



St John's LUTHERAN CHURCH

P.O. Box 279
5520 Fremont Pike
Stony Ridge, OH 43463

Phone: 419-837-5115
Email: officeadmin@stjohnsstonyridge.net

Pastor Cindy Ritter
E-mail: pastorcindy@stjohnsstonyridge.net

Pastor Howard Abts
E-mail: pastorhoward@stjohnsstonyridge.net
Phone: 419-382-1956

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2024 Memory Verse

"So then, a sabbath rest still
remains for the people of God"

~ Hebrews 4:9

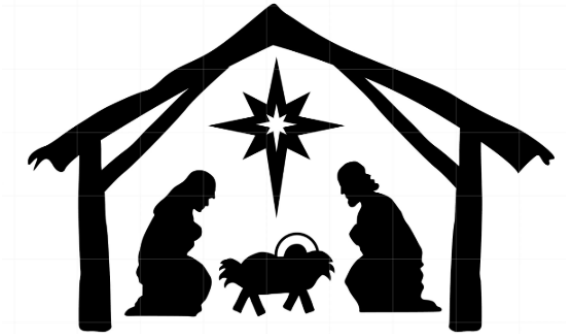
December 2024





From Pastor Cindy...

*"For this day is born to you a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David."
(Luke 2:11)*



Greetings!

It is that time of year to feel the JOY of Christmas. Memories come flooding over me as I recall the words Julie Andrews sings in the beloved musical *The Sound of Music*, "*These are a few of my favorite things.*"

What are a few of your favorite things in this most Holy season of Advent and Christmas as we await the return and birth of our Lord Jesus Christ? I immediately have memories of Christmas seasons in the past: gathering with beloved family members, and dear friends on Sundays at church and joyous get-togethers in between. Folks sharing their most traditional appetizers and foods...sometimes decorated in red and green. MMMM...the delicious Christmas cookies along with eggnog and other sweet treats galore! Christmas candles fill the air with a pleasant aroma of balsam and pine, a nativity set holds a special place in many homes, along with a beautifully decorated Christmas tree and mistletoe hanging in the doorways.

Another one of my favorite things that brings a smile to my face is the memory of excitement, giggles and pure glee of small children on Christmas morning waiting to open their presents. May we have these same reactions knowing the reason for the season...Jesus. He is Love, and He came down on Christmas Day...Jesus Christ our Lord...and remembering this brings unspeakable JOY.

If you are anything like me and love to attend the Christmas Eve worship services...the memories are precious as we recall a beautiful service focused on the

(cont'd. on pg. 3)

birth of the Christ Child. We hear again the priceless Christmas story read from the Gospels; along with other favorite hymns we always sing Silent Night amidst a congregation shining Christ's light with the many candles lit among us.

Ahhh...the memories. Also important to recall in this same Julie Andrews song are these words: *When the dog bites, when the bee stings, when I'm feeling sad, I simply remember my favorite things and then I don't feel so bad.* In this season we will walk alongside those having somber times which may include: loss of a loved one, grief, anxiety, stress, worry, loss of an expectation, health concerns, disappointing relationships, oppression, hunger, fear, economic strife, loneliness, depression and more. These are not our favorite things...and some describe this as having a "Blue Christmas." There will be those among us facing challenges. May we support them, pray for them and with them, and offer hope to them.

In the days ahead at our church and beyond we will have good days and not so good days. May we strive to remember these words of promise from Holy Scripture:

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a Son, and they will call Him Immanuel-which means, God with us."

(Matthew 1: 23)



May you all be filled with Favorite Memories,
Hope, Peace, Love and Joy.

Blessings,
Pr. Cindy Ritter

The family of Carolyn Burns would like to thank Pastor Cindy, Sharon Bitter, Sandy Orth, Sandra and Lyle Diefenthaler, Jan Rucki, and everyone who helped with or donated food for the funeral luncheon. We are deeply grateful for the support and thoughtfulness shown by everyone in honoring her life and memory.



From the Council President...

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

After a busy year, the season of Advent is already upon us and Christmas will soon arrive. Throughout the year, the congregation of St. John's has continued to face a variety of challenges, but through hard work, compassion for one another, and God's grace and love, we continue to work together to serve Him and those in our communities. With the end of this year quickly approaching, we look ahead to the coming year and the continued work that awaits us. The Transition Team is already diligently working through their tasks, and next year there will be several opportunities for the congregation to interact with the team and provide input on the future direction of St. John's. Pastor Cindy and Pastor Howard will also conduct their own transitions to one-quarter time and three-quarters time, respectively. The St. John's community will also be working to find several new coordinators to help lead the church's food pantry as well, as Jerri Reitzel will be stepping back from her leadership role in that ministry after 15 years of generous service. Throughout these continued transitions, I have no doubt that we will all continue to support one another, listen to one another, and search and observe each day for God's guidance as we work to serve Him and uplift each other in our communities and lives.

I would also like to extend an invitation to everyone to attend the Christmas Eve services at St. John's. There will be a contemporary service at 6:00 PM Christmas Eve, followed by the traditional service at 9:00 PM (please note the new time for this year). We welcome everyone to these services, and please extend this invitation further to all friends, family, and neighbors, so that all can experience God's grace and mercy with our congregation.

In Christ,

Kyle Henry
Church Council President



**Please
Join
Us!**

**Wednesday, December 11
12:00 p.m.
Country Farmhouse, Wayne, OH**



**PLEASE JOIN US FOR A
COOKIE DECORATING
AND PIZZA PARTY!**

**SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 14 AT 6:00**

**PLEASE SIGN UP IN
THE NARTHEN SO
THAT WE HAVE AN
ACCURATE COUNT**

SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Sunday Special...



Food Pantry ~ boxed au gratin or scalloped potatoes, white cake mix and canned red or green frosting

Shared Bounty ~ 4-roll toilet paper

The food pantry currently serves 61 families from the community.

THANK YOU.....

A big thank you to Rachel Brackney for volunteering to be one of our Santa's helpers!! She will use the proceeds from the dessert auction on Sunday, November 24th to purchase the gifts for one of the families we have adopted.

Thank you to Linda, Emily and Stephany & Tiffany and Aubrey Porter for delivering the Operation Christmas Child boxes! Your generosity once again shines bright in the halls of St. John's!! A total of 93 Operation Christmas Child boxes were filled with gifts of love for children around the globe.

The Christmas tree is in the narthex with tags for 3 families. Please return your wrapped gift by Sunday, December 15th so that they can be sorted and given to the families before the kids are on Christmas break. This way they will be surprised when Santa comes!!

Social Ministries is looking for a few shopping and wrapping elves to purchase and wrap gifts for one of the four families we will adopt. You will use the proceeds from the dessert auction!!! Please reach out to Jerri 419.297.7300 or Christy Schramm 419.466.5498 if you are interested in helping us brighten a family's Christmas morning. 🎄

The food pantry needs your help!! During the Christmas season we make lots of deliveries. Could you save your small and medium shipping boxes for the pantry?? We use them to pack our food parcels. Thank you in advance. They can be left in the shopping cart in the coat room.

I am planning to resign from the coordinator role of pantry after the Easter food pantry. This decision has not been made lightly, but I feel that the time is right for me, given the ages of our moms. I am going to work on dividing this role up into 3-4 positions instead of one person. PLEASE pray about how you can help serve in this role so that St. John's can continue to serve our friends in need of a hand up. This is the mission of our church, "Saved by the grace of God to witness and to serve others." Thank you, Jerri 419.297.7300

Our committee will meet as needed through the year.

BOOK STUDY!!

at St. John's in the Lounge

Incarnation Study by Adam Hamilton

Mondays at 9:30 a.m. November 18, December 2, 9, 16

or Wednesdays @ 7:11 p.m. on ZOOM

November 20, December 4, 11, 18

If you have questions or need the ZOOM link, see Pr. Cindy.



ATTENTION!!

The cost for an altar flower bouquet has changed. The new price is \$22.50 per vase.

Please check the sign-up sheet in the Narthex if you are interested in placing flowers this month!

Beginning in 2025...

you can place your Altar Flower requests online! Just go to the Home Page of our website and click on the link for 2025 Altar Flower Sign Up. Or you can call the church office at 419-837-5115.



Home About Calendar Church Leadership VOICE Newsletter Resources

2025 Altar Flower Sign-Up

St. John's Hilltop Dayschool

Women of the ELCA

Comforters for Lutheran World Relief will be tied on Tuesday, December 10th from 12:30 to 2:30 in the Parish House, with a potluck beginning at 11:30. If you'd like to join us for the potluck and to work on this important mission project, please see Jan Rucki, Sandra Diefenthaler or Lynda Lees to sign up for the potluck.

Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, December 10th-Tie Comforters & Potluck (Parish House)

Tuesday, December 17th-Crafting Group (Lounge)

Donations of filler for mission comforters are always welcome, including old blankets, sheets, bedspreads, and tablecloths. These donations may be placed in the LWR box in the coatroom. Thank you in advance for your donations. If you have material you'd like to donate for the tops of comforters, donations would be greatly appreciated.



Crafting Group



Calling all crafters and hobby enthusiasts. Our crafting group will meet on Tuesday, December 17th from 10:00 to 11:30 in the lounge. Bring your knitting, crocheting, quilting, craft projects or anything else you enjoy working on. We enjoy conversation and many laughs and would love to have more join us. If you have any questions, please see Lynda Lees. Hope to see you there!





In Loving Memory of...

Barbara Lashaway

Bill & Carolyn Staib and family, Todd & Cheryl Kurfess, David & Michelle Welling, Tim & Patti Bihn, Pastor Cindy Ritter, Deb & Rick Saam, Sharon & Ted Bitter, Arlene Baker, Ed & Mary Anna Cochrane, Kathleen Holzman, David & Linda Bockbrader, Maxine Haas, Rick & Lynda Lees, Sheldrick Farms LTD, Larry & Darlene Michel, Tom & Cindy Walston, The Harbauer Family, Megan Bockbrader, Wanda Mae & Larry Fisher, Elouise Alexander, Joni & Jami Bettinger, Bruce & Barbara Brigode, Barb, Gene, Tim & Katie Myers, Jamie Fincher, Randi & Mike Aring, Britni & Matt Dickson, Matt & Lori Lenke, Cathy & William Carr, Paul & Bev Laubenthal, Marilyn Dewyre, Jeremy & Sandy Orth, Joann & Leroy Ryerson, Shirley Johnson, Pr. Robert Johnson, Cynthia Leffler, Mary Jane Reitzel, the Women of SOAR, WELCA, Shirley J. Brodbeck, Adrienne & Donald Taylor, Ronald & Sandra Grolle, Gary & Susan Micsko, Robert & Jean Hilt, Michael Sibbersen

Carolyn Burns

Larry & Darlene Michel, Rick & Kathy Emch, David & Barbara Sander, Susan & Joseph Timko, Jeremy & Sandy Orth, Pastor Cindy Ritter, Mr. & Mrs. Donald Bennett, Mark Knierim, Donald & Louise Berdahl, Mr. & Mrs. Edward Souers, Kevin Maroia, Steve Burns, Bernadine Klump, Keith & Debra Zellin, Betsy & Ray Reitz, WELCA, Cynthia Leffler, Bill & Carolyn Staib and family, Michael Sibbersen, Janette Rucki, Kathleen Holzman, Rick & Lynda Lees, Myrl & Sheri Bretz, Maxine Haas, Sharon & Ted Bitter, Linda & Jeffrey Jones, Robert & Irene Rostas, Dennis & Isabelle Stombaugh, David & Linda Bockbrader

Helyn Kurfess

Brenda & Matt Schwind, Rick & Kathy Emch, WELCA, David & Linda Bockbrader





December Birthdays *(Those over 74 years young!)*

Carolyn Goodman	12/5	8121 Latcha Road, Perrysburg, 43551
Susan Leck	12/8	944 Lober Drive, Perrysburg, 43551
James Reitzel Jr.	12/9	21872 Stony Ridge Road, Luckey, 43443
Clyde Bame	12/10	8281 Five Point Road, Perrysburg, 43551
Betty Wolf	12/12	Wood Haven Healthcare 1965 Gypsy Lane Bowling Green, 43402
Michael Hannan	12/29	P. O. Box 432, Walbridge, 43465
Janet Reitzel	12/30	3801 Willaford Drive, Plant City, FL 33565

Sunday Morning Christian Education ~ 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School
3 years old – 3rd grade

Catechism
6th, 7th, & 8th grades

4th & 5th Grade

Adult Class

WE NEED COOKIES!!!

The Fellowship Committee is asking for donations of cookies for our weekly after-service fellowship in the Narthex. You can drop them off in the kitchen with a note that says, "Cookie Hour". Thanks!!



WE ALSO NEED COOKIES FOR CHRISTMAS EVE!!

UPCOMING EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

Dec. 5	6:30 PM	Decorate the Church for Christmas
Dec. 6	9:00 AM	Men's Breakfast at Panera, Rt. 20
Dec. 11	NOON	Lunch Bunch @ Country Farmhouse, Wayne, OH
Dec. 14	6:00 PM	Cookie Decorating w/ Pizza
Dec. 15	10:00 AM	Youth-led Worship Service & Children's Christmas Program
	3:00 PM	Dayschool Christmas Program
Dec. 24	6:00 PM	Contemporary Christmas Eve Worship Service w/ special music @ 5:30 PM
	9:00 PM	Traditional Christmas Eve Worship Service w/ special music @ 8:40 PM
Dec. 25		CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED!
Jan. 1		CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED!

MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Library News

*Come in for a visit.
Check something out.*

Stop in and see the new books we have added to the church library. The church library is open whenever the church is open.

These are the books we have added to the church library for December.

Adult Books

From Followers to Leaders

Children's Books

My Turn to Learn Shapes - Natalie Marshall

Let's Be Silly - Emily Skwish

Count With Me - Emily Skwish

Meet My Friends - Emily Skwish

Barnyard Ballet - Emily Skwish

December 2024		Year of Rest Calendar					
Mental	Sensory	Emotional	Social	Creative	Physical	Spiritual	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
So, God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation - Genesis 2:3	1 Do something you love today.	2 Decorate a space in your house.	3 Thank someone for the work they do.	4 Share a blessing with someone today.	5 Tomorrow is St. Nick's Day. Fill someone's shoes with a treat.	6 Take a run or walk with someone else.	7 Spend time outside today.
I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety - Psalm 4:8	8 Take a nap today.	9 Tend to the space where you rest. Remove distractions.	10 Silence your devices for one hour. Breathe.	11 Do something that will bring peace to someone else.	12 Bake or cook something to share with someone else.	13 Today is St. Lucy Day. Bring food to someone to celebrate.	14 Donate your time or money to something you believe in.
For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation - Psalm 62:1	15 Do something that allows you to spend some time in silence.	16 Enjoy something that you associate with this season.	17 Read poetry or a Psalm today.	18 Do something with someone else that doesn't require conversation.	19 Listen to seasonal music.	20 Take a walk or a run alone. Use the time to be aware of God's presence.	21 Read a verse or story from the Bible that strengthens your faith.
Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest - Matthew 11:28	22 Let yourself off the hook for an obligation or expectation.	23 Take a time out and explore light displays.	24 Light a candle and remember someone you love.	25 Check in on someone today. Who might be alone?	26 Make something from scratch today.	27 Sleep in today or take a nap.	28 Give away something.
So then, a Sabbath rest still remains for the people of God - Hebrews 4:9	29 Reflect on your year. Give thanks for your gifts.	30 Explore one of your favorite spaces.	31 Reflect: How will you carry your learnings about rest into the New Year?				

GENEROUS GIVING

Financial Giving through 11/17/2024

General Fund Income *(Year-to-Date)*

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
\$241,875	\$195,019	(\$46,856)

Benevolence Fund *(Year-to-Date)*

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
\$24,188	\$13,978	(\$10,210)

Improvement Fund *(Year-to-Date)*

Actual
\$14,645

(Copies of most recently approved financial reports are available in the Narthex and by request.)

Visit us online at

www.stjohnstonyridge.net



or scan the QR code to set up electronic giving. Click on the "Give Generously" tab to enter your information and offering. Financial gifts can, of course, be sent by mail too. We are grateful for your continued support of our ministry.





December 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship 4p Scouts	2 7:30 Dartball (Away)	3 Noon Prayers via ZOOM 7p Committee Mtg Night #1	4 7p Choir Rehearsal	5 6:30p Decorate the church 8p AA	6 9a Men's Breakfast @ Panera Rt. 20	7 10a-12p Shared Bounty (PH)
8 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship 12p Private Event (PH) 4p Scouts	9 6:30p JJAAM Practice 7:30 Dartball (Away)	10 Noon Prayers via ZOOM 12:30p Tie Comforters & Potluck (PH) 7p Committee Mtg Night #2	11 12p Lunch Bunch @ Country Farmhouse in Wayne, OH	12 9a Staff Mtg (L) 7p Festival Choir 8p AA	13	14 6p Cookie Decorating & Pizza (PH)
15 9a Christian Ed 10a Youth-led Worship 3pm Dayschool Christmas Program	16 6:30p JJAAM Practice 7:30 Dartball (Home)	17 10a Crafting Group (L) Noon Prayers via ZOOM 6:30p Exec Comm (L) 7p Church Council (L)	18 7p Festival Choir 8p Choir Christmas Party (L)	19	20	21 7:30a Food Pantry (PH)
22 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship	23 6:30p JJAAM Practice	24 Christmas Eve Services 6p – Contemporary 9p – Traditional	Church Office 25 Closed 	26 8p AA	27	28
29 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship	30 6:30p JJAAM Practice	31 Noon Prayers via ZOOM	Church Office Closed 			

Committee Meetings: Please schedule all meetings with the office administrator so the proper room is reserved to accommodate all groups. Call 419-837-5115 or email officeadministrator@stjohnsstonryidge.net.