

NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends in Christ,

We are on the brink of Advent season. It just feels like Advent—even with the stores and all the movies—deep down, it is difficult to find a sense of hope and peace which rang through the skies so many years ago—a sense of expectation of both Elizabeth and Mary or the joy of the returning shepherds. For me, it is all so difficult to place my finger on where my feelings lie at present.

In so many ways, I feel scared. We may as well put words to our feelings—the first one that comes to mind is fear. Without listening to the news, I get a sense that fear is overwhelming. I look to my dear mother—and at 91, I ask the question almost every night, “What if?”

I feel tension. People are afraid to speak. People are afraid to express. Someone somewhere might take offense. Things that were never meant to be political have somehow become hotspots in our society and our living room. So, we sit and stew—and that is not good either.

I feel tired. I am tired of all the anger—the hate—the conspiracies. I am tired of all the noise—from every corner. I go to bed at night—and wake with the same feeling tired. Over the night, a million things go rolling through my head—very few peaceful thoughts (not to mention a few trips to the little boys’ room).

I feel lonely. I am tired of seeing only eyes—I miss the smiles. But also realize that this is all for the best. When I put on a mask—I do not think of myself—I think of my mother and members of the church. They are the ones we are called to protect.

As we light the candles of Advent, I am going to try... to try to give these over to God. Hearing again the songs of the angels with refrains of “Do not be afraid.” Witnessing the wonder of a mother giving birth. Allowing myself to the experience joy of the shepherds returning to the fields.

Light one candle. Let us feel the hope.

Light one candle. Let us feel the peace.

Light one candle. Let us feel the joy.

Light one candle. Let us feel the love.

As we light the final candle, let us invite Jesus, who is all in all, to comfort us again.

Pastor Mike

St. John's Lutheran Church
PO Box 819
203 Pearl Street
Guttenberg, IA 52052

Pastor Michael Ashman
319-231-6440
mikepstr64@gmail.com

Church Phone: 563-252-2355
www.stjohnsguttenberg.com
stjohnsoffice@alpinecom.net
Office Hours: 8am - 1 pm (M-F)



PLEASE PRAY FOR: Mary Lou Harbaugh, Mick Pierce, Bill Tielbar, George Harbaugh, Bob & Carla Ferguson, Dave Pont, Brayton Kuhse, Donna Pont, Cecil Bahls, Joan Hinzman, Ammi Hugo, Shelby Preston, Terry Meyer, Joyce Bakken, Sid Sickels and Pete Sakas

Guttenberg Care Center: (SJ) Letha Moser, Eunice Walke, Dave Pont, Una Bishop, George Harbaugh, Vonnie Bormann, Shirley Moore, Eunice Zearley, Janet Moser

(SP) Darlene Akers, Bonna Basler, Helene Lammers, Janice Bahls

Assisted Living: (SJ) Joyce Bakken, Arlene Tackman, Delos Sadewasser, Shirley Moser (SP) Karen Kriesler

St. Pt. Lutheran Home: Neil Morarend

Edgewood Convalescent Home: (SJ) Terry Krieg

Homebound: (SJ) Bob & Carla Ferguson, Gayle Kahle

Our condolences to -

the family of Loretta Bolsinger who passed on November 17th. Her sisters, Lynda Akers, Lisa Bolsinger and Lorna Moser are members at St. John's.

The family of Janet Moser who passed on November 17th. Her funeral was held at St. John's on Nov. 20th.

ADOPT A DAY

How would you like to consider adopting a day(s) and paying for St. John's church utilities for that day(s)? This would be above your regular church giving and would be a huge financial plus for St. John's. You choose the day(s). Why not consider adopting a day for your birthday or that of a family member, or an anniversary of your baptism, wedding or all of them and more? If you would like to adopt a day, just write your information on a piece of paper and enclose it with your payment of \$38 per day.

Dec. 11 In memory of Curt Noack's birthday by Linda Noack

ONLINE WORSHIP

Worship services & devotionals with Pastor Mike are now posted on our website. To access, go to www.stjohnsguttenberg.com, click on "MENU" and then click on "ONLINE WORSHIP".

CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE

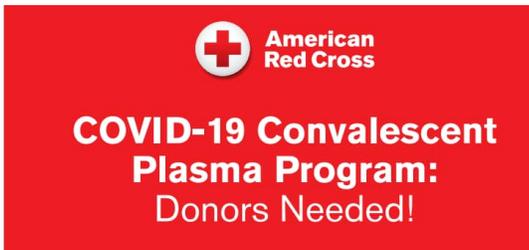
- **1:00 pm St. John's**
- **3:30 pm St. Paul**
- **5:30 pm St. Paul**
- **8:00 pm St. John's**

■ **Regarding seating, we need to know which service you prefer to attend and the number of people in your group. Related family groups will be able to sit together. Please call the church office (563-252-2355) to make your reservation.**

DECEMBER STEWARDS

	Ushers	Camera	Lector
Dec. 6	Forest Brown Lorna Moser	Sam Thein	Nancy Heitman
Dec. 13	Forest Brown Craig Tuecke	Lynda Schaefers	Carolyn Hoffmann
Dec. 20	Forest Brown Lorna Moser	Sam Thein	Michele VonHandorf
Dec. 27	Forest Brown Lorna Moser	Tim Puls	Joan Walke

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR - Red Cross
Bloodmobile at St. John's on December 17th
1 - 6 pm**



Urgent Need for Convalescent Plasma
With the recent surge in COVID-19 cases across the state, the demand for convalescent plasma is outpacing donations.
If you are fully recovered from a verified COVID-19 diagnosis, the plasma in your blood may contain COVID-19 antibodies that can attack the virus. This convalescent plasma is being used as treatment for patients currently sick with COVID-19. You could help save the lives of patients fighting COVID-19!
Criteria to donate plasma for COVID-19 patients include:
17+ years of age and weigh at least 110 pounds. Additional weight requirements apply for donors age 18 or younger.
In good health.
Have a prior, verified diagnosis of COVID-19.
Are fully recovered and symptom-free for at least 14 days.
Think you meet the criteria? Visit American Red Cross's website at rcblood.org/3eWxprn today to sign up to give COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma.
You could make a difference and save some lives of people in our community!

The new Christmas tree is up in the Narthex. If you made a donation to the old tree in memory of a loved one and want a branch as a keepsake, contact the church office.

The Guttenberg Care Center is looking for Christmas donations. They especially would like body wash and body spray.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

This year we are going to simplify our church décor when it comes to poinsettias. Four large flowers have been purchased for the sanctuary. We will not be looking for plant donations as in the past. Instead, we



are inviting you to make a monetary gift toward our local food pantry. This donation can be made in honor or in memory—these will be placed in the bulletins for Christmas Eve. Any questions, please call. Thank you.

Enclosed is my gift to the Local Food Pantry

In memory of

In honor of

Please return this form to the church office no later than December 20th.

Confirmation Ketchup Classes

Pastor has designated the month of December for students who need to catch up on missed classes. He is also sending home a “puzzle” which can be worked on at home which is a great review of the Old Testament. If your child needs to schedule a make-up class, please give us a call for a time and date—also please mention which class(es) they are needing to make up. Congrats to three of our youth who made it through without missing a class!!!

Sermon/ Worship Notes

A quick reminder to keep at those notes. Plus you can use both Thanksgiving Eve and Christmas Eve as additional opportunities. Also, Saturday evening is now available!!!

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Christmas shopping season will look different for many of us this year. Do not let COVID-19 hamper your gift giving and shopping needs this holiday season. Purchase scrip gift cards from St. John's and have your selection of over 700 vendors you can purchase from online or in store.

The best part about using St. John's Scrip, it costs you nothing extra and the church is able to make a percentage of your purchases. Those percentages range from 3-20% depending upon the vendor.

Scrip gift cards can be purchased after worship on Sundays in the narthex or by contacting the church office. Stewardship members are happy to help you select cards for your gift giving needs. Preordering cards is a convenient way to have your scrip cards on hand. Remember to use the gift of scrip purchased through St. John's.

We also offer curbside pick up - just call the office and the cards can be delivered to your car.

Amazon, Kwik Star, Walmart, Target, Subway, Panera & Starbucks are a few of the cards we normally have in stock. Orders placed on Monday usually arrive within the week.



**ST. JOHN'S
DECEMBER CALENDAR**

Dec. 1	5:30 pm (SP) Council Mtg.
Dec. 2	Confirmation Make Up Class
Dec. 5	5:30 pm (SJ) Worship
Dec. 6	9:00 am (SP) Worship 9:30 am (SJ) Sunday School 10:15 am (SJ) Worship
Dec. 9	Confirmation Make Up Class
Dec. 10	7:00 pm (SJ) Council Mtg.
Dec. 12	5:30 pm (SJ) Worship
Dec. 13	9:00 am (SP) Worship 9:30 am (SJ) Sunday School 10:15 am (SJ) Worship
Dec. 16	Confirmation Make Up Class
Dec. 17	Red Cross Bloodmobile
Dec. 19	5:30 pm (SJ) Worship
Dec. 20	9:00 am (SP) Worship 9:30 am (SJ) Sunday School 10:15 am (SJ) Worship
Dec. 21	5:00 pm (SJ) Mobile Food Pantry
Dec. 24	1:00 pm (SJ) Christmas Candlelight 3:30 pm (SP) Christmas Candlelight 5:30 pm (SP) Christmas Candlelight 8:00 pm (SJ) Christmas Candlelight
Dec. 26	5:30 pm (SJ) Worship
Dec. 27	9:00 am (SP) Worship 9:30 am (SJ) Sunday School 10:15 am (SJ) Worship

Heavenly Father, bring healing and comfort for people around the world suffering from Coronavirus COVID-19. Speed their recovery and slow the spread of the virus. We thank you for the efforts of all those involved in treating, testing and caring for patients, and ask your protection over them as they go about their work. Give wisdom to governments around the world as they manage this outbreak. We ask for your peace when we are tempted to panic or become anxious about this disease. Help us to place our trust in you, knowing that our life is safely hidden in you and that you are the Lord of all creation. Enable us to show your love to others, sharing the hope we have in you, praying and caring for the sick and needy as best we can in the name of Christ. Amen.

FROM OUR PARISH NURSE —

Notes from the Parish Nurse:

As we enter into the season of Advent and begin to prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of Christmas, let's renew our own spiritual health and develop ways to cope with the changes in our lives due to the pandemic and challenges that have been thrust upon us. While we cannot get together with our loved ones as in years past, we can still be close with notes and phone calls as well as holding our loved ones in prayer. Many of us will be facing the season without our loved ones for the first time.

There have been many reasons for lament this year. Consider some of these ways to process your own feelings and share with others who are in need.

Grief: release the emotions holding you down.
Prayer helps to put our emotions into perspective.

Talk: share your feelings. This might be the time to journal thoughts and feelings as we progress through this pandemic.

Mental Picture: envision a stop sign to halt painful thoughts and allow us to change our perspective.

Entertainment: allow yourself to laugh or learn.
Grant yourself time to watch a fun movie or read a new book.

Walk: engage in light exercise to keep your body moving and raise your endorphins to lighten your mood.

Breath: inhale and exhale slowly and deeply to reset your mind.

Music: listen to and/or sing favorite songs. If you have the talent, play your musical instrument to release stress and allow your focus to be on the music.

Rest: give your body permission to relax and recover. Stress affects our physical body as much as mental health.

Our lives will never be the same again. Each day brings new challenges and opportunities to learn new ways to live. Reach out to others in new ways rather than in person. Some enjoy Face Time or other computer methods to be able to share face to face. Letter writing might return to be a part of our communication. Reading the numerous letters in the New Testament may revive the practice in our lives.

This is the season of Hope. All hope comes from our Lord, our creator, sustainer, savior and redeemer. He is the One who loves us unconditionally. God will hold us and lead us on our journeys home.



MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

Food distribution will be held on the third Monday of each month at St. John's. The next event will be a drive through event from 5-6:30 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 21st.

If you are able to help, please call the church office at 252-2355, and we will add your name to our volunteer list. We will call if we need your assistance.

**Council Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2020**

Members Present: Craig Tuecke, Mary Streich, Judy Puls, Jim Solomon, Nancy Heitman, Forest Brown, Chuck Hemann, Michele VonHandorf, Pat Jones, Lorna Moser, Pastor Ashman, and Diane Schilling

Members Absent: Stephanie Thomas and Don Schmelzer. **Guest:** Brian Rodenberg

Call to Order: President Craig Tuecke called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Devotions and Prayers: Pastor Ashman read Psalm 90. He related this passage to the song “Dust In the Wind”. We are not permanent. We, as Adam, were created from dust, and like Adam’s son Abel whose life was gone quickly, we are reminded that we won’t last forever. Pastor pointed out the Psalmist’s use of imagery and how the beautiful things make an impact on our hearts and souls. The last verse of Psalm 90 teaches us to count our blessings despite the days we’re dealing with.

Secretary’s Report: The council reviewed the minutes of the last meeting. The minutes of the October 15, 2020 meeting stand approved as published.

Treasurer’s Report:

General Fund:	\$2,700.35
Benevolence:	\$14,274.81
Improvement:	\$6,220.68
Memorial Savings:	\$48,421.51
Benevolence Savings:	\$15,758.38
Sunday School:	\$3,548.61
Organ Fund:	\$4,062.86
Scrip:	\$4,759.59
Luther League:	\$4,679.59

The Treasurer’s Report stands approved as published. Jim shared that the Sophia Smith memorial CD is coming to maturity. We discussed moving it to the Improvement Fund to be used for broadcasting equipment. MSC to cash out the Sophia Smith CD at maturity and put it in the Improvement Fund to be earmarked for broadcasting equipment.

Pastor’s Report: Pastor Ashman submitted a written report for the previous month to keep the Council updated on his activities. The report includes Sunday worship, office visits, phone calls, calls to hospital patients, attending Clayton Ridge athletic events, working on website, preparing and presenting confirmation classes, meetings, baptism, a funeral,

committee meetings, continuing education, and helping with the Mobile Food Pantry. Pastor shared his appreciation for the expediency in which things were repaired at the parsonage.

Outreach Ministries: Nancy Heitman reported that her committee is still writing cards and notes to our shut-ins and care center residents. She suggested we think about taking a Thanksgiving meal to someone in our neighborhood. She cautioned us to think about the exposure to COVID-19.

Educational Ministries: Stephanie Thomas was absent. She reported that Sunday School is going well. Preparations are being made for a virtual Sunday School Christmas Program. Pastor Mike has written a script and will help with editing the video.

Children and Youth Ministries: Forest Brown had nothing new to report. He is hoping that his committee will be able to sponsor an outdoor activity such as sledding.

Public Relations Ministries: Chuck Hemann shared that he had talked with tech support for the sign. It has been updated, and Chuck knows how to fix it.

Stewardship Ministries: Michele VonHandorf would like us to brainstorm. We still need an individual to fill the role of Stewardship council person. Diane shared that the offering envelopes are coming. We need to think about how we will get them to the members of our congregation.

Worship and Music Ministries: Pat Jones discussed coverage for the Saturday night service and the Thanksgiving service. Reservations are being made for the Christmas Eve services at 1:00 pm and 8:00 pm.

Property Ministries: Don Schmelzer was absent. Craig reported that a lot of repairs, updates, and replacements have been completed at the parsonage. There are a few things left to finish including carpeting the upstairs bedroom, replacing the medicine cabinet and light bar, and replacing the upstairs faucets. It was suggested that a schedule be made to include an annual inspection of the parsonage and replacement of batteries in detectors.

Parish Fellowship: Lorna Moser had nothing new to share.

Vice President: Mary Streich had nothing new to report.

Old Business:

Broadcasting Services: Chuck reported that he had made another call to the A & H Video technician. With the changes made, the new proposal is \$7,404.00. Chuck is confident that with additional changes, we can get the cost under \$5,000.00. We would still need to hire someone to pull the cable from the office to the balcony and fix the part on the sign. MSC to purchase the equipment needed as described by Chuck in his report.

Benevolence Endowment: We discussed applying for the Matthew 28 distribution to be used as benevolence to entities outside of our church.

New Business:

Borrowing Video Camera and Stand: If we would have to go back to not being able to worship in person, Pastor would provide video services. To do so, we need a video camera and stand to record those services to be shared online. An estimated cost for a camera is \$300.00 to \$400.00. MSC to authorize purchase of video equipment including a camera not to exceed \$500.00 and to use memorial funds for the purchase.

Craig volunteered to donate a tripod.

Budgets: A packet of budget worksheets was handed out. Budget requests and updates should be worked on and ready to present at our December meeting. The Executive Committee will also meet before the December meeting. As part of the budget, we looked at the benefits package suggested by the synod. MSC to approve the Portico Gold Plus Plan for the benefits package.

Chalice/Paten: Pastor Mike showed us the newly purchased chalice and paten.

Christmas Trees: Mary Streich confirmed that the newly purchased Christmas tree will be put up in the Narthex. If you are interested in branches from the old tree, they are available. The two live Christmas trees for the Sanctuary will be purchased from Murrays next Thursday. Craig Tuecke volunteered to pay for one of them. Nancy Heitman offered the use of Harold's truck to transport them. If you have branches you have cut from the bottom of your tree, Mary Streich would like to use them in the pots at our front door.

Meeting With Bishop: Craig reported about the Zoom meeting he attended with our interim bishop. The synod has a designated staff to help with social media. Craig reported that we are doing what everyone else is doing by social distancing, wearing masks, and using hand sanitizer as we worship in person.

Worship Services: With the uncertainty of our times in regard to COVID-19, if we need to close the church, the decision will be made by the Executive Committee and Pastor Ashman.

Adjournment: Craig declared the meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Regular Council Meeting: Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Judy Puls



All Women of St. John's. www.womenoftheelca.org

2021 St. John's Women of the Board

President: Lynda Akers -- Vice President: Carolyn Hoffmann -- Treasurer: Cindy Niehaus -- Secretary: Pat Meyer
At Large: Lynda Schaefers, Jan Solomon Sarah Circle Representative: Judy Puls

Mission: To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

Purpose: As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.



ST. JOHN'S SEWING LADIES

Information on donations needed or helping with piecing tops, tying or binding contact Carol Tomkins.

Quilt tops for LWR need to measure 60" x 80".

TUESDAYS at NOON

Church wide WELCA has initiated a call to prayer in this time of pandemic. This is a call to prayer, to be practiced every Tuesday at noon, in your time zone.



Sept 12 Decorah LWR Ingathering RESPONSE REMARKABLE!

It was reported that donations came from all over with a total of 1,030 received! The driver who delivered the items to MN LWR warehouse said they were extremely excited and appreciative to see the load arrive.

Totals were:
2178 Quilts, 892 Personal Care Kits, 2317 School Kits, 533 masks, 456 Baby Care Kits, 74 Fabric Kits & 7 Blankets.

Father, I pray that you will turn our hearts toward you as Christmas approaches. Let us not get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season this year and miss the chance to celebrate the gifts of hope, peace, joy, love, that you sent to us on that first Christmas. That first Christmas, you gave us the gift of hope wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. Thank you, Father, for your immeasurable gift. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen

NOVEMBER MINISTRIES

- Clayton County Food Shelf \$200
- LSI \$100
- SOTH Holiday Shop \$75
- ELCA Daily Bread \$200
- NEIA Synod Women \$200
- ELCA Churchwide Women \$500

May you have the gladness of Christmas which is hope;

The spirit of Christmas which is peace;

The heart of Christmas which is love.

Ada V. Hendricks



Christmas Crunch Salad – Myrna Backes
St. John's Generation to Generation Cookbook – 1997

- 4 c fresh broccoli florets
 - 1 med red onion (chopped)
 - 4 c fresh cauliflower florets
 - 2 c cherry tomatoes (halved)
- Dressing:

- 1c. Mayonnaise
- 1 T vinegar
- ½ c sour cream
- Salt & pepper (to taste)
- 1-2 T sugar

In a large bowl combine vegetables. Whisk dressing ingredients until smooth;
Pour over vegetables to toss and coat. Cover and chill at least 2 hrs.



DECEMBER BAPTISMS

Dec. 1
Ron Rosacker
Nancy Ruzicka
Michele VonHandorf

Dec. 2
Ashlynn Finnegan
Dennis Sargent

Dec. 3
Scott Fischer

Dec. 5
Caleb Bittner
Elliott Brown
Lorna Moser

Dec. 9
Gary Bahls
Dick Zittergruen

Dec. 10
Tara Augustyn
Edward Tuecke

Dec. 13
Tyler Kraus

Dec. 14
Alan Moser
Carol Moser
Nell Stone

Dec. 15
Kendra Moser

Dec. 18
Jarad Esmann

Dec. 19
Don Schmelzer

Dec. 20
Jan Solomon

Dec. 21
Dayton Miller

Dec. 22
Crystal Duwe

Dec. 27
Jovi Allyn

Dec. 28
Erin Bries

Dec. 29
Helen Duwe

Dec. 30
Shawn O'Brien

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Dec. 2
Helen Duwe
Breyer Witham

Dec. 3
Erin Bries

Dec. 4
Jarad Esmann
Kohle Helle
Sharon Troester

Dec. 6
Margo Friedlein

Dec. 7
David Bahls

Dec. 8
Cole Bittner

Dec. 9
Anna Lewis

Dec. 10
Lola Reimer

Dec. 12
Jovi Allyn

Dec. 14
Frank Davis
Annalise Niesman

Dec. 16
David Sadewasser

Dec. 17
Shirley Meyer

Dec. 18
Roger Rodenberg

Dec. 20
Maisyn Chase

Dec. 21
Tim Hillers

Dec. 22
Jace Moore
Ronald Troester

Dec. 23
Jessica Klein
Addison Stoerp

Dec. 27
Matthew Preston

Dec. 28
Deb Bries

Dec. 29
Carrie Niehaus

Dec. 30
Kayla Kelly

DECEMBER WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Dec. 7
Forest & Tina Brown

Dec. 14
Ross & Mary Abbott

Dec. 26
Dennis & Sharon Reth