looming on the horizon. We finished the year helping Encyclopedia Brown solve a few mysteries, but now we're hanging out with two boys off on their own adventures. As a class we're reading the modern day tall tale: Maniac Magee, but our teacher is also reading Dragon Rider to us. Will Maniac ever find a home? Will the Firedrake find the Rim of Heaven? What will happen to Ben, the dragon rider? Will he stay with Firedrake? So many questions! We've met Samson and Gideon, Joshua and Moses, Hannah and Saul, David and Goliath, now do we know God's faithfulness to his people? Hmm... Ask us and we'll tell you what we know. Ohio is no longer a Territory; it's a state! Times are a-changin'. People are a-comin'. Which sides of the Civil War will the people of Ohio side with?

Sixth Grade – Ms. Santo

Science/Math - 5th graders will be learning about decimals (adding/subtracting). 6th graders will be moving into integers. 7th graders will be starting algebraic concepts. 4-8th grades are moving into biological sciences. 4th and 5th graders have been working on and will finish a project researching an animal after Christmas Break. 6th graders will be bringing in their cell projects. Both 5th and 7th graders will begin learning about ecosystems and what affects them. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Many blessings to you!

Fifth Grade – Miss Mews

5th/6th/7th Reading – Were you able to stay warm during Christmas Break? The 5th and 6th grade students are just dipping their toes into diagramming sentences. This means they need to identify the parts of speech and show how the words connect to each other. All 5th, 6th and 7th grade students are traversing through the blustery new unit as the New Year begins. In P.E., students are definitely staying warm with the soccer unit in full swing. Thankfully, this is the perfect weather to bundle up and read a book. Students are doing just that as they aim to reach their AR goal for a class pizza party.

Seventh & Eighth Grade – Mrs. Phillips

Welcome to the New Year! In math, geometry is making its appearance to us. The Pythagorean Theorem won't scare us. In 7th/8th social studies, we're on the road to the Revolutionary War. *Hamilton* will be present, and we're writing a break-up letter between King George and the 13 colonies. We'll see how this turns out for both sides. In 5th/6th social studies, we're on the road to a new age and discovery of the New World! In ELA, we finally understand how to diagram a sentence with almost every part of a sentence. It's not only exciting for the students, but a big relief for Mrs. Phillips!

6th Annual Fund Event

March 7, 2020! So mark your calendar and be prepared to have some fun!

The event will be at the Defiance VFW with many exciting activities you won't want to miss!

Dinner will be prepared this year by Bill Phlipot and his Moose friends! So get ready to have a delicious meal!

The school is in need of the following:

- 1. Sponsors**
- 2. Donations**
- 3. Participants**

Tickets are \$25 each or reserve a table for \$200, which seats 8 people! You won't be disappointed! Together we can reach our goal of \$40,000 this year!

Spelling Bee 2020 Results



Champion Alexa Rittner (8)

Runner-up Levi Goff (7)

6th Annual

St. John Lutheran School

AN EVENING WITH FRIENDS

**Saturday, March 7, 2020
5:00-10:30PM**

Defiance VFW
201 Clinton Street

Tickets: \$25.00 per person

Reserve a table (8 tickets) \$200

Tickets available for purchase at the school



Live & Silent Auction
Cocktail Hour begins at 5:00PM
Dinner Served at 6:00PM

Net proceeds benefit St. John's Scholarship Fund & Technology



YOUTH SCOOP

Jan 2020

All kids going into 6th grade through 12th grade are welcome to join us for all youth activities.



— HAPPY NEW YEAR —

Proverbs 16:9- The heart of man plans his way, but the **LORD** establishes his steps.

This year we will focus on who's we are and how our journey is His journey.



This will be the final fundraiser before the Jr. High Gathering. Orders can be taken between Jan. 12 through Jan. 26th. **All orders due on Sunday, 26th.**

Making Pizzas- If you sell pizzas, we ask that you and/or your parents help make the pizzas on Feb. 1st from 10a till 12noon.

Pick-up-Customers may pick up their pizzas between services on Feb. 2nd. 9-9:30 and 10:30-11a or you can take them with you on Saturday and deliver them.

Parent Info Meeting/ Family Night



Wednesday, Jan. 15th

Confirmation and Gathering Information will be presented. Dinner provided. We expect all parents of 6th- 8th graders to attend.

Jr. High Gathering Registrations due Friday, January 17th by 5pm!

Gathering is March 13-15th in Columbus. Cost: \$175



Pokagon State Park Tobogganing



Sunday, January 19th

12 noon till 5:45p

Cost depends on total amount of goers. (about \$9.50 for 6 kids- plus snacks/drinks. Eat lunch there or eat before.) Sign-up by Wed., Jan. 15th.



Thank you to all who made cookies, donated cookies or purchased cookies from our Cookie Walk.

Thank you to all who helped spread the joy of Christmas by purchasing gifts for the Angel Tree kids, donating monies and sorting and delivering food baskets and gifts. The youth are very happy to be part of this program. A special THANK YOU to Jenny George who organizes this for us every year!



Feb. 2- **"Souper" Bowl**
Sunday- kids will be standing with soup kettles by the doors of the church for donations for our food pantry. No youth night.



Feb. 16- **Bowling Night-**
Wacky bowling at Defiance Rec. from 6:30-8:30pm. Bring a friend.

Family Fun Night for Cross Training is February 19th!

Youth Nites- are held Sundays at 6:30-8:30pm in the basement for grades 6-12th except on holidays or special events. Please see calendar on bulletin board. Copies of calendars and forms can be found next to the board by the gym entrance.



Spotlight Student



Hailey Becker

I remember when Hailey first started coming to youth in 6th grade. This Shy, reserved girl has sure come out of her shell in the past two years. It is wonderful. to watch her grow in her faith. She is a great leader; and I can't wait to see how she uses these gifts to lead the younger kids. She actually can't wait till her brothers can join her in youth activities.

Spotlight Parent



Carla Goff

Carla is the mom of Levi. She encourages her son and his friends to be devoted in growing their faith through God's word, service activities or in play. She's always willing to lend a helping hand and also chaperone when she can. Thanks for loving our kids.

January 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 New Year's Day CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED NO SCHOOL TIGERS DEN CLOSED	2 9:30-11:30a Food Pantry NO SCHOOL TIGERS DEN OPEN	3 3:00-10:00p PTL Scrapbooking LR NO SCHOOL TIGERS DEN OPEN	4 8:00-5:00p - PTL Scrapbooking LR 5:30p Worship/ Communion
5 8:00a Worship/Communion 9:30a Worship/Communion 11:00a Worship/Communion 6:30- 8:30p Jr/Sr. Hi Youth YR	6 3:30- 5:00 Boys BB practice 4:00-6:20 Girl Scouts FR 6:30p Cub Scouts LR 6:30p Finance 2 6:30p Telecare	7 9:15a Preschool Chapel- Lorna Smith 9:30-11:30a Food Pantry 2:00-4:00p Tuesdays @ 2 5:00p Boys BB game (H) St. Mary's Edgerton 6:30 Adult BB GM 6:30p Boy Scouts	8 11:30a Endowment Meeting at Slammin Sammies 3:30-5:00 Boys BB practice 5:30p Handbells CB 6:30p Cross Training 6:30p Bible Study (Rohlf) AE 6:30p Senior Choir LB	9 8:55a Chapel- Angie Morris 9:00-4:00 Clothes Closet 9:30-11:30a Food Pantry 12:00-2:00p Knit & Study 5:00p Boys BB game (A) Trinity 7:00p Elders Meeting 7:00p School Board	10 6:30a Iron Men's Bible Study 8:30-2:30p REALM Training FR 10:00-2:00p Clothes Closet END OF 2 QUARTER	11 8:30-3:30p REALM Training FR 5:30p Worship
12 8:00a Worship 9:30a Worship 11:00a Worship 6:30- 8:30p Jr/Sr. Hi Youth YR	13 5:00 Boys BB game (H) Holy Cross 5:30p Trustees 6:30p Cub Scout LR 6:30p Finance 1 6:30p Life With God Class AE	14 9:30-11:30a Food Pantry 2:00-3:00p In Depth Bible FR 5:00p Boys BB game (A) St. Pat 6:30p Youth Board YR 6:30 Adult BB GM 6:30p Boy Scouts	15 9:00a Mom's in Touch at Tim Hortons 3:30- 5:00p Boys BB practice 5:30p Handbells CB 6:30p Cross Training/ Parent Meeting 6-8 graders 6:30p Bible Study (Rohlf) AE 6:30p Senior Choir LB	16 8:55a Chapel- Pastor Mews 9:00-4:00 Clothes Closet 9:30-11:30a Food Pantry 10:00-11:30a Bible Study FR 7:00p Parish Planning	17 6:30a Iron Men's Bible Study 10:00-2:00p Clothes Closet 2020-2021 School Registration for Pre-School thru grade 8 for current members	18 10:00a Boys BB game (H) Solomon 5:30p Worship/ Communion
19 8:00a Worship/Communion 9:30a Worship/Communion 11:00a Worship/Communion 6:30- 8:30p Jr/Sr. Hi Youth YR	20 Martin Luther King Jr. 3:30- 5:00 Boys BB practice 6:30 Finance 2 6:30p Life With God Class AE NO SCHOOL Tigers Den Open	21 9:30-11:30a Food Pantry 10:00a Tuesdays at 10 Bible Study AE 2:00-3:00p In Depth Study FR 2:00-4:00p Tuesdays @ 2 5:00p Boys BB Game (A) Tinora 6:30p Adult BB GM 6:30p Boy Scouts	22 3:30-5:00p Boys BB practice 5:30p Handbells CB 6:30p Cross Training – Family Night 6:30p Bible Study (Rohlf) AE 6:30p Senior Choir LB	23 8:55a Chapel- 5&6 grade Grandparent visitor chapel 9:00-4:00 Clothes Closet 9:30-11:30a Food Pantry 10:00-11:30a Bible Study FR 12:00-2:00p Knit & Study 4:30p Boys BB (A) St. Paul	24 6:30a Iron Men's Bible Study 10:00-2:00p Clothes Closet	25 5:30p Worship Rooms reserved ALL DAY Daddy/Daughter Dance preparation K, GM, LR 6:00- 9:00p Daddy/ Daughter Dance GM, LR
26 8:00a Worship 9:30a Worship 11:00a Worship 6:30- 8:30p Jr/Sr. Hi Youth YR BOOK FAIR	27 Lutheran Schools Week 3:30- 5:00 Boys BB practice 6:30p Cub Scout LR 6:30 Finance 1 6:30p Life With God Class AE BOOK FAIR	28 Lutheran Schools Week Delay School Start 9:30-11:30a Food Pantry 10:00a Tuesdays at 10 Bible Study AE 4:30p Boys Ballgame (A) St. John Freedom 6:30p Boy Scouts BOOK FAIR	29 Lutheran Schools Week 9:00a Mom's in Touch at Tim Hortons 3:30- 5:00p Boys BB practice 5:30p Handbells CB 6:30p Cross Training 6:30p Bible Study (Rohlf) AE 6:30p Senior Choir LB BOOK FAIR	30 Lutheran Schools Week 8:55a Chapel – Kevin Creutz 9:00-4:00 Clothes Closet 9:30-11:30a Food Pantry 10:00-11:30a Bible Study FR BOOK FAIR	31 Lutheran Schools Week 6:30a Iron Men's Bible Study 10:00- 2:00p Clothes Closet BOOK FAIR	AE= Adult Education FR= Fellowship Room LR= Lunch Room YR= Youth Room CH=Church GM=Gym LB= Library CB=Church Balcony CO Church Office a=AM p= PM

