

# *THE GOOD NEWSLETTER*

*December 2018*



ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL  
— LUTHERAN CHURCH —

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Charles City, IA  
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[www.stjohncharlescity.org](http://www.stjohncharlescity.org)

## **“God’s Love in Action”**

### ***Worship Services December 24, 2018***



*4:00 p.m. Candlelight  
Worship/Comm*

*6:00 p.m. Candlelight  
Worship/Comm*

*7:30 p.m. Candlelight  
Worship/Comm*



***Early Morning Thoughts***

It's often dark these days when I leave the house for my morning walk. Sometimes my memory flashes back to the many cold, dark mornings I spent on my paper route as a kid in Waterloo. And I wonder what in the world my parents were thinking, letting me walk around every morning, through seedy apartment buildings and along dark neighborhood streets delivering newspapers by myself.

But that was the 70's; it was a simpler time. Well... not really, but it was simpler to me. I didn't worry about things like child abductors and, apparently, neither did my parents. But poor, unfortunate Johnny Gosch changed all of that. You may remember the news story. In 1982, twelve-year-old Johnny Gosch disappeared while delivering papers on his morning route in Des Moines and was presumed to have been kidnapped. It opened all of our eyes to the fact that the world had become a more dangerous place for children. Though I was in high school by the time it happened and had long since quit my paper route, it was one of those "loss of innocence" moments for me. Johnny was the same age I was when I delivered papers, and even today as I take morning walks, I wonder why it was Johnny who disappeared and not me.

Walking around our Charles City neighborhood this time of year, I pass darkened house after darkened house. I notice all the unlit Christmas lights and the giant, inflatable decorations sitting in sad, nylon puddles on the ground and I think about how fragile Christmas spirit can be. It's easy to be joyful and filled with holiday cheer when the lights are on and the over-sized Santa or snow globe is swaying happily in the yard. But, with the flip of a switch or the tick of a timer, it all goes away and we lie on our beds in the dark worrying about things like kidnappers, robbers, money, deadlines, illness, and death.

But then ... we light candles on the Advent wreath. The world can be so very dark at times, but in this season of Advent we light candles to keep the darkness at bay and to remember that God has sent the Light of Christ to be with us in our dark times ... even when the Christmas decorations are turned off and put away. And because of that I can drag myself out of bed in the morning. I know that the Light is with me and will help me through whatever might happen today. So, I go and exercise. I fight off disease and death another day. When I've finished, I know that the darkness will be gone, the sun will be up, and the world will be filled with light once again.

Peace,  
Pastor Russ

**Our Generosity in September, October, & November**

Your offerings to St. John were shared beyond our walls in August in the following ways:

8% (\$5,535.96) went to support the mission of the larger church

2% (\$1,950.43) went to support *Hospice of North Iowa, Foster Grandparent program, Angel Tree*

And 8% of your Third Quarter Giving went to:

*Holiday Cheer fund* - (\$1,203.43)

*Senior Citizen Center* - (\$1,203.43)

Thanks for your monthly generosity to the mission and outreach of St. John!

## Sound & Video Capital Campaign Approved

On Sunday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, members of St. John gathered between services to listen to information about a proposed upgrade in the sound system, followed by a vote as to whether or not to approve a capital campaign to pursue the upgrade. Receiving a 94% approval, the congregation sent a message that the Council and Sound & Video Task Force should continue with this process. The total estimated cost of the project is \$125,000 so financing this project is an important decision. St. John does have a portion of the Gertrude Kroneman estate dedicated towards supporting "programming" and the balance in the account could easily cover this upgrade. However, the Task Force and Council agree that instead of expending those dollars directly, they would prefer that direct donations be given, and pledges offered in order to finance it. We will still use the assets in the Kroneman account to initiate and complete the project, the cash donations and pledges will be "refunding" the dollars borrowed from the Kroneman account for future use. What a blessing we have this flexibility!

So where do we go from here? We now start the process of fundraising. The Council has decided that no contract with Lifeline Audio will be entered into until 100% of the project has been fundraised through either cash donations or pledges. Much discussion was held over the pledging process. The Council decided to allow a **two-year pledge period** for this project. This means that individuals or families have the immediate opportunity to indicate how much money they will donate towards this project and then pay over the next two years. We know there is support for the project, we just wanted to make it as easy as possible for families to budget. This means that whatever you write down on the pledge card, you will have two years to follow through with your commitment. We have a fantastic congregation and know that people will follow through. Life does happen, and we'll work things out should something change.

Once we reach 100% in direct cash donations or pledges received, we will then start the project. If we can reach \$125,000 by early January 2019, it is possible that we may have the system in place by Easter. Installation is expected to take about a week and training for the following week. Members of the congregation should expect to be receiving a letter in the mail, along with a pledge card. You will also be seeing pledge cards in the pews and in the Narthex.

Please remember that this project is on top of our regular giving. Thank you and I'm looking forward to this exciting project! If you have any questions, please contact me!

Jeremy Heyer  
Congregation President-  
641-330-0479





**Put Jesus On Your Christmas List This Year!** *The Stewardship committee would like to encourage everyone to take the typical amount that you would spend on a Christmas gift and put it in an envelope and then place it in the special box that is in the narthex starting Sunday, November 25<sup>th</sup>. Envelopes can be found next to the special box. These gifts, which are above and beyond your regular giving, will go toward the general budget and be used to fulfill the many ministries of St. John! Thank you in advance for your generosity.*

**CHRISTMAS KIDS GIFT STORE! December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 a.m. - Noon**

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church What:** The Family Board is holding a \$.25 gift store for kids! This is a fun and easy way for kids to shop for gifts for their family members: mom and dad, grandparents and siblings. **Who:** All children accompanied by an adult can shop. Open to the public. **How:** Children can bring their quarters and shop for as many gifts as they like. (Gift wrap options available.)  
Proceeds will go to Lutheran Disaster Response.



**Hospice of North Iowa** invites you to remember your loved ones or honor those living with a light on the *Tree of Life*. With your special gift to Hospice, a light will be placed on the *Tree of Life*. Names of those you wish to remember, and honor will be listed at each tree lighting service you specify. Your contributions to the *Tree of Life* will help extend hospice care to others, so they can live the last months of their lives with dignity, often in the comfort of their own home.

**The tree lighting ceremony in Charles City will be at St. John on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m.**

**FAMILY ADVENT EVENT**

**Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.**

This is an opportunity for parents and children to make some fun Advent-related crafts together.  
**All St. John families are welcome!**

**December 9<sup>th</sup> is "MUSIC" SUNDAY  
at the 8:00 a.m. service!**

**Come enjoy the music of the St. John wind ensemble, Carol Choir & Trinity Choir during this special worship service**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

This year the Christmas program will be Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup>  
**DURING THE 10:15 A.M. WORSHIP SERVICE.**

At 11:30 a.m., following the program, the youth will serve a Chili/Chicken Noodle/Beef Vegetable soup lunch with breads and dessert. Free will donations will go to youth who are serving.



Of  
Note...

**The office will be closed**  
Christmas Day, December 25<sup>th</sup>.

**St. John's books will close**  
**December 28<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.**



**POINSETTIAS:** If you would like to donate toward the poinsettias for Christmas, please notify the church office at 228-3397.

### Wednesday Night Supper

**December 5:** Barbeque meatballs, whipped potatoes, corn & peach crisp

**December 12:** Pork loin, hash brown casserole, fruit, banana split dessert

**December 19:** Salisbury steak, whipped potatoes, glazed carrots, doughnuts

Adults are \$4.00/Students \$2.00. This meal is for everyone! (Take out is available)

### Prayer Shawl Ministry

Now is a good time to spend some time with your knitting, crocheting or quilting to make a prayer shawl for someone that needs special consideration by this congregation. Whether it is an illness, a death or some other life altering event, we can show we care with a warm shawl and a visit. We have some shawls ready to go but need more. We will start putting the shawls out on some Sundays, so they can easily be picked up and delivered to the people. They can be picked up anytime by coming to the office and Kathy will help you.

We ask that you check out the shawl, so we know who will be receiving it. There is also a book with patterns and information of shawl size and tips in the office, plus lots of yarn in the clothing room that can be used.

### Volunteer Needed!

As a part of St. John's ministry to families who have lost a loved one, the Women's Ministry provides food and help for funeral lunches held at St. John. Arlene Thomas has been our monthly caller for the last year and has done a fine job but would like someone else to take over in 2019.

What we need is a Funeral Lunch Coordinator who would find a volunteer from each month's list of "helpers" to be the Caller for that month. The Caller goes through the list to ask for salads, cakes & workers when there is a funeral lunch. The Caller then gives the list of volunteers to the office so a check in sheet can be made. The check in sheet lets those who are here know who is providing food & help. If you are interested in being the Funeral Lunch Coordinator for 2019, please let the office know!

### DECEMBER FUNERAL CALLERS & HELPING HANDS:

**CALLER – Arlene Thomas.** Thanks to our November caller **Arlene Thomas.**

**HELPERS –** Gloria Carr, Diane Cross, Barb Fuls, Lisa Garden, Sarah George, Sandy Hicks, Marlene Holthaus, Gloria Hulbert, Linda Johnson, Rosie Pieper, Joan Semelhack, Sarah Sharp, Karen Streich, Sharon Streich, Connie Swant, Mary Ann Townsend, Yolanda Van Ausdall, Mary Jean Zilm



**The Parkinson's Support group** will meet December 6<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. Families, spouses, those whose mates had Parkinson's but are no longer with us are invited to hear Jana Mentzer talk about Rocksteady Boxing. Call Carol Quade at 641-330-3268 if you have any questions. All are welcome!

**St. John Lutheran Card Ministry**  
will **NOT** meet in December

**Do Day Quilters**  
Meets December 13 at 9:00 a.m.



**DECEMBER 2018**  
Donn & Cherie Schafer

**Women's Bible study**  
"Bad Girls of the Bible"  
Meets at 9:30 a.m.  
December 11  
January 8 & 22  
February 12

**December Birthdays**

21<sup>st</sup> Leona Howe  
21<sup>st</sup> Ed Exline  
22<sup>nd</sup> Mary Jean Zilm  
25<sup>th</sup> Fred Miller  
30<sup>th</sup> Dorothy Rodda



**December Anniversaries**

December 2, 1961 Bob & Marian Dight  
December 23, 1961 Gary & Janice Dana  
December 26, 1960 Larry & Doris Hibbs  
December 31, 1952 Larry & Donna Stewart  
December 31, 1960 Kip & Judy Hauser

***Celebrated...***

***The baptism of...***

*Hudson John Hinz, November 25, 2018*

***With Sympathy...***

***The Funerals of***

*Evelyn Cleone Starbuck Radamacher,  
November 3, 2018*

***Memorials were given in memory of...***

***Evelyn Cleone Starbuck Radamacher:  
Larry & Donna Stewart***

**Scripture Readers:**

**December 2**

**8:00** – Josh Johnson  
**10:15** – Heyers

**December 9**

**8:00** – Lydia Johnson

**December 16**

**8:00** – Scott Hansen  
**10:15** – Cherie Schafer

**December 23**

**8:00** – Ann Prichard  
**10:15** – Sue Ayers

**December 24**

**4:00** – Jeanne Hansen  
**6:00** – Michelle Grob  
**7:30** – Kip Hauser

**December 30**

**8:00** – Todd Prichard  
**10:15** –



But Jesus said, "Let the children come to Me, and do not hinder them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

Blessings, Laurie

### AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

We have an awesome group at the After-School Program this year! We have 22 kids enrolled! How great is that?!? 😊 This program is for 4-year-olds attending preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. It's never too late to join us!

### FAMILY BOARD

Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Family Board will be hosting **25¢ Gift Store** for children in the Parish Hall from 10am-noon. This is an opportunity for parents to bring children to purchase gifts for siblings, parents, and grandparents. We are asking the congregation for donations of Christmas items, crafts, and gently used toys that might be fun gifts for children to purchase. Please bring donations to the church office.

Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, there will be a **Family Advent Event** in the Parish Hall from 5:30-6:30pm. This is an opportunity for parents and children to make some fun Advent-related crafts together. Because, really, what's more fun than counting down the days until Christmas?! ☺ There is no cost for this event and all St. John families are welcome!

### PARISH EDUCATION BOARD

#### CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The **Sunday School Christmas Program** will be on **December 9, 2018** during the **10:15** worship service.

The Preschool through 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade classes will be presenting "Christmas Poetry" and entertaining you with a few songs. The 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> Graders will be acting out the Nativity in a skit called "A Christmas to Believe In."

(The snow dates will be December 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:15am, and then January 9<sup>th</sup> at 6pm if we have inclement weather and cannot hold the program on the 16<sup>th</sup>.)

There will be **NO** Sunday School on December 23<sup>rd</sup> or December 30<sup>th</sup>.

### YOUTH

The St. John Youth will again be decorating a float for the **Annual Lighted Parade**. The Lighted Parade is Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm. All our St. John youth are welcome to ride on the float. (2<sup>nd</sup> grade and under need an adult to accompany them.) We will meet at 5:45pm near TLC.

We will be **ringing the bell for the Salvation Army** at Ace Hardware on December 8<sup>th</sup> from 1pm-5pm. If you are interested in taking a one-hour shift, contact Laurie or sign up on the Youth & Family Bulletin Board.

The Youth will be holding a **Soup Dinner** on **December 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:15 am** in the Parish Hall. We will be serving chili, vegetable beef soup, and chicken noodle soup along with dinner rolls. Plan on feeding the whole family here after the Christmas Program! All free will donations given at this event will go to the St. John accounts of the youth working at this event to put toward mission trips, Bible Camp, etc.



**CHRISTMASKIDS GIFT STORE!**  
**December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 a.m. - Noon**  
**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**What:** The Family Board is holding a \$.25 gift store for kids! This is a fun and easy way for kids to shop for gifts for their family members: mom and dad, grandparents and siblings.

**Who:** All children accompanied by an adult can shop. Open to the public.

**How:** Children can bring their quarters and shop for as many gifts as they like. (Gift wrap options available.)

**There will be NO  
Sunday School  
December 23<sup>rd</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup>**



The Sunday School Christmas program  
will be on **December 9, 2018** during the  
**10:15** worship service.



**Youth Soup Lunch!**

Following the Christmas program at 11:30 a.m. in the Parish Hall.  
Menu: Chili, Chicken Noodle, Beef Vegetable soups & dinner rolls!  
Free will donation goes to youth helping with the lunch.

**December 2018**

**Greeter/Offering Assistant:** Lukas Vance (10:15)

**Acolytes:** 8:00 – Olivia Litterer, Sydney Hinz  
10:15 – Teagan Prigge, Kasey Kakac

Christmas Eve: 4:00 p.m. Isaac Hervert, 6:00 p.m. Kyndra McDonald

**Communion Assistants, Crucifer, & Banner Bearers**

8:00 – Tino Tamayo, Kaleb Cotton, Kaleb Bilharz, Koen Tibbitts, Colton Crooks,  
Alyvia Vance

10:15 – Koen Tibbitts, Keaton Schmidtke, Tino Tamayo

Christmas Eve: 6:00 p.m. Brayton Quade

*Dates & times when the youth are serving are posted on the bulletin board outside the  
Business Manager's office.*



For the many blessings that come from Heaven above; we thank you, Lord, with heart and soul and sing of Your great love!

We are very blessed here at St. John Christian Preschool. We have 45 little ones who enter our preschool center with shining smiles and happy hearts each week. It's easy to love your job when you are surrounded by such enthusiasm!

During the month of November, we talked about letters Ff, Hh, and Ii. We also talked about how **THANKFUL** we are for all the blessings God bestows upon us each and every day! We celebrated the end of November with a Thanksgiving feast. Each little one brought enough 1-bite items to share with all of his or her friends in the class. Even though 24 raisins did not look like much on their own; when everyone combined their "little bits" we were surprised at the feast that we were able to create.

We presented our new afternoon friends (4/5-year old) with their very own Bibles on Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. It is always such an **EXCITING** day! We then ask each of our friends to bring their Bibles back to preschool on Wednesday's so that we may "read" the Bible story together. What an awesome opportunity to expand our literary skills using **GOD'S WORD!**

As we prepare to move into the Christmas season, we invite you to stop by Otto's Oasis where the preschool will be displaying its Christmas tree for the 12<sup>th</sup> year in a row. This year's theme is "Star of Wonder!" Our families contributed hand-made ornaments celebrating the one **TRUE** king. All money placed in the container beneath our Christmas tree is a direct donation to our preschool program. We feel that this is not only a great family activity for our preschoolers and a wonderful way of sharing the Christian message of our preschool with the community, but also a great fundraiser for our program! **NEW** this year will be a "Scavenger Hunt" and "Festive Fridays!" Visitors can participate in a Scavenger Hunt with answers found among the trees. Weekly prize winners will be drawn on Festive Fridays leading up to Christmas. All entries will be eligible for a Chamber Cash drawing at the end of the event. The tree that gathers the most in monetary donations during the event will win the Outstanding Tree Award and an additional \$50 for their organization! So, go out and see our completed tree and vote! 😊

We do not have the words to offer thanks to everyone who supports the preschool. In addition to our amazing preschool staff: Carleen Laue, our substitutes, Shirley Holm & Susan Shankland, Foster Grandma Evelyn Schmidt, and myself, we have a church staff who supports us on every level. Pastor Leeper makes frequent visits to our preschool to talk with, sing with, laugh with and read the Bible story with our little ones. John Swiggum and Julie Heddens keep our preschool so sparkling clean that even visitors comment on how amazing our preschool looks! Kathy Hoeft is quick to answer our phone when we are tied up with our little ones and Linda Hughes keeps track of all of our financial transactions. Our preschool is also greatly impacted by the six women who serve on our preschool advisory board. These moms take extra time out of already busy schedules to ensure that our preschool is all that it can be. Last, but most certainly not least, we remember the **CONGREGATION** who supports us financially and spiritually. All of these people working together provide an early childhood education for many of the youth of Charles City. At St. John Christian Preschool, we not only offer opportunities for our little ones to learn their colors and their letters, but we are also teaching them about God's great love! **THANK YOU FOR HELPING US DO THIS AMAZING WORK!**

Blessed Beyond Wonder, Whitney Franke



"God's  
Love  
in  
Action"



# December 2018 Birthdays!!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
						Eli Engelhardt Tony Lessin Dennis Niezwaag Joshua Tieskotter
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Judy Hughes Arlene Thomas	Julie Begemann Bette Gullickson	Eugene Heitz Levi Wolf	Tanner Evans	Luke Kehret Gina McClintock	Jessica Head Jim Zirbel	Sierra Hinz
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Judy Kelly Monte Waldorf		Judy Hauser Lorie Hoeft Amanda Keyes Connie Swant	Tara Dean	Carson Holm Donald Tieskotter	Joan Semelhack Carol Tyler	Jeremy Evans Tom Litterer
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Austin Lacour Jason Walker	Bev Friend James Johnson	David Boehmer	Jill Connell Paul Van Ausdall Brenda West		Ed Exline Hayden Heyer Nathan Korbel	Mary Jean Zilm
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Lynn Hoeft	Kylann Henderson Marlene Huffman Natalie Keyes	Frederick Miller	Kynsie Eckhoff	Mark Koenigsfeld Danielle Reetz	Adrianna Ferch JoAnn Knowlton	Hazel Hansen Susan Leeper
30	31					
Donna Gambaiani Dorothy Rodda	Dylan Colasuonno Diane Thomas					

# DECEMBER 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
<b>2 Communion</b>	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>8:00 a.m. Worship</b> 9:00 a.m. Kids Store <b>9:05 a.m. Education Hour</b> 9:15 a.m. Deacons <b>10:15 a.m. Worship</b> 11:30 a.m. Parish Ed 	6:00 p.m. Hospice "Tree of Life" 6:00 p.m. Scouts	5:00 p.m. Building & Grounds	<b>Wednesday Night Activities</b> 5:30 p.m. Advent Event 7:30 p.m. Dartball at Baptist	1:00 p.m. Parkinson's Support group 		
<b>9 Music Sunday/Christmas program</b>	10	11	12	13	14	15
<b>8:00 a.m. Worship/Music</b> <b>9:05 a.m. Education hour</b> <b>10:15 a.m. Sunday School</b> <b>Christmas program</b> 11:20 a.m. Soup dinner	6:00 p.m. Scouts	9:30 a.m. Women's Bible study 5:00 p.m. Finance 6:00 p.m. Council	<b>Wednesday Night Activities</b> 5:15 p.m. Family board 7:30 p.m. Dartball at Pleasant Valley			
<b>16 Communion</b>	17	18	<b>19 Newsletter Deadline</b>	20	21	22
<b>8:00 a.m. Worship</b> <b>9:05 a.m. Education hour</b> <b>10:15 a.m. Worship</b>	6:00 p.m. Scouts	6:30 p.m. Preschool board	<b>Wednesday Night Activities</b>			
23	<b>24 Christmas Eve</b>	25	26	27	28	29
<b>8:00 a.m. Worship</b> <b>10:15 a.m. Worship</b>	<b>4:00 p.m. Worship/Comm</b> <b>6:00 p.m. Worship/Comm</b> <b>7:30 p.m. Worship/Comm</b>	<b>Office closed</b> 		10:00 a.m. Assemble newsletters	<b>St. John books close at 4:00 p.m.</b>	
30	31	1/1/2019	2	3	4	5
<b>8:00 a.m. Worship</b> <b>10:15 a.m. Worship</b>		<b>Office Closed</b>				<b>Wednesday Nights</b> 3:30 p.m. After School 5:00 p.m. Supper 5:30 p.m. Carol Choir & wind ensemble 6:00 p.m. Confirmation 7:00 p.m. Trinity Choir