

# The Epistle December 2023

St. John Lutheran Church  
655 Wayne Avenue  
Defiance, OH 43512



## SERVICE TIMES

Christmas Cantata Dec. 20th 7:30 pm

Sunday Worship Service Dec. 24th 10:00 am

The Service of Lessons & Carols

Dec. 24th 3:30 & 5:30 pm

Christmas Cantata Dec. 24th 8:30 pm

Christmas Day Worship Service

Dec. 25th 10:00 am





*From Pastor Mews; “Hope is the good thing, maybe the best of things!”*

*Dr. Martin Luther once said that, “The entire world moves on hope” Do you? Hope for a better life, hope for your family to do well, hope for peace and earth, hope for better health. Hope can be both good or bad! Sounds odd doesn’t it? How can hope be good or bad. For those who have been hoping very long, they could lose heart and give in to despair. For those who believe and are willing to endure pain, hope can be a good thing. We are all imprisoned by our sin and our sinful nature. Too often we make walls of unbelief and despair, either by not having enough hope in Christ, or by being disappointed by unrealized hope. Like those imprisoned, hope can be both good or bad, depending on one’s outlook or maturity in hope. The heartwarming classic movie, “The Shaw Shank Redemption” was a film of friendship and hope. Prisoners Andy Dufresne and Ellis Redding (Red), are close friends, both serving decades in prison for murder. Red was imprisoned for the murder as a young man he committed, and Andy was imprisoned for murdering his wife, but he was framed. Andy told Red that he hoped he go free, Red realizing the fraught of that, blatantly said, “Let me tell you something my friend, hope is a dangerous thing, hope can drive a man insane.” The innocent Andy, never lost hope, but planned and over decades dug a hole to find freedom, escaping to Mexico. In freedom, Andy hoped that Red would go free and join him. In a letter, Andy wrote Red stating, “Remember Red, hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, no good thing ever dies. He invited his friend to come join him in freedom. For us believers, we hope. We hope for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We hope for eternal life with our Lord. In faith that hope is realized, even though we don’t see the blessing of it yet. . This is the essence of faith, hoping for something unseen to become real. This Advent and Christmas, our services focus on hope, hope of our Lord descending on His throne to take us home. In the mean time, we have the hope that our Resurrected Lord will keep us in faith and lead us home in hope. It’s true, “Hope is a good thing, the best of things,” especially in Christ, our new born King! Merry Christmas and happy New Year. Pastor KF Mews.*

## **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 & Lorna 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.

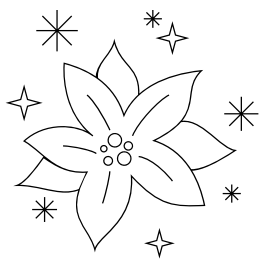


## PERFORMERS NEEDED FOR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

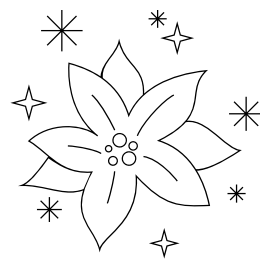
WE ARE LOOKING FOR PERFORMERS FOR OUR CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY SERVICES. THIS YEAR WE ARE TRYING SOMETHING NEW FOR THE FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE 3:30 AND 5:30 SERVICES. WE WILL HAVE ACTORS RE-ENACTING THE STORY IN COSTUME WITH NARRATORS READING THE CHRISTMAS STORY. WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO PERFORM. THERE ARE NO LINES TO MEMORIZE!!!! WE WILL REQUIRE ONE REHEARSAL ON DECEMBER 23 AT 10:00 A.M. WE WILL NEED THE FOLLOWING: MARY, JOSEPH, YOUNG JESUS (3 OR 4 YEARS OLD), HEROD, WISE MEN, SHEPHERDS, AND ANGELS. WE ARE ALSO LOOKING FOR INSTRUMENTALISTS 14 OR OLDER TO PLAY IN OUR ST. JOHN WIND ENSEMBLE. (YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO PLAY AN INSTRUMENT AND TAKE PART IN THE PAGEANT.) MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE NEED A COSTUME AND PROP PERSON. PLEASE CALL OR TEXT CONNIE WARNCKE 419-956-2283. PLEASE LEAVE YOUR NAME, THE PART DESIRED AND YOUR PHONE NUMBER.



**S T . J O H N L U T H E R A N**



**CONGREGATION**  
*Christmas Party*



**Sunday, December 17 at 4:30 pm**

**Let's celebrate Christmas with our church family!**

Please bring a side dish to share for a congregation potluck meal.

The main entree will be provided.

Come early and enjoy the  
Christmas Program by the  
St. John Lutheran School Students

2:00 - Preschool Program  
3:30 - Kindergarten - 8th grade

Kid Christmas Party, 2:30 pm

Come downstairs in the Tiger's  
Den after the Preschool Program  
to enjoy a movie, crafts, activities,  
snacks, and even a place to nap  
before the Congregation Meal.

Free will donation will be collected for Raven's Care of Defiance.

✂️ -----  
Yes, I'm so excited to come to the Congregation Christmas Party!

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

I plan on bringing this side dish: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Number of Adults \_\_\_\_ Number of Children

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I plan on attending the Kid Christmas Party

**Please Return to the Church Office by December 13th**



Cross<sup>+</sup>training

CHRISTMAS

PAJAMA PARTY

JOIN US!

DECEMBER

13

B.L.A.S.T.  
EVENT

- WEAR YOUR FAVORITE CHRISTMAS PAJAMAS
- BRING AN APPETIZER OR DESSERT TO SHARE
- BE READY TO PLAY GAMES!





### ***The need for food rises!***

Thank you to 18 volunteers who helped put the Thanksgiving bags together on October 30. We were able to assemble 70 bags with the many donations from our congregation members. THANK YOU! In October, we served 86 families or 253 people. We distributed 358 bags of food worth \$5,370. As of November 9th, we have served 50 families or 146 people with a distribution of 173 bags of food at a value of \$2,595. Each of those 50 families received a Thanksgiving bag at a value of \$50.00 each, which is a total of \$2,500. The Cross Training November B.L.A.S.T. event participants also collected food items for the SJL food pantry. Thank you to all who participated!



### ***CHURCH DECORATING***

*The Fellowship Board will be decorating the church on Monday, December 4th at 5 p. m. If anyone would like to come help and decorate, your help would be appreciated.*

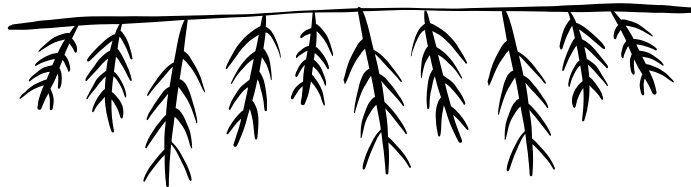
### ***THE CLOTHES CLOSET,***

LOCATED ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE SCHOOL, CONTINUES TO PROVIDE GENTLY USED CLOTHING AT AN AFFORDABLE PRICE TO OUR COMMUNITY. THE CLOTHES CLOSET IS OPEN ON THURSDAY FROM 9:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M. AND ON FRIDAY FROM 10:00 A.M. UNTIL 2:00 P.M. IF YOU HAVE A DONATION, YOU MAY DROP IT OFF ON MONDAY OR TUESDAY FROM 8:00 TO 10:00 A.M. OR DURING DAYS WE ARE OPEN. BRING DONATIONS AND COME ON IN AND DO A LITTLE SHOPPING.



# Sermons for December

Date	Church Year Sunday	Title	Scripture	Theme
Dec. 2-3, 1 <sup>st</sup> SUN IN ADVENT,		<i>"Patience is a Virtue."</i>	Isaiah 64:1-9	Patience/Faith
Dec. 6, 2 <sup>nd</sup> MIDWEEK ADVENT,		<i>"Praying Like Paul."</i>	1 Thess. 3:10-13	Prayer/God
Dec. 9-10, 2 <sup>nd</sup> SUN IN ADVENT,		<i>"Remain in Faith"</i>	2 Peter 3:18-24	Faith/Salvation/Time
Dec. 13, 3 <sup>rd</sup> MIDWEEK ADVENT,		<i>"You've Got a Ticket to Ride."</i>	1 Thess. 4:13-18	Faith/Christ's Coming
Dec. 16-17, 3 <sup>rd</sup> SUN IN ADVENT,		<i>"Witness."</i>	John 1:6-8, 19-28	John Baptist/Point to Christ
Dec. 20, 4 <sup>th</sup> MIDWEEK ADVENT, 1:00		<i>"Faithful Watching/Waiting."</i>	1 Thee.5:1-11	Patience/Faith
Dec. 20, 4 <sup>th</sup> MIDWEEK ADVENT, 7:30,		<i>"New and Glorious Morn."</i>		Christmas Cantata
Dec. 24, 4 <sup>th</sup> SUN IN ADVENT, 10:00 a.m.		<i>"The House God Built."</i>	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16	King/Son of David
Dec. 24, 3:30 CHRISTMAS EVE:		Lessons and Carols		Christ's Birth.
Dec. 24, 5:30 CHRISTMAS EVE:		Lessons and Carols		Christ's Birth.
Dec. 24, 8:30 CHRISTMAS EVE:		<i>"New and Glorious Morn."</i>		Christmas Cantata
Dec. 25, 10:00 CHRISTMAS DAY		<i>"Rejoice Evermore."</i>	1 Thess. 5:16	Christ's birth/Joy
Dec. 30-31, 1 <sup>st</sup> SUN after CHRISTMAS		<i>"Christmas for Lonely."</i>	Luke 2:22-40	Christ for Lonely/Hurting



## Prayer Requests

Please let the church office know of any prayer requests. Call 419.782.5766 or email [church.office@stjohntigers.com](mailto:church.office@stjohntigers.com). For the Prayer Chain, please contact Judy or Penny via phone, text, or email if you have a prayer request, an addition, a correction, or any feedback for the Prayer Chain Warriors to include in their prayers. Judy Detter ([detterjudy@gmail.com](mailto:detterjudy@gmail.com)), text Judy: 419.783.7032. Penny Mueller ([pennym41@gmail.com](mailto:pennym41@gmail.com)) text Penny: 419.304.5768

# *Bible Study Opportunities*

Led by Pastor Mews

**FAITH IN THE TRUE GOD! 1 !** Written by Dr. Schwarz, Luther Scholar and former professor at the University of Regensburg in Germany, this in-depth class is practical and engaging look into Luther's life with insight and relevance in our 21st Century lives. Thoughtful topics include faith, life, marriage, parenting, the nature of God and the relationship of faith and reason.

Classes gather each Wednesday, from 2:00-3:00 p.m. in the fellowship room.

November schedule:

Wednesday, December 6, Class

Wednesday, December 13, Class

Wednesday, December 20, Class.

Wednesday, December 27, No Class

## **ISAIAH**

1. The book and class theme is "To Keep the people in eager anticipation of Christ!" This Bible study is over the book of Isaiah and it gathers 10:00-11:30 A.M. in the fellowship hall. Feel free to join us, as all is provided and over 25 people are enrolled. Our outreach ministry is to the Path Center of Defiance. November Schedule: Thursday, December 7, Class Thursday, December 14, Class Thursday, December 21, Class Thursday, December 28, No Class

Winter "Life with God 1," (LWG 1) Begins in January. This class is for those desiring to become communicant members of St. John Lutheran Church, those desiring to renew their faith, or those who wish to 'check out' the basic teachings of Christianity and Lutheranism. We encourage every member to attend once every five years. Watch for more details or share with Pastor Mews dates and times that are best for you. Registration forms will be available in mid-to-late December.



## *Bible Studies*

**SUNDAY-9:30 a.m.**

- Phil Rohlf – "The Letters To the Seven Revelation Churches" Lunchroom
- Sandy Gyurnek – "Help Is Here: Finding Fresh Strength and Purpose in the Power of the Holy Spirit" by Max Lucado, in the Fellowship
- Faye Luhring – "Overcoming Strife / Enduring Faith" Lunchroom
- Jeff Rohlf – "The Genesis Account of Noah's Ark," by Calvin Smith
- Lisa Mews "The Women of Christmas," Mondays 6:30 pm

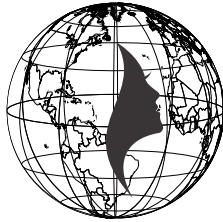
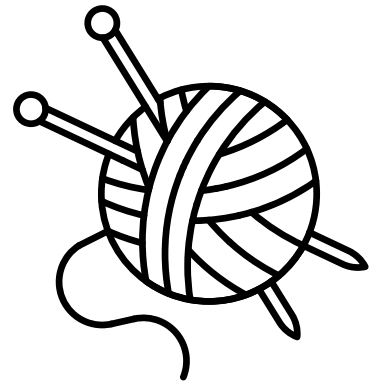
**Wednesday Night Bible Study 6:30 pm**

**ACTS – ADULT CROSS TRAINING**

**STUDIES: GRACE, FAITH, AND LOVE:**

These gifts equip us for an abundant life in Christ. Join us as we spend the next three weeks exploring these blessings as our power source each day. We meet every Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m. in Adult Ed A with Judy Detter and Penny Mueller.

**SECOND AND FOURTH TUESDAY  
KNIT 'N STUDY at 1 pm on  
NOVEMBER 14TH & 28TH**



**MOMS IN  
TOUCH**

Faye Luhning invites to you join a group of ladies who pray for not only our congregation and its members, but also our community and world affairs. They meet every other Monday at 9:00 a.m. at 274 Wilson St. This summer, they meet November 6th and 20th from 9 - 10 am. For more information, please call Faye at 419-782-0153.



***This is 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 that everyone is enjoying our homemade noodles. Don't forget, the Congregational Christmas Party will be held on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 4:30 pm. Please bring a dish to share. Our next meeting is December 14, at 2pm. The officers will be the hostesses and we will be having a Cookie Exchange. The food pantry item is Disposable Razors Toilet Paper or Laundry Soap. Have a Very Merry Christmas. Happy Birthday Jesus!!***



*The Dart Ball season is underway. Anyone interested in joining our team please contact Jeff Buchhop, 419-439-2120. We have recently joined a league with 9 other churches and can't wait for you to join us!*

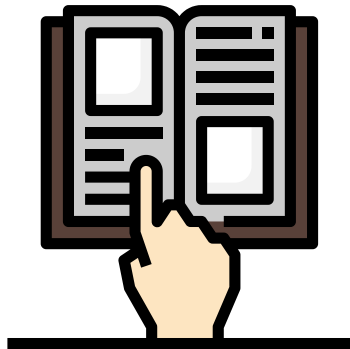
**Dates:**

*December 12 - Home against Westly Methodist Bryan*

*January 16 - Home against First Lutheran Bryan*

*February 13 - Trinity Lutheran Bryan*

*March 5 - Home against St. Peter Florida*



# Memories

**The church pictorial directory will now be out in late November / early December due to photo retakes.**

## **Baringer / Wachtman Scholarship**

**The Baringer / Wachtman Scholarship is available for YOU! If you are currently seeking to further your education on a Christ-Centered campus, please consider attending a Lutheran Church Missouri Synod university. Our church has scholarships available to assist you in your commitment to a degree in the many programs offered at Concordia Universities throughout our United States. You must be a communicant member of St. John Lutheran or Christ Our Savior, Defiance, OH, in order to apply. For more information, contact Rick or Nancy Baldwin, Jan or Mike McGhee, Angie Morris, or Lonnie Warncke.**





# Happy Anniversary 40+ Years

Keith & Marlene Eberle 12/02 (62)  
Steven & Brenda Buchs 12/06 (43)  
Tom & Samira Stelzer 12/08 (44)  
Neal & Judy Detter 12/09 (51)  
James & Nancy Schatz 12/10 (57)  
Ron & June Crosser 12/22 (45)  
Allan & Valerie Van Vlerah (55)  
Alan & Darlene Steingass 12/30(56)



## DECEMBER

### 80 + BIRTHDAYS

Barbara Hughes December 3rd (80)  
James Miller December 7th (85)  
Helen Delventhal December 10th (95)  
Anna Sines December 14th (89)  
Larry Meyer December 15th (85)  
Janet Koch December 17th (86)  
Hank Gerken December 21st (92)  
Edith Chandler December 28th (92)  
Susan Meyer December 31st (83)  
Judie Zachrich December 31st (80)

## PASTOR'S SERMONS

*If you missed a sermon, you can find it on our YouTube channel, on our webpage*

*([www.stjohndefiance.com](http://www.stjohndefiance.com)) and on our Podcast site.*

*Google search: st john lutheran church defiance ohio youtube. Then subscribe to St. John channel to get notified when we are broadcasting "live".*

### **LINK TO OUR WEBPAGE**

*<https://www.stjohndefiance.com/sermons-2/>*

### **LINK TO OUR PODCAST**

*<https://www.buzzsprout.com/54964>*

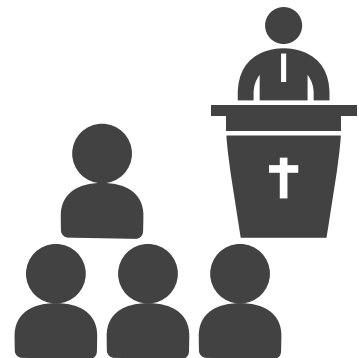
*Put your favorite podcast app on your phone and listen to the sermons any time of day.*

### **RADIO**

**WONW 1280 AM Defiance**

**WZOM 105.7 FM Defiance**

*Our service is broadcast a week later on Sunday at 9:30 a.m. on WONO 1280 AM and on WZOM 105.7 FM at 8:00 a.m.*



THE  
LUTHERAN  
SCHOLARSHIP GRANTING  
ORGANIZATION  
OF OHIO



## WIN

for students & families

Donations to the LSGOO make private Lutheran education a reality for more students and families.

## WIN

for participating schools

Donations to the LSGOO allow schools to offer more tuition assistance to families who want to be part of their school communities.

## WIN

for you as an Ohio taxpayer

Donors to the LSGO of Ohio receive a nonrefundable tax credit\* for their donations, which will be applied to their Ohio income tax liability, dollar-for-dollar, up to \$750 (or \$1,500 for couple filing jointly).

\*The Lutheran Scholarship Granting organization of Ohio is not a tax-advisory organization.

Please consult your tax professional to determine how this giving opportunity may impact your individual tax outcome.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The LSGO of Ohio's purpose is to raise scholarship dollars for students to attend Lutheran schools throughout Ohio.

Scholarships will be prioritized for students of low-income households.

SGOs (Scholarship Granting Organizations) are NEW:

they were recently brought into existence in Ohio legislative session.

You, the taxpayer and donor, can select the participating schools to which you'd like your donation directed.

The LSGOO is a recognized charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



LEARN MORE AND  
MAKE YOUR DONATION  
ONLINE AT  
[WWW.LSGOOHIO.ORG](http://WWW.LSGOOHIO.ORG)

Give on the secure online site or send a check to The Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization of Ohio, 3870 Linden Road, Rocky River, Ohio 44116, and write St. John Lutheran, Defiance on the memo line.



**You can use your tax dollars to help students!**

THE  
**LUTHERAN**  
SCHOLARSHIP GRANTING  
**ORGANIZATION**  
OF OHIO



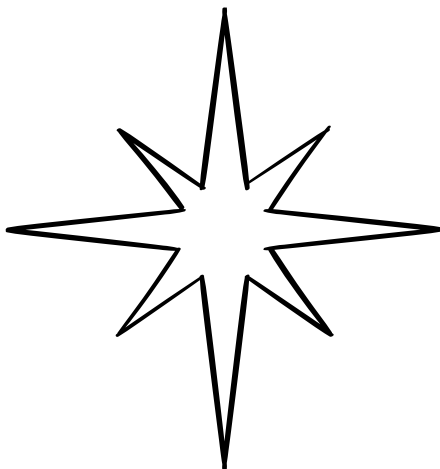
Select St. John Lutheran School,  
Defiance, Ohio and donate  
before the end of the year.

- Your donation can be designated to a specific (participating) school
- All funds go toward student scholarships/tuition assistance
- Ohio taxpayers can receive a tax CREDIT of up to \$750

<https://lsgoohio.org>

**Make a donation. Change a life.**



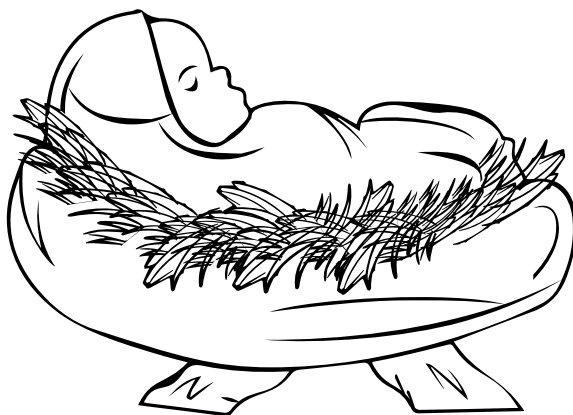


## OUTREACH MINISTRY

*Outreach Ministry seeks to share the Gospel of Christ within and outside of our walls to proclaim Jesus and the ministry of our church and school locally, nationally and globally.*

*Outreach Ministry is featuring a Nativity scene along with a large St. John Church and School banner at the Christmas Cruise-Thru at the Defiance County Fairgrounds in Hicksville from November 23 – December 23. This annual event, open from 6:00 to 9:00 PM, has over 2.5 miles of displays with over 3 million brilliant LED or RGB Light configurations and can be enjoyed in the comfort of your vehicle. Your vehicle can also be parked to enjoy the Festival of Trees, a miniature village, live reindeer, vendors, food ,drinks, a carriage ride, ice skating and a massive fireworks show. For a calendar dates for each of these events, go to [www.christmascruiesthru.com](http://www.christmascruiesthru.com). Goodwill donations are accepted and proceeds stay with this 501c3 nonprofit.*

*The Outreach Ministry Committee meets monthly to plan additional opportunities to be more welcoming to worshippers and be more visible in the community. Additional information regarding this ministry is available by contacting: Mike Saxton at 419 393-2513 or Pastor Mews at 419-782-5766.*





## Scout News

### December 2023

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 is reverent, a number of the boys are working on their religious awards which will be presented on Scout Sunday in February.

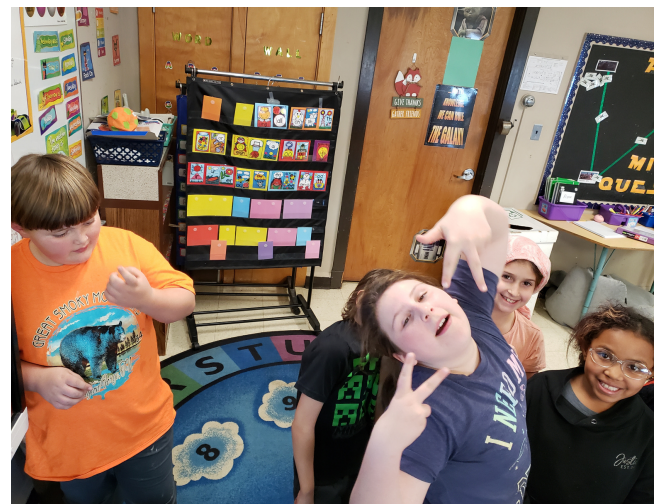
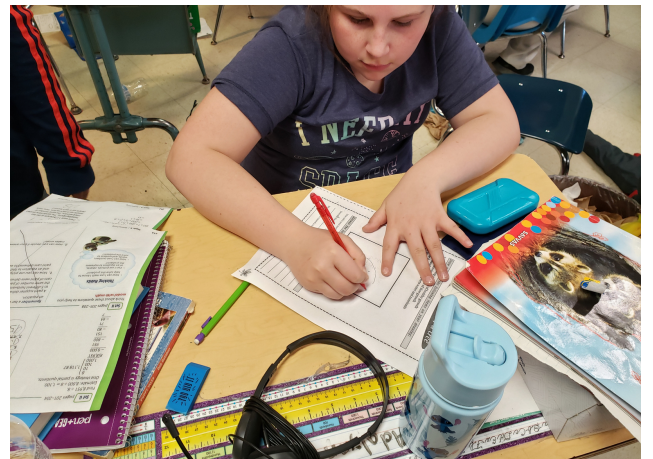
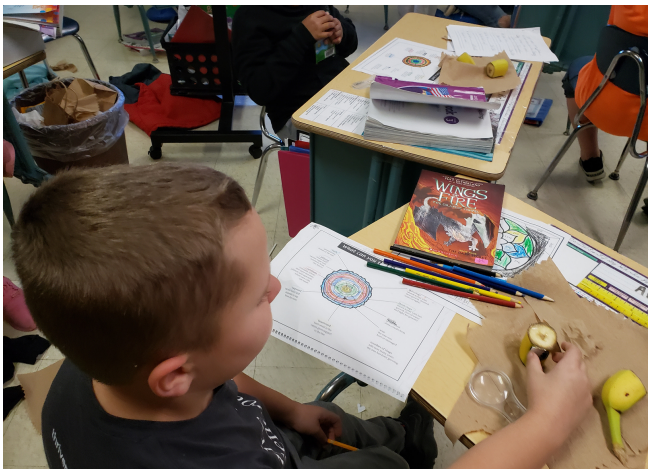
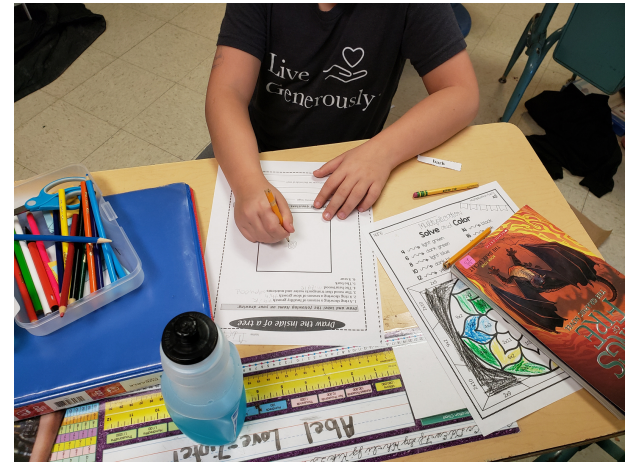
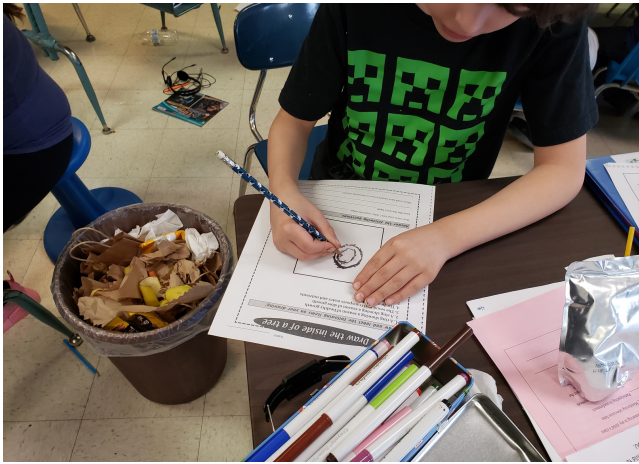
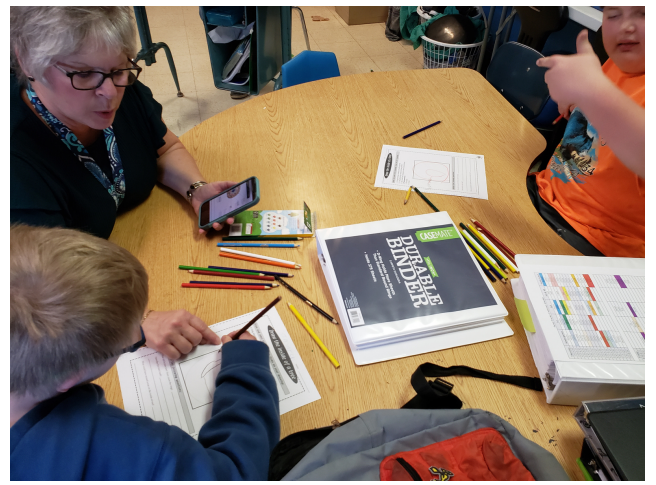
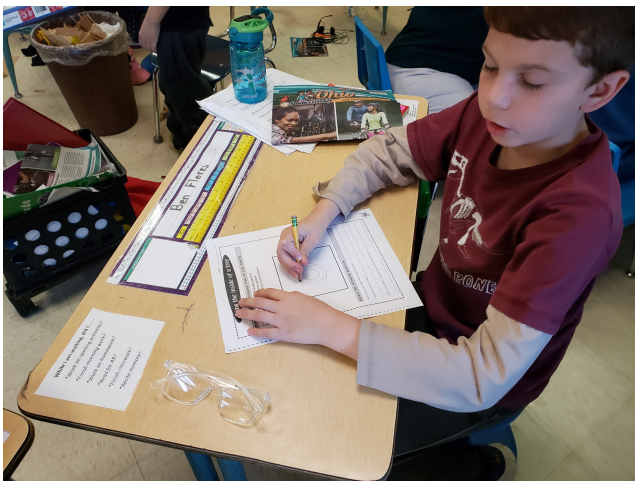
The Troop is also planning a Christmas party as well as a lock-in event. Scouts, in addition, are currently working on various skills in preparation for the annual Klondike Derby to be held at Camp Lakota in January. Further, members continue to focus on achievements for rank advancement.

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.

MERRY  
Christmas











**Reformation Assembly  
Activities  
Completed in our 4 Houses  
Thank you.  
Blessings,  
Mr. John March, principal**





# MERRY CHRISTMAS

## December

## 2023

Saturday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Clothes Closet 10:00 am	2 Worship Service with Communion 5:30 pm
3 Worship Service with Communion 8:00 / 9:30 / & 11:00 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Studies @ 9:30am	4 Moms In Touch 9:00am Finance 9:30am Boy Scouts 6:30 pm Lisa Mews B.S 6:30 pm TeleCareCalling 6:30pm	5 Food Pantry 9:30am Tuesday B.Study 10am Tues. Book Club 2:00pm Youth Board Mt 6:30pm Outreach Min. 6:30pm	6 Advent Serv 1 & 7:30pm True Faith B.St. 2:00 pm Hand Bells 5:45 pm Cross Tr/Adult BS 6:30p Senior Choir 6:30 pm	8 Clothes Closet 9:00 am Food Pantry 9:30 am Isaiah Bible St. 10:00 am Elders Meeting 6:00 pm	9 Clothes Closet 10:00 am	10 Worship Service 5:30 pm
10 Worship Service 8:00 / 9:30 / & 11:00 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Studies @ 9:30am	11 Finance 5:30pm Boy Scouts 6:30 pm L. Mews BStudy 6:30 pm	12 Food Pantry 9:30am Tuesday B.Study 10am Knit & Study 1:00 pm	13 Advent Serv 1 & 7:30pm True Faith B.St. 2:00 pm Hand Bells 5:45 pm Cross Tr/Adult BS 6:30p	14 Clothes Closet 9:00 am Food Pantry 9:30 am Isaiah Bible St. 10:00 am BCDS Mtg. 7:00 pm	1 Clothes Closet 10:00 am	16 Worship Service with Communion 5:30 pm
17 Worship Service with Communion 8:00 / 9:30 / & 11:00 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Studies @ 9:30am	18 Moms In Touch 9:00am Finance 9:30am Boy Scouts 6:30 pm L. Mews BStudy 6:30 pm	19 Food Pantry 9:30am Tuesday B.Study 10am Tues. Book Club 2:00pm Trustees 6:30 pm	20 Advent Serv 1 & 7:30pm True Faith B.St. 2:00 pm Hand Bells 5:45 pm Cross Tr/Adult BS 6:30p	21 Clothes Closet 9:00 am Food Pantry 9:30 am Isaiah Bible St. 10:00 am Parish Planning 7:00 pm	22 <b>Church Office Closed</b> Clothes Closet 10:00 am	23 Worship Service 5:30 pm
Christmas Eve 24 Worship Service 10 am Worship 3:30 / 5:30 pm Christmas Cantata 8:30p Bible Studies @ 9:30am	Christmas Day 25 <b>Church Office Closed</b> Worship Service with Communion 10:00 am	26 Knit & Study 1:00 pm	27 Advent Services 1 & 7pm Hand Bells 5:45 pm Cross Tr/Adult BS 6:30p Senior Choir 6:30 pm	28 Clothes Closet 9:00 am Food Pantry 9:30 am Ladies Aid Mtg. 2:00pm	29 Clothes Closet 10:00 am	30 Worship Service with Communion 5:30 pm
31 Worship Service with Communion 8:00 / 9:30 / & 11:00 am Sun. School Bible Studies @ 9:30am	January 1 <b>Church Office Closed</b>	2	3	4	5 Epiphany 6 Worship Service with Communion 5:30 pm	

