

THE EAGLE

St. John's Weekly Newsletter December 14, 2025

It was on December 10, 1866, that the constitution of St. John's Lutheran Church was adopted and signed. That means St. John's has been here for 159 years. Pretty incredible, right? But it shouldn't be surprising because it was established on a firm foundation rooted in God's Word.

Many of you reading this probably have a much deeper understanding of the history of St. John's, but even when Word and Sacrament are rightly administered, a congregation may not always grow and thrive. In fact, Satan works hard to make this the case. Even when things are done correctly, he can deceive—just as he did Adam and Eve. Beyond that, other factors can cause a church's physical location to close or move. Sadly, in our synod, as in every denomination, we hear about churches closing for various reasons. It's a reminder to be thankful for what God is doing for us here at St. John's... and what He has been doing for the past 159 years.

So, what does all of this mean for us today? It means we must trust in the Lord today, tomorrow, and in the future. And we must remember that the Church is not just a building but a community of believers. As I pondered what to write for this article, a hymn verse from *Built on the Rock* (LSB #645) came to mind:

*Grant, then, O God, Your will be done,
That, when the church bells are ringing,
Many in saving faith may come
Where Christ His message is bringing:
"I know My own; My own know Me.
You, not the world, My face shall see.
My peace I leave with you. Amen."*

Let that continue to be the case here at St. John's for the next 159 years—and many more after that.

May the Lord continue to bless you,

Pastor Dille

Thank you

Molly Bushue from FISH would like to thank everyone for their donations! The community donated over 1,000 toys!

The Story Bible

There are still 2 more Story Bibles in the office. These would make great Christmas gifts. If you are interested in purchasing one, please contact the church office. They are \$25 each.

Advent Midweek Services

Wednesday, Dec 17

12:15pm & 6:30pm

Mary's Son... Our Savior

Sunday School Teacher

We are in need of a Kindergarten/1st Grade Sunday School Teacher. please reach out to Kiley Bohnhoff at 217-343-3520 if interested!

Welcome!

Macie Kohnert is received into membership in our church family today by adult confirmation, at the same time as Kyle and Macie's son, Will, is baptized into Christ. Welcome to Kaleb Dille, and Will and Macie Kohnert on this 3rd Sunday of Advent!

Office Help



Working in our church office is both important and fulfilling. The Office Assistant is a VITAL member of our ministry team. Will you 1) pray for the right candidate to be found, 2) spread the word to people you know about our need to hire an Office Assistant, and 3) consider yourself for the position? The detailed job description and application are on our website at stjohnsLCMS.net (about...employment)! The need is great. The ministry together is greater!

Pennies



Please do not give us pennies, because our bank is no longer taking them!

2026 Offering Envelopes

Stop in the gym to pick up your envelopes. Your # has most likely changed. Make sure you don't use your new envelopes till 2026.

Response to the Gospel
Our Attendance Last Week

Sunday, December 7 425
Dec. 10th Advent Service 145
Adult Bible Class..... 56

Our Offering

Thanksgiving.....\$1,214.00
General Fund.....\$18,500.28
Online Offering.....\$6,039.28
Total Gen. Fund Offering.....\$25,753.56

LIFE QUOTE From Lutherans for Life

“And every life matters to God. It is impossible to live—even for a few moments on this earth—and not influence somebody in one way or another. We are all always influencing somebody—either for good or for bad. Life matters. Your life matters. Lives of kings and lives of shepherds all matter. We all matter and are important to God.” *Dennis D. Nelson, Lutheran CORE – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

Mission Team

A Shumway-Faith Lutheran Mission Team is being explored for March 18-30, 2026. Looking for 10 volunteers to do painting at 4 churches in Southwestern Uganda. Individual cost for travel, meals, lodging, and transportation estimated to be \$2,800 with the team raising additional funds for materials being donated to the project. Your trip includes 2 days at a National Park to view wildlife, a school visit, and a day in Kampala city. If interested in more details, text or or call Norbert Soltwedel 217 259 2833.

Stewardship Moment

Isaiah 35:4

“Say to those who have an anxious heart, ‘Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.’” The return of our Lord at the Last Day is a cause of joy and anticipation for us believers. We know our Lord and His love, and we look forward to His Second Advent. Indeed, how we live our lives here and now flows from our certain hope of resurrection and eternal life.

LifeLight

LifeLight will be starting again on January 11th studying Proverbs. Sign up by Dec. 28th on the bulletin board.

Prayer List

Bernetta Marxman, Donna Elmore, Carol Klein, Lisa Shaw, Terry Long, Cassie Power, Steve Rubin, Holly Bray, & Jane Probst. Eagle’s Nest Preschoolers Jaxson (parents Cheyanne & Tyler) and Leah (parents Shelly & Amine).

Youth Corner Upcoming Events

Advent Soup Luncheon

Soup will be served before and after the **Lunch** Advent service December 17th

High School Caroling

Will be December 14th. Meet at the church at 3:00 p.m. Youth Board will treat carolers to Pizza Man afterwards.

Cookie Walk

Saturday, Dec. 20th & Sunday, Dec. 21st.

Drop-off times:

Friday 19th 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Saturday 20th 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

High School Work Times:

Saturday 20th

Before Church 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

After Church 6:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Sunday 21st

Before 8:00 a.m. Worship

7:15 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

After 10:30 a.m. Worship

11:30 a.m. - noon

6th – 12th Grade bring 6 dozen cookies

High School Student Only sign up to work on the bulletin board

GOLDEN EAGLES DINNER

The Golden Eagles dinner will be Thursday, Dec. 18th, at noon. Catered by Joe’s. There will be salad, chicken alfredo, lasagna, bread, and desserts. Our program this month will be Christmas BINGO. We ask that you please sign the name of each person who'll be attending on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the atrium. If you're planning to attend you **MUST sign up this Sunday, 14th.**

Cards

If you are needing cards, check the card cabinet in the main hallway. More cards have been added.

Pastor Koschmann

Pastor Koschmann will again be our guest preacher on New Year's Eve at 6:30pm Communion Service. While he'll always be loved and welcomed here, this will be the last regularly scheduled New Year's Service with PK. He loves our congregation, too, and said, "a lot has changed! But the Gospel hasn't."

What to look forward to...

Take note of some special aspects of our calendar in the latter part of this month:

- Children's Christmas Service is December 21 at 10:30am. There will not be adult Bible Class that day. The 10:30am worship will be a non-Communion Service.
- Christmas Eve Communion: 4:00pm, 6:30pm, 9:00pm.
- Christmas Day Communion: 9:00am.
- Our church office will be closed Friday, Dec. 26
- No Service Saturday, December 27.
- Sunday, December 28 there will be ONE Service at 9:00am. The Lord's Supper will be celebrated.

Which Christmas Service(s) will you attend?

All three Christmas **Eve** Services (4:00, 6:30, and 9:00) are the same, except that the special musical anthem in each is unique. 4:00pm is likely to be crowded. 6:30 & 9:00 will have plenty of room, and plenty of God's Word. In all three Services will be using the offering plates (not the offering boxes at doors) to collect offerings and our attendance/prayer cards. Our Christmas **Day** Service (9:00am) will begin with a procession and culminate with the proclamation, "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come!"

Office Closed

The Church Office will close at Noon on December 24 and will reopen on Monday, December 29 at 8:00am. In case of emergency, please call the pastors: Pastor Burdick (309-255-5580), Pastor Dille (636-328-4216) Pastor Fortkamp (217-690-9746). Thank you!

Upcoming Communion Practices

In this new Church Year, we will be introducing a couple of new practices as we distribute the Lord's Supper:

- Beginning December 14, we'll offer gluten-free hosts to those who need them. We'll be learning as we go along, but the plan right now is that the gluten-free hosts will be on the altar on a separate paten (bread tray) from the others, and the pastor will bring the paten to the person who has notified him that they will need one. Normally the person can let the pastor know before Service, but if time doesn't allow for that it's fine for the communicant to say to the pastor while at the rail "gluten free, please" and he'll bring that paten. The person will pick up the gluten-free host directly from the tray. We know of a few people who will prefer this already, and would appreciate it if others would notify the pastors before service, if possible.
- In our Christmas Day Service, we'll offer the Communion Chalice to those who prefer it. Since we have only one Chalice, we'll make it available on the lectern (left) side only. A beautiful symbol of the unity we have in Christ, we're making it available due to some inquiries about offering it. The trays of individual communion cups will be offered first. If someone prefers the Chalice, they won't take an individual cup and then pastor on the lectern side will follow with the Chalice. You are encouraged to guide the Chalice to your lips by holding the base of the cup.

Birthdays This Week

| | |
|-------|--|
| 12/14 | Bob Flach, Debbie Koester, Randy Miller |
| 12/15 | Kris Wernsing |
| 12/16 | Arnetia Osborn, Cathy Mellendorf |
| 12/17 | Brenda Wendling, Gary White, Jack Miller, Jonathon Marxmann, Shirley Morse |
| 12/18 | Debra McClure, Jake Wendling |
| 12/19 | Nic Koester |
| 12/20 | Ryan Mayberry |

Anniversaries This Week

12/16/1978 Richard & Sandra Devall

CALENDAR-----Dec. 14 – Dec. 20, 2025

| | | | |
|---|----|-------------------------|--|
| Sunday | 14 | 8:00 a.m. | Worship w/HC |
| | | 9:15 a.m. | Sunday School & Christmas Program Practice |
| | | 10:30 a.m. | Worship w/HC |
| | | 11:30 a.m. | Fellowship Hall Rental |
| | | 11:30 a.m. | Trinity Room Rental |
| | | 1:00 p.m. | Board of Youth |
| | | 3:00 p.m. | LYF Caroling |
| Preschool – Monday – Friday 8:25 a.m. – 11:25 a.m. (Unless Otherwise Noted) | | | |
| Monday | 15 | | Pastor Dille's Sabbath |
| | | 8:45 a.m. | Preschool Chapel |
| | | 10:30 a.m. | Preschool Party |
| | | 1:00 p.m. | Cemetery Meeting |
| | | 4:00 p.m. | Board of Evangelism |
| | | 5:00 p.m. | Board of Stewardship |
| | | 5:15 p.m. | Choir Practice |
| Tuesday | 16 | 8:45 a.m. | Preschool Chapel |
| | | 10:30 a.m. | Preschool Party |
| Wednesday | 17 | | No Preschool |
| | | 9:00 a.m. | Bible Study |
| | | 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. | LYF Soup Lunch |
| | | 12:15 p.m. | Advent Service |
| | | 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. | LYF Soup Lunch |
| | | 1:00 p.m. | Office Staff Devotion/Meeting |
| | | 5:00 p.m. | Confirmation |
| | | 5:15 p.m. | Bell Practice |
| | | 6:30 p.m. | Advent Service |
| Thursday | 18 | Noon | Golden Eagles |
| | | 6:30 p.m. | Stephen Ministry |
| Friday | 19 | | Pastor Burdick's Sabbath |
| | | 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. | Cookie Drop Off |
| Saturday | 20 | 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | Cookie Drop Off |
| | | 10:00 a.m. | E.A.S.T.E.R. |
| | | 4:30 p.m. | Cookie Walk |
| | | 5:30 p.m. | Worship w/HC |
| | | 6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | Cookie Walk |