

NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends in Christ,

All too often I sit before a blank page—praying for God to give me something...anything. Here we are again. Well, not exactly. The other day on our way to an appointment, Mom and I were talking about Christmas—I mentioned that I thought about not writing our usual letter—that it was too difficult. For the past few years, I have written a part for Mom, myself and Puddy. The past few weeks have not been the same here at the parsonage—its been way too quiet...and sad. If you have not already heard, we needed to say "Good-Bye" to Puddy on November 3rd. She has been a part of our life for the past 16 years.

So, you might ask, "what does this have to do with Christmas and the whole holiday experience?" Well, the answer is quite simple. For some people, the holidays are not always filled with joy—there are many—so many sad people around this season. People, for whom, these days conjure up sadness, memories and tears. I understand this now.

We can still find a sense of peace within the Christmas message—we can still sing the traditional hymns. But hymns like the favorite "Silent Night" provoke different thoughts and feelings—going home to a quiet house without someone to greet you. Just not the same. But still we decorate—or we rejoice that God has given us the greatest gift of all—and that is love (I know you expected Jesus). And that love never goes away—it is always there.



May God bless you this Advent—and this Christmas seasons. May our world find some peace. May we find hope wrapped in bands of cloth. With this precious child, God promises to make all things new—and that promise--- to that promise I cling—we all cling as we believe that love conquers all.

Finally one of my favorite photos—as she slept on her chair—covering her eyes. "Sleep in Heavenly peace, dear one. Sleep in Heavenly Peace" Amen.

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 WORSHIP:

5:30 PM - Saturday
10:15 AM - Sunday

ADVENT WORSHIP:

Wed. at 7:00 PM

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP:

8:00 PM

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP:

10:15 PM

Church Office Hours:

Tues: 7:00AM - 3:00 PM
Wed & Fri: 7:00AM - 12:30 PM
Thursdays 12:30-3:30 PM

Church Phone: 563-252-2355

Church Email:
stjohnsoffice@alpinecom.net

Our Website:
www.stjohnsguttenberg.com



Advent Midweek Worship

Saint Paul:

Soup Luncheon : Noon

Worship 1pm

Saint John's

Worship 7 pm

Christmas

A SAVIOR IS BORN



Worship for December 24th: 10:15 4th Sunday in Advent -- St. John's
5:30 Candlelight Worship St. Paul 8:00 Candlelight Worship St. John's
Both Services with Special Music

Worship for December 25th: 10:15 Christmas Day -- St. John's



-PLEASE PRAY FOR-

Keep in your prayers: Ross Abbott, Vera Ashman, Owen Aulwes, Cecil Bahls, Kay Becker, Ron & Kay Bahlmann, Tiffany Randall Cichowski, Lois Davis, Marvin Dean, Bob Ferguson, Tammy Goodman, Marcia Kruse, Brayton Kuhse, Richard Larson, Juanita Loven, Kathy Meskimen, Jenny Meyer, JoLynn Moore, Merlin Moser, Randy Moser, Shirley M. Moser, Tiffany Moser, Jean Pensel, Mick Pierce, Shelby Preston, Zander Purman, Denny Reth, Pat Rodenberg, Denny Roth, Natalie Schmelzer, Rich Schmelzer, Jim Solomon, Terry Thein, Wayne Thiese, Bill Tielbar, Arthur Tomkins, Al Ullerick, Allan White, Dennis Zittergruen

River Living Center: Bob Ferguson, Kathy Handke, Nell Stone, Arlene Tackman, Mae Jetter, Janet Lundt, Judith Olson, Ed & LaVonne Rodenberg, Virginia Roth

Guttenberg Care Center: Shirley Moore, Shirley Moser, Wayne Thiese

Ennoble Nursing Care: Dennis Roth

Garden View Place, Monona: Terry Thein

Homebound: Bill Tielbar



CARE CENTER WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

GUTTENBERG CARE CENTER:

Every 1st, 3rd, 4th Monday at 10 AM

RIVER LIVING CENTER:

Thurs. Dec. 7 - 10:30 AM

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 \$45 per day.

Nov. 21 - Merlin & Judy Moser, in honor of Merlin's birthday

Dec. 8 - Kim & Dan Hagen, in honor of Duane Hagen's birthday

Dec. 12 - Rick & Mary Allyn, in honor of granddaughter Jovi Allyn's birthday

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Camera Ministry



SUNDAY

Dec. 3 - Nash Reimer
 Dec. 10 - Gavin Stoerp
 Dec. 17 - Jovi Allyn
 Dec. 24 - a.m.:
 Dec. 24 - p.m.: Gavin Stoerp
 Dec. 31 -

SATURDAY

Dec. 2 -
 Dec. 9 - Wyatt Kremer
 Dec. 16 -
 Dec. 23 -
 Dec. 30 -

SUNDAY

Dec. 3 - Jovi Allyn
 Dec. 10 - Caleb Bittner
 Dec. 17 - Nash Reimer
 Dec. 24 - a.m.: Alayna Judkins
 Dec. 24 - p.m.: Natalie & Myka
 Dec. 31 - Alayna Judkins



PRAYER & HEALING SERVICE



Prayers for Healing are Available After Worship
 Also Available by Appointment
 Contact Pastor Mike



If you would like to join, or know someone interested in finding a church home, please let us know.

We are very flexible – you are welcome to join on any weekend –
 just contact Pastor Mike!

DECEMBER Stewards

	Ushers	Lector
DEC. 3	Stephanie & Jon Thomas	Stephanie Thomas
DEC. 10	Craig Tuecke & Mary Streich	Craig Tuecke
DEC. 17	Kevin & Rabecca Hennessey	Kevin Hennessey
DEC. 24	Mary Beth & Rick Allyn	Mary Beth Allyn
DEC. 31	Gary & Sue Meyer	Lynn Moser

We will be collecting mittens and socks for the Family Resource Center this Christmas season. Please place your donations under our Angel Tree!



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY



Cookie Decorating

Crafts

Games

December 16th

10 am until Noon

Friends always welcome!!

Donuts with the Pastor

Kids are invited to stop in before school each Friday and enjoy breakfast with Pastor Mike!



SARAH CIRCLE WILL BE HAVING A
BAKE SALE

AFTER WORSHIP SERVICE ON
DEC. 16 & 17.

PROCEEDS WILL GO TOWARDS THE NEW
FAMILY RESOURCE BUILDING!



Save the Date: February 4th

Blessing of our Missionaries:
Doc and Carolyn Hoffmann

SCRIP cards
make great gifts!
Purchase yours in the
narthex after worship or
contact the church office!



Give the gift of
Farmers Market Coffee

\$8 per bag - regular

\$6 per bag - decaf

Each purchase supports
Lutheran World Relief!



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS

Please submit this form to the church office with payment to St. John's **no later than Dec. 3, 2023.**

Choose your poinsettia size:

_____ 8 inch pot - \$29

_____ 6 inch pot - \$14

Please complete one form for each poinsettia you wish to purchase.

IN HONOR OF: _____

IN MEMORY OF: _____

GIVEN BY: _____

YOUR NAME: _____

YOUR PHONE: _____

YOUR EMAIL: _____

Check your preference:

___ Please donate my poinsettia to the church

___ I will pick up my poinsettia after worship
service on Dec. 24th or 25th



Celebrating
The
PEACE * JOY * LOVE * HOPE
OF THE ADVENT SEASON

December 2023 St. John's Lutheran Advent Calendar

Please consider the daily calendar suggestions below for you and your family during the Advent season. By reading a chapter a day in the Gospel of Luke, the story of Jesus will unfold over twenty-four days. Each day add a food item as suggested into a box. If you do not have a particular food please substitute as you wish. The list of items is from the Family Resource Center based on their needs. By [Wednesday, January 3, 2024](#) please return the box of food items to the narthex of St. John's Lutheran Church. The Stewardship Committee will then deliver them to the Family Resource Center. Thank you for sharing with others so they may know the kindness and joy we celebrate in Christ.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Come, Lord Jesus. Come into the manger, come into our hearts, come into the world. With your love, change our hearts. With your justice, change our world. Amen.	Dear Lord, help us to grow as people of repentance and peace. In our waiting remind us of your great power. Amen.	Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. Empower us to share your abundant love with our neighbors at home and around the world. Amen.	Help us, dear Lord, to care for neighbors, bearing fruits of mercy, justice and radical generosity. Amen.	Lord God, awaken us to live in your way, through Jesus Christ our Savior, who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.	1	2
					Read Luke Chapter 1	Read Luke Chapter 2
					Oatmeal in carton	Brown sugar
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1st Sunday in Advent Luke Ch. 3	Luke Ch. 4	Luke Ch. 5	Luke Ch. 6	Luke Ch. 7	Luke Ch. 8	Luke Ch. 9
Poptarts	Can of fruit	Juice	Pancake mix	Syrup	Hot Coca mix	Can of soup
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2nd Sunday in Advent Luke Ch. 10	Luke Ch. 11	Luke Ch. 12	Luke Ch. 13	Luke Ch. 14	Luke Ch. 15	Luke Ch. 16
Spaghetti Sauce	Noodles	Can of vegetables	Can of tuna	Hamburger Helper	Macaroni and Cheese	Can of stew
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
3rd Sunday in Advent Luke Ch. 17	Luke Ch. 18	Luke Ch. 19	Luke Ch. 20	Luke Ch. 21	Luke Ch. 22	Luke Ch. 23
Box of broth	Bouillon cubes	Can of chili beans	Box of tea Or coffee	Cereal	Ramen noodles	Can of fruit
24 Worship 10:15 am Christmas Eve-8:00 pm Luke Ch. 24 Peanut butter	25 Christmas Day Our Savior is born Worship 10:15 am	Spread JOY!			Please return your food box to the church narthex by Wednesday, January 3. Thank you.	

From the CHURCH COUNCIL

St. John's American Evangelical Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 9th, 2023

Members present: Craig Tuecke, Deb Preston, Lorna Moser, Michele Von Handorf, Diane Thiese, Forest Brown, Sherry Oliver, Brian Rodenberg

Members Absent: Frank Davis, Chuck Hemann, Mary Streich, Penny Rausch

Staff Present: Pastor Ashman, Rabeca Hennessey

Call to Order: President Rodenberg called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Devotions & Prayers: Pastor Ashman led with a reflection from the book of Revelations and an opening prayer.

Secretary's Report: The Council reviewed minutes of the October council meeting. No additions or corrections were noted. Craig made a motion to approve the minutes as published. Michele made a second to that motion.

Treasurer's Report: Craig reviewed the October income and expenses. Sherry made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Diane made a second to the motion.

General Fund:	\$ 6,707.51
Benevolence:	\$26,045.93
Improvement:	\$31,480.17
Memorial Fund:	\$ 6,580.31
Benevolence Savings:	\$15,781.99
Sunday School:	\$ 1,524.72
Organ Fund:	\$ 1,843.37
Scrip:	\$ 3,893.15
Luther League:	\$ 5,673.59
Ending Balance:	\$ 99,530.74

Pastor's Report: Pastor Ashman provided the highlights of his written report.

Outreach Ministries: Diane reported that the Thanksgiving meal planning is going well. As of today, 133 meals reservations have been made. The majority of those are either pick up or delivery.

Educational Ministries: Penny was absent but provided a written report. Next year's VBS is scheduled for June 10th-14th. A group meeting was held on October 24th with prepping for the Sunday School Christmas Program.

Children & Youth Ministries: Forest reported that Trunk or Treat went very well despite the cold weather and the need to move the event inside. There were eleven participants and 260 trick or treaters. Pastor acknowledged and thanked Missy Reth for decorating for the event. He also continues to plan for a mystery meal and "turkey" scavenger hunt to be held yet this month. Forest continues to plan for a trivia night with the council and confirmation students.

Public Relations: No report

Stewardship Ministries: Sherry was present to provide a report which highlighted the activities of Stewardship Sunday which include thank you notes, small gifts, and fellowship. The group worked on their budget and is organizing food collection for the Family Resource Center.

Worship & Music Ministries: No report

Property Ministries: No report

Parish Fellowship: Lorna met with the volunteers for funeral dinners. The annual soup dinner is planned for February.

V.P. Report: No report.

Old Business:

1. Open council positions remain for Property and Public Relations
2. Rejoicing Spirit Update – Pastor reported that he is ready to move forward with signing of the contract and would like to hold a service yet before Christmas.

New Business:

1. The Executive Committee met regarding 2024 proposed staff salaries which would become active in February 2024. In following Synod guidelines, an 8.25% increase is proposed for Pastor Ashman. Tentative salary increases of 4.5% are proposed for the secretary and custodian.
2. Craig reviewed Committee budgets to be presented at the Annual Meeting on January 28th, 2024.
3. The Advisory Committee met and gave a recommendation regarding distribution of available funds from the Benevolence Endowment. The available distribution amount is \$14,360.00. The Council voted to transfer an additional \$640.00 to the original amount to gift \$5000.00 each to three beneficiaries which include the Family Resource Center, Shepherd of the Hills, and Lutheran Services of Iowa. Michele made a motion for this donation recommendation. Forest made a second to the motion.
4. The Council recommended moving forward with painting of the Church office.

Adjournment: A motion was made to adjourn. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next regular council meeting: Thursday, December 14th at 6:00pm, at the home of Michele VonHandorf

Minutes respectfully submitted by Deb Preston



ALL COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Please submit your Annual Reports for 2023 to
the church office by Dec. 31st!

Monthly Stewardship Report

Amount Needed Weekly \$3,774

Offering	Oct. 31	\$ 2,795
	Nov. 7	\$ 4,143
	Nov. 14	\$ 2,007
	Nov. 21	\$ 2,840



Merry Christmas from LSI!

At LSI, we recognize that the holiday season can be a challenging time for many, especially for the populations we serve throughout the year.

We know parents who feel hopeless, with few resources to raise their young children. We know adults with disabilities who feel voiceless, with no support system or connection to their community. We know immigrants and refugees working to become U.S. citizens, with little community support or help along the way. We know teens who are aging out of foster care, fearing they will never have a forever home.

In the spirit of giving, the spirit of love, and the spirit of working together, let us stand with them and lift them up this Christmas season.

As we reflect on the past year, we thank you — our generous supporters and community partners — for stepping up to give and help the people LSI is privileged to serve. We are grateful for your contribution in bringing the light of Christ to your neighbors who rely on these essential services. LSI wishes you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

LSI's annual matching gift campaign is currently active, and those making a new or increased financial gift can double their impact through the end of the year. If you would like to learn more about how you can support Iowa children and families, contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Senior Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and facebook.com/LSI.iowa



DECEMBER CALENDAR

Fri. Dec. 1	7:00 am	(SJ) Donuts w/Pastor
Sat. Dec. 2	5:30 pm	(SJ) Worship
Sun. Dec. 3	8:00 am	(SP) Worship
	9:00 am	(SJ) Sunday School
	9:45 am	(SJ) Choir Rehearsal
	10:15 am	(SJ) Worship
Mon. Dec. 4	4:30 pm	(SJ) Stephen Ministry
Tues. Dec. 5	1:00 pm	(SJ) Tuesday w/God
	5:30 PM	(SP) Council Meeting
Wed. Dec. 6	1:00 pm	(SJ) Sarah Circle
	1:00 pm	(SP) Advent Worship
	2:00 pm	(SJ) Confirmation
	5:30 pm	(SJ) Confirmation
	7:00 pm	(SJ) Advent Worship
Fri. Dec. 8	7:00 am	(SJ) Donuts w/Pastor
Sat. Dec. 9	5:30 pm	(SJ) Worship
Sun. Dec. 10	8:00 am	(SP) Worship
	9:00 am	(SJ) Sunday School
	10:15 am	(SJ) Worship
Tues. Dec. 12	1:00 pm	(SJ) Tuesday w/God
Wed. Dec. 13	1:00 pm	(SP) Advent Worship
	2:00 pm	(SJ) Confirmation
	5:30 pm	(SJ) Confirmation
	7:00 pm	(SJ) Advent Worship
Thur. Dec. 14	7:00 pm	(SJ) Council Meeting @ Michele VonHandorf's
Fri. Dec. 15	7:00 am	(SJ) Donuts w/Pastor
Sat. Dec. 16	5:30 pm	(SJ) Worship
Sun. Dec. 17	8:00 am	(SP) Worship
	9:00 am	(SJ) Sunday School
	10:15 am	(SJ) Worship / Christmas Program
Tues. Dec. 19	1:00 pm	(SJ) Tuesday w/God
Wed. Dec. 20	1:00 pm	(SP) Advent Worship
	2:00 pm	(SJ) Confirmation
	5:00 pm	(SJ) Mobile Food Pantry
	5:30 pm	(SJ) Confirmation
	7:00 pm	(SJ) Advent Worship
Fri. Dec. 22	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	
Sat. Dec. 23	5:30 pm	(SJ) Worship
Sun. Dec. 24	8:00 am	(SP) Worship
	9:45 am	(SJ) Choir Rehearsal
	10:15 am	(SJ) Worship
	5:30 pm	(SP) Christmas Eve Worship
	8:00 pm	(SJ) Christmas Eve Worship
Mon. Dec. 25	10:15 am	(SJ) Christmas Day Worship
Tues. Dec. 26	1:00 pm	(SJ) Tuesday w/God
Thur. Dec. 28	4:30 pm	(SJ) Stewardship
Fri. Dec. 29	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	
Sat. Dec. 30	5:30 pm	(SJ) Worship
Sun. Dec. 31	8:00 am	(SP) Worship
	9:45 am	(SJ) Choir Rehearsal
	10:15 am	(SJ) Worship

Church Office Hours

The Church Office is Open:

Tues: 7:00 am - 3:00 pm

Wed: 7:00 am - 12:30 pm

Thurs: 12:30 - 3:30 pm

Fri: 7:00 am - 12:30 pm



**NORTHEAST IOWA
FOOD BANK**

MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

Thank you to all who volunteered to help with the mobile food pantry, both pre-packing and distributing.

Mobile Food Pantry is held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Truck from the Northeast Iowa Food Bank is scheduled to arrive at 4:30 pm, with distribution from 5 - 6 pm.

The next event will be a drive through event at 5 pm on Wed. Dec. 20th –volunteers needed at 4:30 to unload the truck



THANK YOU to the volunteers from City of Guttenberg, our Confirmation students and all who assisted with the November Mobile Food Pantry.

DECEMBER *Baptisms*

<u>Dec. 1</u> Ron Rosacker Nancy Ruzicka Michele VonHandorf Dustin Kelly	<u>Dec. 19</u> Don Schmelzer
<u>Dec. 2</u> Ashlynn Finnegan	<u>Dec. 20</u> Jan Solomon
<u>Dec. 3</u> Scott Fischer	<u>Dec. 22</u> Crystal Duwe
<u>Dec. 5</u> Caleb Bittner Elliott Brown Lorna Moser	<u>Dec. 27</u> Jovi Allyn
<u>Dec. 9</u> Gary Bahls Dick Zittergruen	<u>Dec. 28</u> Erin Bries
<u>Dec. 10</u> Tara Augustyn Edward Tuecke	<u>Dec. 29</u> Helen Duwe
<u>Dec. 13</u> Tyler Kraus	
<u>Dec. 14</u> Alan Moser Carol Moser Nell Stone	
<u>Dec. 15</u> Kendra Moser	
<u>Dec. 18</u> Jarad Esmann	

DECEMBER *Birthdays*

<u>Dec. 2</u> Helen Duwe Breyer Witham	<u>Dec. 16</u> Barrett Preston David Sadewasser Mary Carrier
<u>Dec. 3</u> Erin Bries	<u>Dec. 17</u> Shirley Meyer
<u>Dec. 4</u> Jarad Esmann Kohle Helle Sharon Troester	<u>Dec. 18</u> Roger Rodenberg
<u>Dec. 5</u> Wyatt Backes	<u>Dec. 20</u> Maisyn Chase
<u>Dec. 6</u> Margo Friedlein	<u>Dec. 21</u> Tim Hillers
<u>Dec. 7</u> David Bahls	<u>Dec. 22</u> Jace Moore Ronald Troester
<u>Dec. 8</u> Cole Bittner	<u>Dec. 23</u> Jessica Klein Addison Stoerp
<u>Dec. 9</u> Anna Lewis	<u>Dec. 26</u> Lisa Judkins
<u>Dec. 10</u> Lola Reimer	<u>Dec. 27</u> Matthew Preston
<u>Dec. 12</u> Jovi Allyn	<u>Dec. 28</u> Deb Bries Everett Anderegg Ellie Dugan
<u>Dec. 14</u> Frank Davis Annalise Niesman	<u>Dec. 29</u> Carrie Niehaus
	<u>Dec. 30</u> Kayla Kelly

DECEMBER*Wedding**Anniversaries*

<u>Dec. 7</u> Forest & Tina Brown
<u>Dec. 9</u> Chuck & Paula Hemann
<u>Dec. 14</u> Ross & Mary Abbott
<u>Dec. 26</u> Dennis & Sharon Reth

