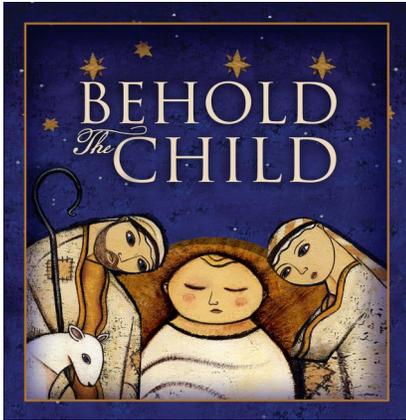


The December Epistle



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Advent is a special time for preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ at Christmas. We invite you to join us in a celebration of worship, Christian fellowship, and study during this holiday season.

Wednesday,
December 1
Luke 2:8-20
1:00 & 7:30 p.m.
"For You and All
the World"

Wednesday,
December 8
Matthew 2:1-12
1:00 & 7:30 p.m.
"To Set You Free
from All Your
Sorrow"

Wednesday,
December 15
Luke 1:46-55
1:00 & 7:30 p.m.
"For You, to Bear
Your Flesh in
Weakness"

Wednesday,
December 22
John 1:1-14
1:00 p.m.
"All the World
with His Free
Grace Supplying"

Wednesday,
December 22
Cantata
7:30 p.m.
"Behold the
Child—Wrapping
the World in Love"

Friday,
December 24
Luke 2:1-14
3:30 p.m.
"Behold the Child,
Wrapped in Sight
and Sound"

Friday,
December 24
Luke 2:1-14
5:00 p.m.
"Behold the Child,
Wrapped in Sight
and Sound"

Friday,
December 24
Luke 2:1-14
6:30 p.m.
"Behold the Child,
Wrapped in Sight
and Sound"

Friday,
December 24
Cantata
8:30 p.m.
"Behold the
Child—Wrapping
the World in Love"

Saturday,
December 25
1 John 4:7-16
10:00 a.m.
"Behold the Child,
Wrapping
Someone in Love"

Sunday,
December 26
Only
9:30 a.m.

Friday
December 31
Psalm 90:1-12
5:30 p.m.
"Behold the Child,
The Name of
Jesus"

- CHURCH SERVICE TIMES -

Traditional Services: 5:30 p.m. Saturday, 8:00 and 9:30 a.m. Sunday
and Contemporary Service at 11:00 a.m. Sunday

655 Wayne Ave., Defiance, OH 43512

• www.stjohndefiance.com

Church 419.782.5766

- LIVE STREAMING -

5:30 p.m. Saturday and 11:00 a.m. Sunday
Bible Study, Sunday, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

School 419.782.1751

• www.facebook.com/stjohnlutherandefiance

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SERMONS FOR DECEMBER

December 1, "For You and All the World" by Pastor Mews

Text: Luke 2:8-20

December 5, "Bring to Completion" by Pastor Mews

Text: Philippians 1:2-11

December 8, "To Set You Free from All Your Sorrow" by Pastor Mews

Text: Matthew 2:1-12

December 12, "Expectations of Jesus?" by Pastor Mews

Text: Luke 7:18-28

December 15, "For You, to Bear You Flesh in Weakness" by Pastor Mews

Text: Luke 1:46-55

December 19, "Surprise Endings" by Pastor Mews

Text: Micah 5:2-5a

December 22, "All the World with His Free Grace Supplying" by Pastor Mews

Text: John 1:1-14

December 24, "Behold the Child: Wrapped in Sight and Sound" by Pastor Mews

Text: Luke 2:1-14

December 25, "Behold the Child: Wrapping Someone in Love" by Pastor Mews

Text: 1 John 4:7-16

December 26, "Newly Clothed" by Pastor Mews

Text: Colossians 3:12-17

December 31, "Behold the Child: The Name of Jesus" by Pastor Mews

Text: Psalm 90:1-12



Church Staff NEW

Emails

Pastor Mews:

pastor.mews@stjohntigers.com

DCE Cassidy:

cassidy.holeso@stjohntigers.com

Secretary Dani:

church.secretary@stjohntigers.com

Secretary Diana:

dgrim@stjohntigers.com



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Sunday, December 19, in the sanctuary

2:00 p.m. Preschool Christmas Program

3:30 p.m. K-8 Christmas Program



PASTOR'S OFFICIAL ACTS

Baptisms

Adalynn Grace Cruz on November 14, 2021.
Parents are Javier Cruz & Gracie Zipfel.

Parker James Rensi on November 20, 2021.
Parents are Jacob & Autumn Rensi.

Funeral

Mary Bergman passed away November 1, 2021, and received a Christian memorial service on November 23, 2021.



PRIVATE COMMUNION

The Pastor continues to offer private Communion for anyone who wishes to have Communion. Please call the church office for an appointment.

SHUT-IN CALLS

We have around 30 people who are designated as shut-ins in our congregation. The Pastor, Walt Smith, and George Kaiser are keeping in contact with our members. If the shut-in person is comfortable having a home visit, arrangements will be made for this visit.

Dear Friends in Christ,

*"It came without ribbons! It came without tags!"
 "It came without packages, boxes or bags!"
 And he puzzled three hours, till his puzzler was sore.
 Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before!
 "Maybe Christmas," he thought, "doesn't come from a store."
 "Maybe Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more!"
 (The Grinch Who Stole Christmas!)*

***"Maybe Christmas," he thought, "doesn't come from a store."
 "Maybe Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more!"***

For many, Christmas is a holiday in which material stuff is given and received. American retailers know that that over 25% of all material goods are purchased during the Christmas holiday season. In line with this, the most common questions that we ask in association with Christmas are "Is your shopping done?" and "Are you ready for the holidays?," meaning parties, gift exchanges, shopping and the like. However, there is a rub with Christmas, 2021, that is called an interruption in the supply chain. Most Christmas gift products, the ones that jam the aisles at Kohl's, Wal-Mart, and Meijer for Black Friday, and the ones that are made particularly for 'blow out' sales are now off-shore on large ships. A lack of truck drivers, trucks and unloaded boxes may dent the tonnage of Christmas bargains and goods that we stand in line for at all hours of the day and scour the internet ads to be wrapped safe under our tree, to be opened to surprised and delighted faces.

Perhaps the Grinch, one of the popular villains in American Christmas lore, knows something we can all remember: *"Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store, Maybe Christmas....perhaps....means a bit more."*

The Gospel of Luke shares the Christmas that means just not a bit more, but eternally more. For this gift is eternal, brings eternal blessings and isn't found under a tree, but in a stable. Luke writes, *"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord."*

No supply chain shortage, no disruption of a lack of containers, truck drivers or empty shipping boxes, can interrupt His blessings. He is the promised Messiah who brings life, eternal life and salvation. The Savior is the promised blessing that will bring comfort, hope and final the victory of our struggle with sin and death. It is for all people, and no supply chain deal can interrupt that.

As God's Word assures, God's supply chain of His grace come in real and concrete means, through our Baptism, through His proclaimed Gospel and Word and through the Lord's Supper. These bring us the blessings of ***"The Savior born for you!"***

For all of us, may we know and cherish our infant Lord, *"Maybe Christmas," he thought, "doesn't come from a store, "Maybe Christmas...perhaps means a bit more."* Amen!

Pastor KFM

LIFE WITH GOD

The spring class starts Monday, January 10, and runs through April 11. Classes are held Monday evenings in the Adult Bible Study Room from 6:30-8:30 p.m. This class is for all interested in renewing their faith, learning the basics of Christianity and Lutheranism, or just exploring what our church believes and why we do what we do. Sign up by January 10. Blue forms are attached or see Pastor Mews or the Church office.



Endowment

Here are a couple ideas for your year-end legacy strategy to benefit our church through our Endowment Fund. As you know, we use earnings only to benefit the church in non-budget areas only. We have given over \$600,000 to that end over the years, thanks to the generosity of our donors. We want to help you make the most of your charitable giving.

1) Consider qualified charitable deductions (QCDs) if you're 72. When you reach age 72 (or 70 1/2 if you turned 70 1/2 before 2020), you're at the required minimum distribution (RMD) age, meaning you will have to start making a minimum taxable withdrawal annually from your retirement accounts. RMDs were waived during 2020 but are back in effect for 2021. If you're not itemizing your deductions and you're at RMD age, you may want to consider donating your RMD to our Endowment Fund through a QCD. It will satisfy your RMD, and up to \$100,000 annually won't count as taxable income. A financial advisor can help you figure if this approach works for you.

2) Donate appreciated assets instead of cash. It's easy to donate cash and we certainly encourage it. But giving appreciated securities instead can mean more money going to the Endowment Fund and less to taxes. You won't have to pay capital gains taxes when you donate appreciated assets, and we don't have to pay taxes when we sell them. For example, if you wanted to give \$10,000, you could give it as a cash gift. But if you have a stock or mutual fund that has appreciated to \$10,000, consider donating it instead. You won't owe capital gains tax on the asset, you will still receive a charitable deduction if you can itemize, and you'll meet your giving goals--possibly having paid less out of pocket.

Dave Memmer, Endowment Fund Chairman

Cross Training

Our Cross Training students have been keeping busy with classes and BLAST events over the past few months. We are very thankful for our students and their families for all their help at our Trunk-or-Treat/Reformation Festival and at the Self Care service night where we cleaned around the church and school. Take a look at some pictures we captured of these two events below!

Lastly, our students and leaders will be attending the Advent services together throughout the month of December. Classes will begin right at 6:30 p.m. and then we will head down to church around 7:25 p.m. This is a part of our classes, so students will be expected to attend. Also, pickup will be at the same time as usual at 8 p.m.

December Schedule:

Dec. 1 – CT Classes /
Participate in Advent Service #1

Dec. 8 - CT Classes /
Participate in Advent Service #2

Dec. 15 - CT Classes /
Participate in Advent Service #3

Dec. 22 & Dec. 29 – NO CROSS TRAINING,
Christmas Break





Scouting News



After a fun and engaging Turkey Shoot in November, a Cub Pack Christmas celebration will be held this month with a variety of fun activities and games. Cubs will also continue working on engaging achievements, specific to each Den. With one of the points of the Scout Law being that a Scout in reverent, a number of the boys are working on their religious awards which will be presented on Scout Sunday in February.

The Troop is currently working on various skills in preparation for the annual Klondike Derby to be held at Camp Lakota in January. In addition, members continue to focus on achievements for rank advancement.

Both the Pack and Troop thank everyone who purchased popcorn during the recent campaign. Monies earned help provide outstanding programs for the youth. Your support was truly appreciated.

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.

FROM THE DESK OF PRINCIPAL JOHN MARCH:



Dear St. John Family,

Christmas evokes so many warm memories for me. Sitting by the fire, gazing up at the Christmas tree. Listening to Christmas music while sipping hot cocoa. Relaxing. Some of the most precious times that I have during Christmas are with my children doing our Christmas Devotions. During our times together we read about the various characters in the Christmas story and then add a person, animal or object to our nativity scene. Just before Christmas we add the final character: baby Jesus to it. We then have a complete nativity. It makes us all stop and think about the importance each one had in fulfilling the prophecy and miracle of the birth of Jesus.

I am going to be honest, the last couple of years have been full of changes and ups and downs for my family. Moving, changing schools, making new friends, trying to establish new medical caregivers and specialists for my son, and in the midst of all that dealing with covid and restrictions including not being able to see my wife's family in nearly 2 years.

<continued on pg 6>

DECEMBER

40+ Anniversaries

Keith & Marlene Eberle (60) Dec 2
 Steve & Brenda Buchs (41) Dec 6
 Hal & Lori Hanenkrath (42) Dec 8
 Tom & Samira Stelzer (42) Dec 8
 Neal & Judith Detter (49) Dec 9
 Jim & Nancy Schatz (54) Dec 10
 Ron & Marilyn Burke (71) Dec 16
 Ron & June Crosser (43) Dec 22
 Alan & Valerie Van Vlerah (53) Dec 28
 Alan & Darlene Steingass (53) Dec 30

80+ Birthdays

James Miller (83) Dec 7
 Helen Delventhal (93) Dec 10
 Anna Sines (87) Dec 14
 Larry Meyer (83) Dec 15
 John Schatz (81) Dec 19
 Henry Gerken (90) Dec 21
 Edith Chandler (90) Dec 28
 Susan Meyer (81) Dec 31

Nursing Homes & Care Facilities

Brookview Healthcare Center: Sue Bidlack, Ron Norden (Hospice)

Glenn Park: Helen & Marvin Steingass, Bonnie Gomez

Kingsbury Place Assisted Living: Johanna Keesbury, Minnie Wagner, Martha Vaughn

Laurels of Defiance: Lorna Goldenetz, Becky Lindeman, Linda DeTray, Ron Burke (Hospice), Mark LaGorin

SKLD Nursing Home (Twin Rivers): Robin Casper, Virginia Mast

Hillsdale Cty Medical Care: Imogene Grimes

Pine Hill Retirement Community: Wilma Beaverson

Ashleigh Aanerud Tim Aanerud Annette Bergman

Nicholas Hedlund Kendra Oehlerich Zachary Harrow

Jacob Hutcheson Jacob Hinkle Jordan Hutcheson

Nathaniel Mueller Aaron Jagow Hans Jagow

James Fisher Alexis Poindexter Andrew Nicely

Tracey Fraedrich Corey Renn

Men and Women in Military Service

Friends and Family Prayers - Please add to your prayers

Keith Ashbacher (friend of Rick & Nancy Baldwin), **Marian & Wayne Belknap** (mother and step-father of Debbie Wagner), **Amanda Bok** (niece of Marilynn Buchholz), **Charlie Beard** (requested by Charlie & Carol Edwards), **Barb Cavin** (mother-in-law of Sarah Cavin), **Amanda & Scott Egly** (family of Nancy Eickenberg), **John Glick** (brother of Linda Brandt), **Ivey Hall** (friend of Jim & Nancy Schatz), **Glenna Helmke** (grandmother of Krystle Adams), **Atlas Jagow** (grandson of Don & Marye Jagow), **Gary LaFontain** (family of Linda DeTray), **Sally Lee** (sister of Ted and Otto Nicely), **Nick** (Grandson of Sharon Meyer), **Gwenn Maas** (niece of Wendy Nashu), **Barbara & Werner Mews** (parents of Pastor Mews), **Sue Meyer** (sister of June Martin), **Melissa McCray** (daughter of Ed & JoAnn McCray), **Wilma Mullins** (friend of Linda DeTray), **Cindy Oberhaus**, **Lincoln Douglas Ordway** (grandson of Susie Curl's nephew), **Mike Reichard** (son-in-law of Gladys Spreeman), **Matthew Roehrig** (brother of Mark Roehrig), **Isiah Schultz** (friend of Linda DeTray), **Tony & Jim Smith** (friends of Linda DeTray), **Tamie Stefin** (family of Wes Cereghin), **Mike Stork**, **Gary Voltz** (father of Dan Voltz), **Eric Wolford** (requested by Karen Frederick), **Gary Zenz**

But through it all we are confident that God has a plan for our lives and it includes being in Defiance. However, being here has included an increase in evening meetings and time spent away from my family. Working more than 60 hours a week can be exhausting. The other day when I pulled the devotional/nativity set out to get it ready to start our family advent devotions later this month, my eyes fell on the Innkeeper. A sudden realization came over me. I can totally relate to him! He seemed to have a really good excuse for not finding a proper place for Mary and Joseph in his inn. His establishment was full and he was overwhelmed with work providing for the needs of his customers. Yes, he provided a cave for the young couple, but I am sure when he found out that the baby that was born was the Messiah he probably regretted it. I can totally relate to his predicament: my schedule is definitely overcrowded, and I am struggling to have enough room to give my family, let alone my Savior, the attention they all need this Christmas. But that is what Advent is for: preparing our hearts and minds for the celebration of the birth of the Messiah. The busyness of this season can be overwhelming and we can lose the joy and peace found in it. I recognize that I need to make some changes so that my Savior is given the time and attention that He deserves this season and I am going to. Can you relate? Is your schedule overcrowded and overwhelming? How could you make generous space in your schedule and your heart for Christ this Christmas season? Let's refocus this Advent season, to truly take the time to rest and worship in the miracle of the season.

With a grateful heart,
John March, principal





In first grade we have been enjoying the holiday season. The students have really enjoyed the fall season and all that comes with it. We have done different fall-related crafts, such as making goofy pumpkins after we read "The Bumpy Pumpkin". We also made a delicious pumpkin pie in a cup for our harvest party! Students helped measure out and mix the different ingredients. During our read aloud time, we have been reading lots of books about Thanksgiving and what it means to be thankful. The students have been creating a "gratitude chain" where they write all the things they are grateful for. They have been having a blast with it and continue to add to it daily!

-Miss Tressler



EN ESPAÑOL

The students of the Spanish class (3rd grade - 8th grade) worked on a turkey project in Spanish class. The students made a turkey and on each of their feathers, they wrote down what they are thankful for in Spanish. Here are some pictures:

thankful



be thankful
♥

Financial Update



Look for a revised Quarterly Financial Review in the upcoming months.



Ladies Aid

This being the month that we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, our Savior, let us remember 2 Corinthians 9:15 "Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!" and also John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life".

We hope everyone who came to the Advent Tea enjoyed themselves. Also, thank you to everyone who bought noodles and gift baskets.

Our next meeting is December 16, 2021 at 2 p.m. The officers will be the hostesses and the food pantry item is disposable razors.

The first meeting for next year will be on January 29 at 2 p.m. Janet Seymour will be the hostess. The food pantry item is hand & body lotion.

Have a very merry Christmas.
Happy Birthday, Jesus !!!

The Food Pantry



Continues on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. In November we served 50 families or 129 people with 274 bags of food with a value of \$4,240.00

Food Pantry clients will receive a ham for Christmas. Distribution of the hams will start on Tuesday, December 7. Thank you for your continued support.

Thank you to everyone who helped put 72 Thanksgiving bags together. With everyone's help we got it done in a half hour.



Angel Tree Program

St. John will be participating in the Prison Fellowship Ministries Angel Tree Program again this year. Each child will have two Angels on the tree, one for a clothing item and one for a fun or toy item. Each gift should be a \$20.00 value. Please return the wrapped gifts with the Angel attached to the outside of the gift to the church office by **Sunday, December 12**.

St. John Youth Group and other volunteers will then deliver the gifts to families. If you are unable to shop for a gift, a monetary gift may be given to the church office. The Youth Board will choose an Angel and shop for the gift for you. Monetary gifts may also be given to the church office to assist with the food baskets that are prepared and given to each family.

For questions, contact Cassidy Holess
419.782.5766



WINTER 2022 St. John Lutheran church, Defiance, Ohio

LIFE WITH GOD: (LWG 1) Starting, Monday, January,10, 2022

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," explores and answers these questions and more in an informal, enjoyable, yet beneficial way through a 12 session/week course called "Life with God." (LWG) Sign up below, we ask that participants attend 10/12 classes and 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. Life with God 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 10, 2022 to Monday, April 11, 2022. Classes are held on Monday Evenings in the Adult Bible Study room from 6:30-8:30 P.M.. Bring nothing, on the last class we will bring refreshments to share. After the 2nd class, no new class members are to join.

TEACHERS: Pastor Mews who has 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 in to the church office by **Sunday, January 9, 2022** or hand to a pastor.

WINTER 2022 St. John Lutheran Church "Life with God 1" (LWG 1) 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.

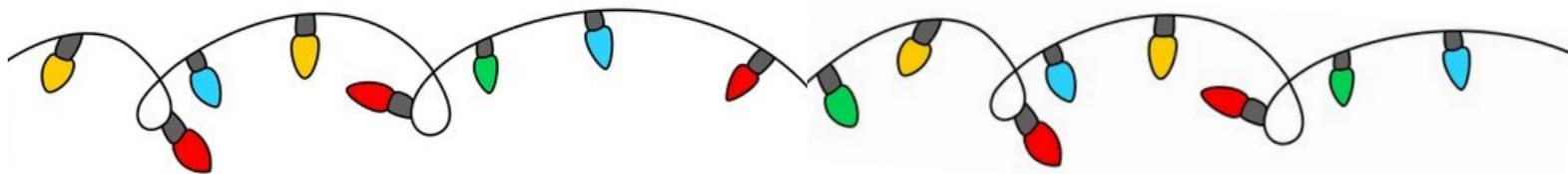
_____ I plan to attend Life with God to renew my faith and/or to support a friend attending.

_____ 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;

December Youth Scoop 2021



Youth Night Schedule:

- Dec. 5– Youth Night: The Chosen pt. 1
- Dec. 12—Youth Night: The Chosen pt. 2
- Dec. 18– Angel Tree Drive-Thru and Christmas Party
- **Dec. 19, 26—No Youth; Christmas Break**
- **Jan. 2—No Youth; New Year’s Weekend**



Angel Tree Drive-Thru: Saturday Dec. 18th 10:00am-2:00pm

We will be doing another drive-thru style event for our Angel Tree participants this year. Youth and families will meet at St. John to help pack food baskets, organize gifts, and pass everything out to the Angel Tree families. We will need lots of help for this event, so please reach out to Cassidy if you and your youth are able to attend.

Jr./Sr. High Youth Christmas Party: Saturday Dec. 18th 2:00pm-4:00pm

St. John youth will celebrate our Christmas party after the Angel Tree Drive-Thru with fun activities like a “Nailed it” treat decorating contest, Christmas games, and a gift exchange! Please send your youth with an inexpensive gift (something you can find around the house/funny gift). Hope to see everyone there!

Youth Room Cleanout Day: TBA in 2022

When we return after Christmas and New Year’s, we will be planning a cleanout day for our youth room at St. John. This would include having our youth and families rearrange the youth room to fit our style and needs, cleaning out closets, and giving some extra TLC to our space.



DCE Intern Cassidy—Contact Information

Cell Phone: 517-769-5084

Email: Cassidy.holeso@stjohntigers.com



December 2022 Youth Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Cross Training 6:30-8pm	2	3	4
5 Youth Night 6:30-8pm	6	7	8 Cross Training 6:30-8pm	9	10	11
12 Youth Night 6:30-8pm	13	14	15 Cross Training 6:30-8pm	16	17	18 Angel Tree Drive Thru/Youth Xmas Party 10:00-4:00pm 
19 No Youth Night	20	21	22 No Cross Training	23	24 Christmas Eve 	25 Merry Christmas! 
26 No Youth Night	27	28	29 No Cross Training	30	31 New Year's Eve 	