

# *THE GOOD NEWSLETTER*

*December 2019*



ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL  
— LUTHERAN CHURCH —

200 South Main Street  
Charles City, IA  
50616-2751

Phone:  
641-228-3397

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[www.stjohncharlescity.org](http://www.stjohncharlescity.org)

## **“God’s Love in Action”**

### ***Worship Services December 24, 2019***



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

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

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



## The Advent Blues

Do you get the blues in December? Maybe it's the stress of having to buy presents for everyone. Maybe it's the frenzy of going to party after party or the loneliness of having no party to go to. Maybe it's the pressure of being expected to prepare a perfect HGTV holiday. Maybe it's the grief of remembering loved ones who won't be at Christmas dinner this year. If you get the blues in December, you're not alone.

Maybe that's why in the weeks leading up to Christmas we put a blue cloth on the altar and light blue candles on the Advent wreath. Oh sure, I know the official line. The Lutheran Manual on the Liturgy says: "The preferred color in Advent is blue ... Blue suggests hope, a primary theme of Advent." Yes, that's true, but blue is often how we feel living in this crazy, chaotic, and grief-filled world. During Advent we come to worship with our troubles and cry out to God as we sing:

"Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here..."

That's blues music to Lutherans!

Have you ever listened to blues ... I mean real blues? (Hint: You won't find it in the hymnal) Listen sometime to Buddy Guy or B.B. King or Koko Taylor and you'll start to notice a theme ... every blues singer is really just waiting for their baby to come back. There's an old saying that blues music and gospel music are really the same thing. In the blues we sing "Baby, Baby." In gospel music we substitute "Baby, Baby" with "Jesus, Jesus." Everything else is the same.

During this Advent season we're sittin' in church, singin' the blues, and waitin' for our Jesus to come back. He promised he would, you know. And when he comes there'll be no more craziness and chaos and grief.

In December we often sing the blues, but we sing with hope because we know our Jesus will keep his promise and he will come back!

Peace,  
Pastor Russ

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

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

8% (\$1,605.13) went to support the mission of the larger church

2% (\$586.00) went to support *Ministerium Fund for fuel assistance* and

(\$200.00) went to support the "*Angel Tree*" project to purchase food for the families

And 8% of your Third Quarter Giving went to:

*Floyd County Salvation Army "Red Kettle Fund"* - (\$500.00)

*"Shop With a Cop"* - (\$500.00)

*"Toys for Tots"* - (\$500.00)

*Chamber of Commerce "Holiday Cheer Fund"* - (\$675.00)

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

**Stewardship and Thanksgiving:** The church offers electronic giving options for making donations on a scheduled, automated basis. It is convenient and there are no fees. You can make changes easily by calling or stopping by the office. This may be an option you would like to consider.

**St. John Lutheran's Simply Giving**  
*"God's Love In Action"*

**Your Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
**City, State, Zip** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contributions:**

\_\_\_ 1. **Enroll in Simply Giving with my giving going to:**  
 St. John Ministry Support Plan \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total Contribution** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ 2. **I would like to \*change my contribution**  
 to the following amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Changes can be done by a phone call; a voided check or deposit slip is not required*

<b>Effective Date of First or Changed Contribution</b>	___/___/___
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**Frequency of Contribution (Total Contribution divided as indicated)**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Per Week on Mondays  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Semi-monthly - 1st & 15th  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly on the 1st  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly on the 15th

**Checking/Savings Account Authorization *Please Debit my...***

\_\_\_ Checking account (Attach voided check)  
 \_\_\_ Savings account (Attach voided deposit slip)  
 Routing # \_\_\_\_\_  
*Valid routing # must start with 0, 1, 2, or 3*  
 Account # \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize the above organization to process debit entries to the above account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization.

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

*"God's  
 Love  
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 Action"*



**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, December 1<sup>st</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.*



**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 Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.**

**“Season of Giving,”** a concert of winter music from Charles City Singers and the Charles City Community Chamber Orchestra, will be presented at 2pm, Sunday, December 8, at Trinity Methodist Church in Charles City.

Advance tickets \$7 at 1st Security and 1st Citizens Banks, Chamber of Commerce, CC Art Center and from members. Tickets at door \$9; students k-12 free.

**December 15<sup>th</sup> is “MUSIC” SUNDAY  
at the 9:00 a.m. service!**

#### **Advent\Christmas Music Sunday**

We are planning a joint church service between Messiah and St. John to celebrate the music of the season on Sunday, December 15, 2019 at 9:00 AM at St. John Lutheran Church. This service will feature: combined adult choirs, children's choir, string quartet, piano/organ duets as well as congregational singing. Designated offerings will go to each respective church and any loose offerings will go to the food pantry.

#### **SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

This year the Christmas program will be Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>

**DURING THE 10:15 A.M. WORSHIP SERVICE.**

At 11:15 a.m., following the program, the youth will serve a Chili/Chicken Noodle soup lunch with cornbread or dinner rolls. 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.



Of  
Note...

**The office will close at**  
Noon on Christmas Eve  
and be closed  
Christmas Day, December 25<sup>th</sup>.  
The office will close at noon on December 31<sup>st</sup>.



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

**St. John's books will close December 30<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.**

**Wednesday Night Supper**

**December 4:** Spaghetti, scalloped corn, garlic bread, cottage cheese, poke cake

**December 11:** Chicken casserole, green beans, lettuce salad, cake

**December 18:** BBQ meatballs, macaroni and cheese, corn, fruit, ice cream bars

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.

**ADVENT/CHRISTMAS MUSIC SUNDAY**

There will be a joint church service to celebrate the music of the season on Sunday, December 15, 2019, at 9:00 AM at St. John Lutheran Church. This service will feature: Combined Adult Choir from St. John and Messiah, Children's Choir, String Quartet, Piano/Organ duets, as well as congregational singing.

Designated offerings will go to each respective church and any loose offerings will go to the Food Pantry. After the church service, we invite all from both congregations to join us for a brunch potluck in the parish hall.

Following this, all are invited to join in caroling at the local nursing homes and assisted living facilities. We will take the church bus to these facilities.

Please join us in this event to begin the "Journey to the Manger."

**DECEMBER FUNERAL CALLERS & HELPING HANDS:**  
**CALLER – December 1-15, Sandy Hicks; December 16-31, Gloria Carr.**

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, Sarah Sharp, Karen Streich, Sharon Streich, Connie Swant, Mary Ann Townsend, Yolanda Van Ausdall, Mary Jean Zilm



The Parkinson's Support group will not meet during the months of December and January.

St. John Lutheran Card Ministry will  
NOT meet in December

Do Day Quilters  
Meets December 12 at 9:00 a.m.



DECEMBER 2018  
Donn & Cherie Schafer



### 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...*

*Carter Lee Van Horn, November 10, 2019*  
*Alden Lee Pommrehn, November 10, 2019*  
*Holland Marie Heller, November 24, 2019*

#### *With Sympathy...*

#### *The Funerals of*

*Alice M. Wolff, November 20, 2019*

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

*Marion Alice Wichman Kreger: James & Randall Kreger*  
*Andy Melrose: Helen Goplerud, Angela Ayers*  
*Alice M. Wolff: Karen Streich, Tileen Litterer, Mike & Carleen Laue, Leona, Howe, Lola Vest, Arlene Thomas*

### Scripture Readers:

#### December 1

8:00 – Lauren Connell

10:15 – Anna Herbrechtsmeyer

#### December 8

8:00 – Justin DeVore

10:15 – Scott Hansen



#### December 15

9:00 – Anna Herbrechtsmeyer

#### December 22

8:00 – Justin Heyer

10:15 – Ryan Venz

#### December 24

4:00 – Carol Brahn

6:00 – Annabelle McDonald

7:30 – Kim Watkins

#### December 29

8:00 – Quinn Heidebrink

10:15 – Amy Kubik



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 32 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! We could use some donations of washable markers (it seems many of ours have dried up) and small paper plates for snacks and crafts if you feel called to donate.

### FAMILY BOARD

Thank you to everyone that donated to our **25¢ Gift Store** for children. This was a great opportunity for parents to bring children to purchase gifts for siblings, parents, and grandparents. Much fun was had by all!

### PARISH EDUCATION BOARD

#### CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The **Sunday School Christmas Program** will be on **December 8, 2019** during the **10:15** worship service.

The Preschool through 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade classes will be presenting "The ABCs of Christmas" and entertaining you with a couple of songs. The 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> Graders will be acting out the Nativity in a skit called "Telling the Christmas Story."

(The snow date will be January 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:15am.)

There will be **NO** Sunday School on December 1<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup>.

### YOUTH

The St. John Youth will again be decorating a float for the **Annual Lighted Parade**. The Lighted Parade is Friday, December 6<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 have some kids in Nativity scene costumes so feel free to dress like a shepherd or angel or Wise Man if you want to!

We will be **ringing the bell for the Salvation Army** at Ace Hardware on December 15<sup>th</sup> from 3pm-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 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:15 am** in the Parish Hall. We will be serving chili and chicken noodle soup along with cornbread or 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.





**There will be NO  
Sunday School  
December 1<sup>st</sup>,  
December 22<sup>nd</sup> and  
December 29<sup>th</sup>**

The Sunday School Christmas program  
will be on **December 8, 2019** during the  
**10:15** worship service.



### **Youth Soup Lunch!**

At 11:15 a.m., following the program, the youth will serve a Chili/Chicken Noodle soup lunch with cornbread or dinner rolls. 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.

### **December 2019**

**Greeter/Offering Assistant:** Isaac Oetken

**Acolytes and Communion Assistants:**

**December 1:** 8:00 – Hannah DeVore, Annemarie Hansen

10:15 – Tyler Marth, Kassey Kakac

**December 8:** 8:00 – Hannah DeVore, Hayden Heyer

10:15 – Kassey Kakac

**December 15:** 9:00 – Kassey Kakac, Tyler Marth

**December 22:** 8:00 – Hayden Heyer, Katie Prichard

10:15 – Isaac Hervert



**Christmas Eve:** 4:00 p.m. Isaac Hervert, 6:00 p.m. Taylor Quade

**December 29:** 8:00 – Hayden Heyer, Taylor Quade

10:15 – Isaac Hervert, Madie Lensing

*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 forty-three 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 M, K, X & Y. 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 20 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 olds) with their very own Bibles on Friday, November 1<sup>st</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, with Pastor Russ! 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 13<sup>th</sup> year in a row. This year's theme is "Crown Him with Many Crowns for He is King of All!" 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! There 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, Jena Lusk & Brittany King, Shirley Holm & Susan Shankland, Foster Grandmas Evelyn Schmidt and Cindy Kinney, 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. Jamie Carolan 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!

As we look to the New Year, we do have some preschool openings available, so please spread the word! Call 228-7274 for more information!

Blessed Beyond Wonder,

Whittney Franke



"God's  
Love  
in  
Action"



# December 2019 Birthdays!!

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

# DECEMBER 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1 Communion</b>	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>8:00 a.m. Worship</b> 9:00 a.m. Stewardship a.m. Deacons <b>10:15 a.m. Worship</b> 11:20 a.m. Parish Ed	6:00 p.m. Scouts 9:15	5:00 p.m. Building & Grounds	<b>Wednesday Night Activities</b> 5:30 p.m. Advent Event 7:00 p.m. Dartball at Methodist	7 p.m. Stephen Ministry		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<b>8:00 a.m. Worship</b> <b>9:05 a.m. Education hour</b> <b>10:15 a.m. Sunday School</b> <b>Christmas program</b> 11:15 a.m. Soup dinner	6:00 p.m. Scouts	9:30 a.m. Women's Bible study 6:00 p.m. Council	<b>Wednesday Night Activities</b> 5:15 p.m. Family board 7:00 p.m. Dartball at St John	9:00 a.m. Do Day Quilters 7 p.m. Stephen Ministry		
<b>15 Music Sunday w/ Messiah</b>	16	17	18 Newsletter Deadline	19	20	21
<b>9:00 a.m. Worship</b> <b>10:30 Brunch Potluck</b>	6:00 p.m. Hospice "Tree of Life"	6:30 p.m. Preschool board	<b>Wednesday Night Activities</b> 7:00 Dartball @ Pleasant Valley	7 p.m. Stephen Ministry		
22	23	<b>24 Christmas Eve</b>	25	26	27	28
<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> Church office will close at Noon	<b>Office closed</b> 			
	30	31	1/1/2020	2	3	
<b>8:00 a.m. Worship</b> <b>10:15 a.m. Worship</b>	<b>St. John books close at 4:00 p.m.</b>	10:00 Assemble Newsletter Church office will close at Noon	<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