

NEWS FROM ST. JOHN'S

DECEMBER 2024

FROM THE PASTOR

On Continuing Education

We as Lutherans have a tradition and legacy of excellence in catechesis and education. This is obviously true and most clearly shown with the effort and resources that we pour into our Lutheran schools. St. John's only took one year from its founding to open the school, and this was for good reason. We not only want our children to be set up for worldly success but to be faithful and devout Christians both in their homes and in the community. But though these schools are a valuable resource, we must not become complacent with continuing education in adulthood. We have a tendency as fickle human beings to forget or be misled by false doctrine.

"And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes." [Ephesians 4:11-14]

It is likewise true there is simply always more to learn. Pastors and teachers are required to attend conferences which, in part, include continuing education. Doctors and nurses are required to do the same in order to keep up to date with changes and new information. Although our doctrine remains the same, the world around us is constantly changing. How we respond to the world around us therefore likewise changes. We need to continue to be equipped to properly understand and address these changes. In part, this is why we offer Adult Bible Class and encourage even life-long Lutherans to re-take our New Member Class. But though you are urged to take advantage of these opportunities, there are many other resources that you can draw upon. Podcasts, for example, have become all the rage nowadays and for good reasons. They give us an opportunity to reflect and learn in a way that is engaging and fits our schedules and the busyness of our hectic lives. I want to encourage you to consider making a good Lutheran podcast part of your daily life. Just a few of these options include [Issues Etc.](#), [KFUO](#), and more recently the [On The Line](#) podcast. All three bring knowledgeable laymen and clergy to speak on topics ranging from politics and society, reflections on the lectionary readings for the coming week, and other

theological topics. All three examples are specifically aimed at you, laymen and laywomen who are navigating a sinful and broken world in your life at home and as you go out into the world. Do not neglect your own private devotions, the reading of scripture, bible study, and attendance in church. But do add to those things this easy way to learn more about the faith, to be encouraged in your own life of faith, and to stay up to date with how the church responds to the many changes of the world. If you have any questions or need guidance with accessing these resources, please feel free to contact your pastors. We are always happy to help!

-Pastor Joshua DeYoung

OFFICIAL ACTS

Funeral:

Kathleen Karpinsky

11-29-2024

2025 FLOWER CALENDAR

The flower calendar for 2025 has been posted in the church narthex. To sign up to provide altar flowers, simply write your name and contact information next to any available Sunday.

2025 GIVING ENVELOPES

Giving envelopes for 2025 are now available! You can pick yours up on the tables outside the cafeteria. If you give online with Vanco or through another means, envelopes were not issued. If you would still like to receive a box of giving envelopes, please let Kimberly know.

NEW INDIVIDUAL GLASS CUPS FOR COMMUNION

Beginning in January, we will be moving over to using glass individual cups for communion. The common cup will continue to be available for those who prefer it. This switch has been made possible through a generous donation from within our District. These new cups will be collected by an acolyte at the end of the distribution and then cleaned and sanitized in the dishwasher to be reused week by week.

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

The season of Advent will soon be here. Please see the list below of the special service times from Thanksgiving through the New Year.

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Advent Vespers – 6pm

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

Advent Vespers – 6pm

Wednesday, December 18, 2024

Advent Vespers – 6pm

Tuesday, December 24, 2024

Christmas Eve Communion Services at 4 and 11pm

Wednesday, December 25, 2024

Christmas Day Communion Service – 9am

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Hymn Sing – 6pm

FELLOWSHIP FRIDAY

There will not be a Fellowship Friday in December! We look forward to getting together again in January.

“BIBLE AND BREW” MEN’S STUDY

Our Bible and Brew Men’s Study will not be held in December due to Christmas. We will resume the study in January!

CRAFT SALE THANK YOU

Thank you so much to everyone who came and supported the craft sale. Your generous donations helped to raise a little over \$1,500.00. This money will go directly to help support the Bugenhagen Conference. Thank you again and we hope you are enjoying all of your treasures from the sale.

CRADLE ROLL PLAYDATE

Please join us for a play date! Intended for the youngest among us (newborn to those who haven't started school yet.). Tuesday, December 3rd at 9am at the PlaySpace, 505 6th St., Racine. Please see visitplayspace.com website for pricing and rules. Socks required. RSVP to Stephanie Peterson at 815-931-8790 or Kerry Jacquet at 847-209-9448.

FAMILY GINGERBREAD HOUSE DECORATING

Calling all families with youth 0-18. Join us Friday, December 6th at 5:30pm for dinner and gingerbread house decorating. Whether you are an experienced decorator or just coming to eat the sugar, it's a fun time for all. Spaghetti and meatballs will be served and gingerbread houses provided. Feel free to bring any extra toppings/decorations for your house that you want to use. Please RSVP by 12-4-24 using the link provided here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040B4AAC62EA3FB6-53432223-family> or by contacting the church office.

NON-PERISHABLE FOOD DRIVE

The Stewardship committee is going to be placing food drive baskets in the back of church and in the classrooms for collecting food, gift cards and cash for Families in Need of help. Please donate non-perishable food items and/or gift cards to your favorite grocery store as those are nice as well. We will be collecting food and gift cards from Thanksgiving until December 15. We will be distributing the baskets sometime before Christmas. Thank you!

THE LEAVES ARE FALLING....

Just in time for fall...300 leaves have been purchased to fill a new section of tree branches that will be installed in the hallway outside of the pastors’ offices!

There are three levels of leaves that will be available for purchase: \$300, \$200, and \$100. All proceeds from the purchase of these leaves will be put in our Church Renovation Account and be utilized to help fund the eventual replacement of the church’s roof.

Thank you to Kris Reisdorf for this fundraising idea and for coordinating the ordering of the new tree branches and leaves!

Order forms will be available in the church office and in the back of the sanctuary. If you have any questions, please contact Kimberly in the church office.

SERMONS ON YOUTUBE

We are now streaming live content through YouTube. The easiest way to watch the sermons live is to subscribe to the channel and turn the notifications on. Our channel can be found by searching "St. John's Lutheran Church and School Racine, WI." Every time a live video is being broadcast, you will get an update and will be able to watch it. The sermons are also archived on the channel, but are now accessible through the tab that says "Live" rather than the "Videos" tab.

FROM YOUR DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Advent Worship Services: Please join us for our midweek Advent Vespers services Wednesday, December 4th, 11th and 18th at 6:00 pm.

Christmas Concert: Please join us for our annual Christmas Concert to be held this year on *Sunday, December 15th*. The pre-concert music will begin at 5:45 pm, and the concert will follow at 6:00 p.m. Our Senior Choir, Handbell Choir, Hand Chime Choir, Children's Choir, vocal Soloists, Trumpet Choir, Violinist, Oboist, Flautists, and Dulcimer will color this beautiful traditional service we have come to know and love with music that will point us to the promise God's Word proclaims that a Savior is sent into this world to cleanse us all from our sins.

Children's Christmas Concert: On *Monday, December 16th*, our students will provide a visible witness of their faith and trust in the Savior born to us with a special Pre-School – 8th grade Christmas program '*To Us a Child is Born*'. The program will be held two times - 4:15 pm and 6:00 pm, December 16th. Special pre-service music will be provided by the Hand Chime Choir, Dulcimer Choir and several of our Band Students.

Hymn Sing: On Wednesday, January 1, 2025, we will have a Hymn Sing at 6:00 pm. Join us as we gather and sing our favorite hymns during this evening.

May God Bless you *and* your family through this Advent and Christmas season, and may you be filled with peace and joy in the year to come!

*Glory to God in the highest heaven
and on earth peace to those on whom His favor
rests. Luke 2:14*

SCHOOL NEWS CORNER

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

December is one of the busiest months in our school year, and though it hasn't started to snow just yet, you can sense the holiday approaching by looking at the energy in our students! Our teachers and students are already preparing for the Christmas season. With the arrival of December, classroom trees will be decorated, lights will adorn our hallways, and our chapel hymn will switch to "What Child is This?" We hope that you are able to join us for our school's Christmas program on Monday, December 16th, at either 4:15 or 6:00 pm. There is nothing that can put you in a better mindset for our Savior's birth than hearing children proclaim, "We bring you good news of great joy- today in the town of Bethlehem, a Savior has been born to you! Glory to God in the highest!" God's blessings on your Advent preparations!

DINING OUT AT PANERA

Join us for our next Dining Out Night at Panera, 5304 Washington Avenue from 4-8pm. St. John's will receive 25% of all qualifying purchases. Please show the flyer or enter the promo code when ordering online for St. John's to get credit for your order. A flyer is attached to the emailed newsletter or can be picked up in the back of the sanctuary. Hope to see you at this tasty fundraiser!



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2-Dec	John Borgardt	16-Dec	Wesley Patzke
2-Dec	Sean Fox	17-Dec	Melissa Bowe
2-Dec	Naomi Holthaus	17-Dec	Anita Grant
7-Dec	Shirley Elwood	17-Dec	Justin Schuler
8-Dec	Jillian Widmar	18-Dec	Matt Patzke
9-Dec	Linda Lie	20-Dec	George Miller
9-Dec	Mack Struebing	21-Dec	Tootie Blaesing
11-Dec	Brenden Cummings	21-Dec	Lydia Rodriguez
11-Dec	Grace Preuss	23-Dec	Sally Marek
12-Dec	David Messersmith	25-Dec	Merry Mertins
12-Dec	Marie Ramage	25-Dec	Debbie Ritt
13-Dec	James Day	26-Dec	Eric Peterson
14-Dec	Hollynn Anzalone	28-Dec	Diane Glassen
14-Dec	Valentina Miller	28-Dec	Tiffany Hoffmann
14-Dec	Ava Morales	28-Dec	Thomas Nelson
15-Dec	Lou Duchac	29-Dec	Elena Borgardt
15-Dec	Eunice Matter	29-Dec	Maximilian Knoell
15-Dec	Madison Mohar	30-Dec	Connie Cochran
15-Dec	Natalie Rosborough	30-Dec	Sarah Miller
16-Dec	Peter Duchac	31-Dec	Jim Dresen



We apologize if we have forgotten anyone.
Please contact the church office at 637-7011 to correct.
Thank You!

VANCO MOBILE AND ONLINE GIVING

Giving is easier than ever through St. John's Vanco online or the Vanco Faith mobile app. You can access **Vanco online giving** by going to the St. John's Church and School website; stjohnsracine.org. Under the church heading, click online giving. This page allows you to give to different church funds. You can choose a one-time contribution or set up recurring contributions through this site. Giving is also available through the **Vanco mobile app**. Vanco, our eGiving provider, has launched an updated mobile app called Vanco Mobile Faith. Downloading the new Vanco Mobile is easy! Head over to the App Store or Google Play to download Vanco Mobile for free.

To use Vanco Mobile, follow these easy steps:

1. Search for our church by entering St Johns Lutheran. Do not use any punctuation, and it is case sensitive
2. Create a new account or login
3. Select your gift amount, fund, and frequency
4. Enter your payment method and click submit to complete your donation.

Please contact Kimberly in the church office if you have any questions about or need assistance with the Vanco online or mobile app giving. chapman@stjohnsracine.org or (262) 637-7011.



STEWARDSHIP CORNER - DECEMBER 2024

December 1 – Advent I

Matthew 21:3 – “If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.” – Consider the faithfulness of that man who owned the donkey and colt. All he needed to hear was, “The Lord has need of it,” and he willingly gave. The Lord has given each of us various callings in life (in our homes, in the church and in the communities we live in). In each calling we have good work to do which comes from the Lord’s hand. The Lord has need of us in each calling. How is He calling you to generous giving in each of your vocations?

December 8 – Advent II

Luke 21:28 – “Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” When the world starts to fall apart, when things go badly, when nation rises against nation, Jesus tells us to lift up our heads because redemption is nigh. What a wonderful reminder that we Christians really do have nothing to fear! Jesus has conquered and He will deliver the full victory to us in His second Advent. Therefore we are free to live godly, generous, faithful lives here and now, for we have nothing to be afraid of.

December 15 – Advent III

Luke 3:4 – “As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’” God makes long-range plans: Isaiah lived more than seven hundred years before St. John the Baptist preached by the Jordan River. Obviously, God sees farther into the future than we do! That’s yet another reason to trust Him when it comes to how He tells us to live our lives: He knows what’s coming and we don’t.

December 22 – Advent IV

Philippians 4:5-6 – “The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Wouldn’t you like to be free from worry and anxiety? Isn’t it worry and anxiety that often keep us from living the generous life God has called us to? St. Paul contrasts anxiety with prayer, supplication and thanksgiving in making our requests known to God. In other words, when you are tempted to anxiety and worry, pray to the Lord with a thankful heart and pour out your supplications before Him.

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve

Luke 2:11 – “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” We give gifts at Christmas time because God gave the greatest gift at Christmas. That’s how it always works: God acts, and we imitate. That’s what it means to grow in faith — to grow more into the image of God in what we think, say and do.

Dec. 25 – Christmas Day

John 1:12 – “But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.” In the beginning we were made in God’s image. When Adam and Eve sinned, the image was tarnished, and in some ways, it was even lost. But Christ has come to restore us, to make us God’s children again, to restore the image of God within us. The Christian life is a life of growing into that image, of struggling against sin and striving to imitate our Lord in His mercy, generosity, love, faithfulness and kindness.

December 29 – Christmas I

Luke 2:38 – “And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of Him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.” Notice here how giving thanks to God leads to good works (speaking about Jesus, in this case). Thankfulness toward God for all He has done for us is the foundation of a Christian life lived in godliness. For if we know all that the Lord has done for us, how can we not strive to honor Him with what we think, say and do?

December 31 – New Year’s Eve / January 1 – New Year’s Day

Luke 2:21 – “And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.” So how was your 2024? What are you looking forward to (with either joy or dread) in 2025? No matter our joys or our sorrows, this is certain: last year and next year belong to Jesus. And His very name is a comfort to us, for He is called Jesus because He will save His people from their sins, as the angel said. As you begin a new year, rest in that knowledge.

LIFE THOUGHTS FOR LUTHERANS – DECEMBER 2024

Advent I – “The Lord is our righteousness” (Jeremiah 23:6b). What comforting truth for hearts troubled with sin’s guilt that keeps resurfacing. Sometimes a past sin can be so haunting that we do not always feel forgiven, or we cannot forgive ourselves. The sin of abortion is a prime example. But our righteousness does not depend upon us or our feelings. Our righteousness is Christ! *Prayer: O Lord our Righteousness, may my comfort and hope be anchored in You and not my feelings. Amen.*

Advent II – No matter what sufferings we carry or how weary we become, Jesus provides hope-filled news about His second coming. Christ has won the victory, and when He returns death and evil will be vanquished. We will be “leaping like calves from the stall” (Malachi 4:1-3). “[S]traighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (Luke 21:28). Some things are worth waiting for—even amid suffering!

Advent III – “Speak tenderly” in Isaiah 40:1-2 is literally “speak to the heart.” More than nice-sounding words, all of the Good News encapsulated in the first and second coming of Jesus speaks powerfully to those with struggling and burdened hearts. The life issues give us opportunity to speak this Good News to matters of the heart, especially those considered “controversial” and “divisive.” *Prayer: Thank You for touching our hearts with the Good News! Help us share it with all who deal with matters of the heart. Amen.*

Advent IV/Christmas Eve – Jesus brought God delicately amidst sinners, as humble in crucifixion as He was helpless in conception. Yet this estate did not hinder but, in fact, heralded the full realm and reign of God for us. And thereby He reaffirmed the worth of even the feeblest human beings. God’s gift of life arrives all the better for the plain packaging He habitually hides it behind. *Prayer: Lamb of God, make it so that our taking hold of You leads us to cradle Your little ones as well. Amen.*

Christmas I/New Year’s Eve – A peaceful departure (Luke 2:29) may not always mean the absence of pain and suffering. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, it is seeing the presence of our Savior accomplishing His will according to His timetable. *Prayer: In our last hour, dear Savior, help us see You and be at peace. Amen.*

PLEASE JOIN THE 3RD ANNUAL “SHUT-INS” CHRISTMAS CARD CONTEST!

It’s our THIRD year already! Our third year of joyous Christmas card giving in pure JOY, with NO prizes other than JOY in the giving! Yes, JOY is the theme for sending Christmas cards to our shut-ins again this year – in great abundance! This is going to take some time, especially if you include everyone on the list below. So, plan now. Make it a priority and start early. Let your entire household be a part of this tradition! May the St. John’s family rally around our “Shut-Ins” and send Christmas greetings with all the love we have, because God first loved us and gave us the Christmas gift of HIS SON. Gift your fellow church-family members who are shut-ins. You may never hear from any of them, but God will hear them asking Him to bless you back with their prayers of Christmas thanks and JOY!

Please share the Christmas message with them:

“Joy to the world, the Lord is come!”

SHUT INS

Name	Address	Phone Number
Ann Beckett	6603 Medley Drive, Racine, WI 53402	
Pat Cole	6551 Mariner Drive, Unit 6, Racine, WI 53406	
Sue Erickson	5101 Wright Ave #121, Racine, WI 53406	
Gary & Shirley Filicetti	4710 N Main St, Racine, WI 53402	
Janet Fisa	McMynn Tower 110 7th St, Racine, WI 53403 Room #904	
Marcella Geyer	3139 Conrad Drive, Racine, WI 53404	
Gail Gotch	1916 Wisconsin Avenue, Apt. 359, Racine, WI 53403	
Joanne Griffin	3920 N. Green Bay Road, Rm. 74, Racine, WI 53402	
Mimi Hynek	5321 Douglas Avenue, Apt. 1156A, Racine, WI 53402	
Susan Monson	418 Shoreland Drive, Racine, WI 53402	
Kathy Patzman	5404 Idlewood Drive, Racine, WI 53402	
Art Preuss	5643 Erie Street, Room 219, Racine, WI 53402	
Linda Puchter	8500 Corporate Drive, Mount Pleasant, WI 53406	
Joanne Ruble	1108 N. Sunnyslope #104, Racine, WI 53406	
Judy Schweitzer	5643 Erie Street, Room 247, Racine, WI 53402	
John Smith	1636 Raintree Lane, Racine, WI 53406	