



The GOOD NEWS GAZETTE

Emailed & mailed if requested. Copies available at Church@Welcome Center **December 2024**

315-986-3045

Office hours: M-FRI. 8:30am-12:30pm

Lance Eckler, Pastoral Assistant

www.pumpkinhook.org

Worship:

Sundays 9:45AM live & streaming

Wednesdays 7PM live & streaming

'Peace, Joy, Hope And Love, Through OUR Savior, Jesus Christ!'



From the Pastor's Desk

Pastor Bob Weidmayer



*"Come, Lord Jesus,
be our guest,
and let Thy gifts
to us be blessed.
Amen!"*



As far back as I can remember my family has used the little table prayer printed above as preparation. I remember my mother and father teaching us that as we prayed we were inviting God Himself to come and dine with us as our guest. We were also taught to recognize that the very items placed before us were God's gifts to us as we asked Him to bless them for our good and His glory. It was only after the proper preparation of prayer that we would enjoy our meals together.

As we come nearer and nearer to the season of our Lord's birth it is fitting that we prepare at this time also. Advent is the season of such preparation. Over the weeks of Advent we will make ready for the coming of our Savior. Just as the little table prayer above assisted us in making us ready to enjoy a meal together, so also it will serve to assist us in our preparation for the celebration of our Lord's birth.

We begin by simply focusing upon the promise of God that He is coming soon. As we pray this part of the prayer, we acknowledge that He is faithful to His promises and we eagerly expect His coming soon.

We continue through Advent by recognizing that God comes as both Host and Guest. He comes to host the victory celebration and the final marriage feast. He also comes as guest for He arrives to dwell among and within us. Are we ready for His arrival?

As we near the festive season we will focus upon the blessings which accompany our Lord's arrival. He is the Word made flesh and dwells among us in bodily form. The gifts of Word and Sacrament which He provides are truly life-giving gifts, imparting faith and salvation to all.

These gifts brought by our Savior are His gifts. They are intended, however, for you and for me. They are a rich blessing to each of us as God works through His means of Grace to restore the relationship that once was lost.

Ultimately, we conclude with a final affirmation. We close this prayer with the Amen from God's people. Amen, yes, it shall be so shows our confidence in God's loving care and His provision for us. We proclaim a bold and final AMEN as we acknowledge God's manifold love and blessings to us.

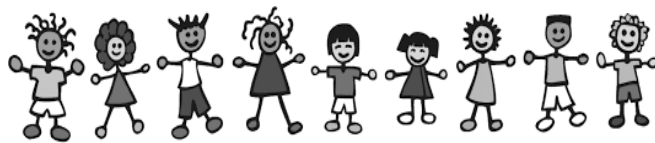
*"Come, Lord Jesus,
be our guest,
and let these gifts
to us be blessed. Amen!"*



Serving Christ with you, Pastor Weidmayer

Preschool News

Cheryl Power



We have so much to be thankful for at St. John's Christian Preschool-our sweet preschoolers, their parents and the support they provide to their children and to us, our wonderful teachers, Pastor Bob's constant support and Lance for always being available!!

We've had a great month preparing for our Thanksgiving Feasts. The children helped make corn muffins, sticky buns and applesauce in both classes and the 3's helped cut up veggies for our turkey soup. It has been fun hearing all the different and wonderful ways our preschoolers are thankful for the world around them!

We'd like to thank our parents, grandparents and friends who were able to join us for our feasts this year. It was so much fun seeing you all!

On to Christmas!!! We have another busy month...our classes will each make their own Nativity for Christmas while learning about the story of the birth of our savior. They are working hard learning new songs for our Christmas plays. Their parties are the 19th for the 3's and the 20th for the 4's. Members of our congregation are always welcome to join us!

We are thrilled to announce the need for a teacher beginning in January. Megan and her family are expecting a new blessing the beginning of February. ♡👶👶 We wish her much happiness with their new addition!

We will be interviewing ASAP. The job is Monday through Friday, 9:00-12:00. If you are interested or know of someone who may be, please contact me anytime.

Also, we do still have openings available in our 4's class. Feel free to contact me if you have a little one you'd like to have join us.

We all wish you and your family a wonderful Christmas season.
God's blessings, Cheryl Power (585) 315-1819

Financial Secretary

Max Hogenes

Our Financial Health

As of November 29, 2024

YTD Giving Comparison

Giving = \$181,540

Prior Year = \$171,121

\$10,419

YTD Giving vs. Expenses

Giving = \$181,540

Expenses = \$197,003

\$-15,463

	Yearly	Weekly
2024 YTD Giving	\$181,540	\$3,782

2024 Approved Expense	Budget
\$244,026	\$4,693

\$-911 weekly

Members of St. John's:

We want to thank God for the Blessings he has bestowed on us through the members of St. John's. **A huge thank you to all members for their continued support and prayers.**

2 Corinthians 9:7

"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Please help beautify our altar for CHRISTMAS! Sign-Up Sheet is at our welcome center.



Holiday Services

Please join us!

Christmas Pageant Worship: Sunday December 22, 9:45AM.

Christmas Eve Worship: December 24, 7PM, candlelit.

Christmas Day Worship: December 25, 10AM.

Sunday December 29: Worship 9:45AM

New Year's Eve Worship: December 31, 7PM.

New Year's Day: NO Worship Service.

Please help beautify our sanctuary for Christmas! Poinsettia sign-up sheet at our welcome center.



Monthly Ladies Luncheon

Vicky Payne



Second Wednesday (December 11th) at Flaherty's @ 12:30PM. All ladies welcome in the fun, food, & fellowship!

Please Help Us!

Please take your bottles and cans to Alpco, or the collection can at our north entrance inside the double doors. The money will be donated to St. John's.

If at Alpco, tell the attendant at the booth to put your bottle credit toward St. John's Lutheran Church Pumpkinhook. Every little bit helps as we shore up our deficits!

THANKYOU!



President's Message

Steve Maier



As this year comes to an end and with Thanksgiving being just passing, I am thankful for many things and am reminded about many more. I am thankful for our church family and all that they do to support each other in the happy times and the sad. You have all been a blessing to many people and in the community, also.

I love being a part of this family, even when we have losses and other sadness. We lean on each other for support and give a helping hand. This is so important today even if others do not see it. Remember the words to a song that the band plays at times, "They will know we are Christian by our love". Our love for each other and for others throughout the area. Let us share God's Word and the story of Jesus with others this Christmas season. I would love to be able to say that we had so many people at the Christmas Eve service that we had to use overflow seating. If you cannot make it, the services will be online for you to watch later. Please make sure to watch and appreciate all that the Lord has done for us. Merry Christmas and Happy New Years to you all!

a caring congregation reaching out to all

Long Term Prayer List December 2024:

Members of St. John's

Nancy Bowerman	Gordon Hill	Doug Snyder
Karen Carey	Mia Howie	Chuck Thomas
Helen Schwartz	Kay Minwell	Emily Vokes
Richard Scofield	Heidi VanAken	Sandy Bastian



Family & Friends

Nadine Printup & Blaise Readon (Mary Meade)
David & Debbie Kuehnert (Don Kuehner's siblings)
Don Nugent (Chuck Thomas' father)
Mildred O'Neil (Charlene Musfeldt's sister)
Wayne Grewe (brother of the Buckingham's & Sharon Jenkins)
Jane Barmaster, Autumn, Emily, Charlene, & Katie (Martha Barmaster family (family of Vicky Cole)
Kathleen Goodberlet (granddaughter of Jack & Maryann Bauer)
Joe Davenport (friend of Sharon Green & Candy Aldrich)
Bob & Lynn Steamer (sister & brother-in-law of Roger Carpenter)
Jeff, Peggy & the Coons children (family of Pat Coons)
Jo Donahue (Shawn Patience)
Pete Poulakis (family of the Plumbs)
Loreen Coyle (sister of Les Fleenor)
Keshap grandchildren (Bob & Barb Leisten)
Dan Bauer (Luann Holtz & Jack Bauer)
Carl Ellerman (Candy Aldrich)
Jack Torrence (Karen Meyer)
Amy Klino (Lisa Maier's friend)
Erik (David Heckman's friend)
Stephen Fredrickson (Candy Aldrich)
Sharon Evans (friends of Barnes and Smiths)
Karen Butler (Candy Aldrich's sister-in-law)
Minister to Family (Betty & Rick Carr)

The Cole



Military and their Families

ET3 Adam Hopseeker (the Barnes family)
SS Brian Heckman (the Heckman family)
LT Paul Kuehnert (Don Kuehnert)
LC Mercedes Buckingham (Sharon Jenkins)

Annual Voter's Meeting

We will gather together to discuss the business of God's church NEXT Sunday, December 8th at 10:45 AM. Our meeting will be to approve the annual spending plan for 2025 as well as election of new officers and board members. This is an important day, please plan to be there, thank you!

Family Activities

Kim Baxter

Event	Day	Date	Time	Location	Contact
Church member Caroling	TBD	December	11:00 AM	Church	Baxter/Barnes
Christmas Cookie Baking	Saturday	12/21/2024	TBD	Church	Kim Baxter
Church Pageant - Holiday Party	Sunday	12/22/2024	9:45	Church	Braun/Baxter
Pizza Party & Game Night	Saturday	1/11/2025	6pm	Church	Kim Baxter



Sunday School News

Linda Braun

We are using the Simply Loved Curriculum.

Bible Point: Jesus loves people in need.

Bible Memory Verse: "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." (1 Peter 5:7)

Bible Lessons: Christmas Pageant, Practice beginning on December 1st

Dates to remember:

December 21st 10am – Christmas Pageant Practice

December 22nd 9:45am – Christmas Pageant during the service, followed by a reception .

No Sunday School on 12/29

Please contact Linda Braun, Sunday School Director; frau11braun@gmail.com, if you have any questions or concerns.



The Board for Worship and the Arts

Linda Braun

Thank you to everyone who helped to make our Thanksgiving Eve service a success.

Advent begins 12/1 and marks the beginning of the church year. Advent Calendars with daily scripture readings. Pastor is working on a specific theme regarding light. Here is an outline of the sermon themes. 12/1 & 4: *Rise and Shine*, 12/8 & 11: *The Light of Redemption*, 12/15 & 18: *The Light of Praise*, 12/22: *The Light That Sustains*, 12/24: *The Light of Hope*



Christmas Pageant: Come join our multi-generational pageant on 12/22 at our 9:45 service.

Christmas Eve: 7 pm Candlelight Service, including a children's message. (Poinsettia Sign-Up is at the Welcome Center)

Christmas Day 10am,

Sunday December 29 Lessons and Carols



Tuesday, December 31st - New Years Eve 7pm

Stewardship

Howie Barnes

Repenting of "Yours" and "Mine"

Retailers have had their Christmas displays up since before Reformation Sunday. The kids have made their list and checked it twice, or three times or more. It won't be long before the tree will start shedding its needles, the stockings emptied, the gifts unwrapped, toys broken, and the too small or out of style clothes returned. Before we know it, the annual celebration of Christmas will be over.

But for the children of God, we know that the gift of Christmas doesn't ever end. Week in and week out, the Lord continues to shower His gifts on us. Every time the Lord gathers us to His house, and we are led to kneel at His table, the gift of forgiveness is repeatedly granted to us. It is nothing we deserve. It comes to us freely!

The fourth stanza of the stewardship hymn, "Forgive Us Lord for Shallow Thankfulness" (LSB 788) highlights both this gift and our response.

Teach us, O Lord, true thankfulness divine, that gives as Christ gave, never counting cost.



To learn thankfulness is necessary. The parents of young children are well-versed in the fact that they must teach their children thankfulness. It does not come naturally. The spiritual genetics inherited from our parents allow us to think that the world revolves around us. When we receive something, there is an inward desire to think that we in some way deserve it.

But there is no way that we deserve anything we get from our Lord. We need that ongoing lesson from God Himself. Thankfulness toward God is worked in us by the Holy Spirit. God's Word works this thanksgiving in us. We need this weekly reminder that Jesus didn't consider "equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself" for us, to the point of death on a cross (Phil. 2:6). He didn't bat an eye. He paid the price! Our life of stewardship is one of daily and weekly thanksgiving inspired by the Lord Himself. That knows no barrier of "yours" and "mine," assured that only what's withheld is lost.

Because Jesus gave us everything and more, there can be no ownership. The child at Christmas is quick to claim that the newly gifted toy is "mine!" But as Psalm 24:1 asserts, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein." There isn't anything in creation that is ours. When we cling to and claim ownership of anything in creation, we are losing out on the continual gifts with which the Lord desires to shower upon us. Closed hands cannot receive anything new. We cling to the old and dead and miss the new thing that the Lord desires to do in and for us.

We are led to repent of the "yours" and "mine" and remove the lie that we have any ownership. In this we have the promise that God will continue to give to us. Not just at Christmas, but every Sunday at the altar in the Lord's house.



Rise & Shine

As a result of God's redeeming work through the Messiah, the light of life would fall on Israel. God's people would then turn to shine forth as a spiritual light to all nations. We are to do likewise, reflect the light of God's Messiah to the nations so that we are instrumental in removing the spiritual darkness that covers our world!

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:45a Sunday School 9:45a 9:45 Church service 10:45a Praise band practice	2 5p Lions Den meeting Pack	3 11a Bible study 5p Tiger den meeting Pack 5p Webedo Den Cub Scouts 5p AOL Den meeting	4 7p WOW Worship	5 7p Choir practice	6 5p Pack 50 meetings 7p euechre	7
8 8:45a Sunday School 9:45a 9:45 Church service 10:45a Voters meeting 10:45a Praise band practice 4p Pack 50 committee meel	9	10 11a Bible study 5p Bears Den Pack 50 5p Wolves Den meeting Pack 5p Webedo Den Cub Scouts	11 7p WOW Worship	12 7p Choir practice	13	14
15 8:45a Sunday School 9:45a 9:45 Church service 10:45a Praise band practice	16 COUNCIL 7PM	17 11a Bible study 5p Tiger den meeting Pack 5p AOL Den meeting 5p Webedo Den Pack 50	18 7p WOW Worship	19 7p Choir practice	20	21 Christmas Cookie Baking
22 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT 8:45a Sunday School 9:45a 9:45 Church service 10:45a Praise band practice	23	24 11a Bible study 7p Christmas Eve Candleligi	25 Pastor Christmas vacation 10a Christmas Day Holy Coi	26	27	28
29 Pastor Christmas vacation 9:45a 9:45 Church service 10:45a Praise band practice	30	31 11a Bible study 7p New Year Eve Service	NO SERVICE	1	2	3
						4

St. John's Lutheran Church

153 Church Ave. Farmington, NY 14425

St. John's Lutheran Church

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'Focused On Growing Families In Faith'



'Merry Christmas!'

a caring congregation reaching out to all