

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

February 2025

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BEAUTY IN OUR BROKENNESS

In a small village, there was a potter known for his beautiful, hand-crafted clay pots. He spent hours shaping and molding each one, ensuring they were perfect in every way. One day, he crafted two identical pots, both smooth, shiny, and without flaw. When they were fired in the kiln, they came out beautiful, ready to be sold.

As the potter walked to the market, he tripped and dropped one of the pots. It shattered into many pieces on the ground. The potter carefully picked up the broken pot, gathered its pieces, and continued to the market. He looked at the second pot and smiled. “You are perfect,” he thought and will surely fetch a good price.

As he arrived at the market, a woman noticed the potter holding the shattered pieces of the broken pot. Curious, she approached him and asked, “Why do you keep the broken pot?” The potter looked at the woman and explained, “It was beautiful once, but now it’s no longer whole. The other pot will serve its purpose, but this one—though it may be broken—reminds me that beauty and purpose are not always defined by perfection.”

The woman pondered the potter’s words and asked, “What will you do with the broken pieces?” The potter smiled and said, “I’ll gather them up and I’ll reshape this pot. It may never be the same as it was, but it can still be used. It will carry new purpose and beauty.”

Over time, the potter carefully reassembled the broken pot. Though it wasn’t perfect, it was unique. The cracks became part of its story, and it became a pot that carried a different kind of beauty—one shaped by care, patience, and restoration.

Just as the potter saw value in the broken pot, God sees value in us—even when we feel shattered by life’s struggles. Our imperfections and struggles are not signs of worthlessness but opportunities for God to reshape us. Through His grace, our brokenness can become part of our unique beauty and purpose.

“But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us” - 2 Corinthians 4:7. This verse speaks to the idea that, like jars of clay (which are often fragile and imperfect), we are vessels containing something far more valuable—God’s power and grace. Even when we feel broken, God’s presence within us shines through, and He can use our imperfections to display His glory and strength. The cracks and flaws in the jar do not diminish its purpose; rather, they serve to show that God’s power is at work in us, despite our brokenness.





ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

YOUTH NEWS



WE LOVE BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US. 1 John 4:19

LET'S PLAY A BOARD GAME



Lack of snow pushed our sledding family day to February 9, but our kids and parents enjoyed a day together playing board games together and enjoying a potluck lunch. Thanks to everyone who participated and who brought a dish and game to share.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR



SUNDAY SCHOOL SINGS

8:45am – Meet in Pre-school Room
Wear red, pink, white or black
11:30am - HAND BELL CHOIR



SLEDDING / POTLUCK

12:00pm – Family day at Schultz's



FAMILY FUN DAY

11:30am – March Madness Minute to Win It games



COLOR CONTEST

Annual Color Contest sheets handed out

IT'S COMING SOON!



Family Fun Day – March 16 – 11:30 am
More details coming soon!

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but be an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

St. John's ACT has embraced the winter by staying inside in the warmth and light. Gone are the days of playing capture the flag outside, replaced with board games and tag inside. We are getting along mostly, but sometimes the cabin fever gets the better of us.

Our Christmas Cookie Fundraiser was a success. The teens worked together on a Sunday after church, making lots of sweet treats. Anytime we can have fun and earn money is a success.

Devotion time was spent on topics of lying and life goals. We took a couple of weeks off around Christmas. It was good to spend some time away because there was a lot of sickness going around.

Staying centered on Jesus is our goal with ACT. Explaining who Christ is and how to live as a Christian is what it's all about. God bless St. John's congregation and our ACT Group.

Be in the Know

KEEPING MEMBERS INFORMED + INVOLVED

SENDING A BOX OF "LOVE" TO COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THOSE IN THE MILITARY

It has become an annual tradition to send a special box of goodies and "love" to show our support for our members away at college or in the military. This is St. John's way to let them know God is always with them and that we are thinking of them and keeping them in our prayers. Boxes will be packed by the St. John's Circle and sent out on Monday, February 10.



If you have a college student or a child in the military please let us know their name and address as soon as possible. Contact the office at 218-927-3170.



CHURCH NEWS & NEEDS

God is at work at St. John's. Thank you to all our amazing guest pastors for helping us out. Please know that the below list is subject to change.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

02 / 02 Pastor Peterson
 02 / 09 Pastor Milo
 02 / 16 Pastor Thomson
 02 / 23 Pastor Johnson
 03 / 02 Pastor Carnicom
 03 / 09 Pastor Peterson
 03 / 16 Pastor Thomson
 03 / 23 Pastor Johnson
 03 / 30 Pastor Thomson

MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICES

Pastor Peterson
 Supper at 5:00pm / Worship at 6:00pm

SHUT-IN VISITS

Pastor Thomson & Pastor Worrel

VACANCY PASTOR

Pastor Thomson
239-276-9460



CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

PASTOR CALL UPDATE

The Call Committee has met a few times since our last call that was denied. Two members have recommended pastors they know and they have received five additional names from the district (only two were willing to consider a call at this time). The committee then met to discuss the for possible pastors and three have been contacted to see if they would be open to an interview. Once the interviews have been conducted, the committee will share prospects with the congregation for you to review and a Special Congregation Meeting will be set to decide on the next call.



FELLOWSHIP SERVERS NEEDED

We are looking for volunteers to provide refreshments for fellowship time following worship. If you are able to help, please sign up on the sheet posted in the fellowship hall by the kitchen.

Thank you so much for your willingness to serve and help create a warm, welcoming environment for our congregation!

WEEKLY USHERS NEEDED

There is a weekly sign up for ushers located on the bulletin board in the entry. We ask that all confirmed members (male or female) sign up to help each Sunday worship run smoothly. This is an easy way to serve at church. Thanks!





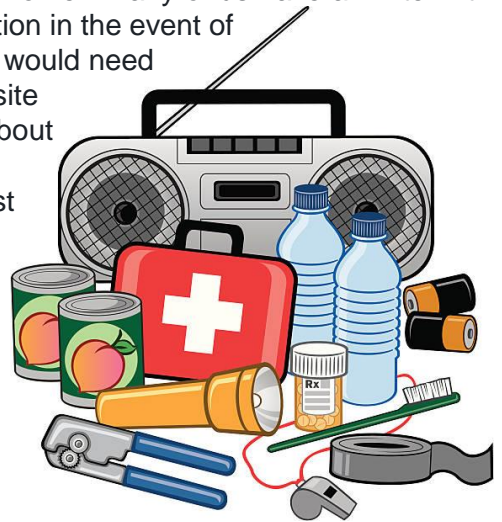
As I write this essay, devastating fires are laying waste to entire neighborhoods in the Los Angeles metro area. Fueled by strong Santa Ana winds, bone-dry vegetation and the low humidity of the air, fires are spreading quicker than ever imagined. Sometimes there are only minutes to gather everything that people want to save. Presently, over 150,000 people have been forced to evacuate, while even more are under evacuation warnings. Thousands of structures are ruins of ash. At least 24 people are known to have lost their lives and 16 people are missing.

Natural disasters and severe weather are the most common disasters that we are likely to experience, such as tornadoes, floods and fires. But there are also man-made disasters that we may experience in our lifetimes. Thankfully, we have not experienced the devastation of war in our homeland in many generations.

In all cases, having plans in place and pre-planned supplies at the ready can be incredibly important should you have to leave your home. Many of us have a winter kit in our vehicles and most of us know the safest location in the event of a tornado. Have you thought about what items you would need should you have to "bug out"? *Ready.gov* is a website designed to help you think about just this. It talks about planning, building bug-out kits, what is needed for financial planning, how to be tech ready, how to best care for your pets, evacuation and shelter, what about those with disabilities or the elderly, businesses and most importantly, your children.

I pray that none of us experience such disasters in the years to come and that God always keeps his loving arms around us.

Theresa Hiller-Baty, RN Parish Nurse



Worship services also available on:





PARSONAGE UPDATE

Have you seen the parsonage lately? The parsonage project continues to progress. Many projects are nearing completion or complete, and items are getting checked off the list.

The expanded kitchen is complete and looks beautiful! It features all new custom-built cabinets, new stainless-steel appliances, new floor, new paint, windows repaired and a new arched doorway to the back door entry.

The main level bathroom has been updated and looks brand new! New fixtures, new floor, new sink top, new cabinet knobs and drawer pulls, and new paint.

The next big projects is giving the stairway upstairs a facelift and repairing and remodeling the laundry room area.



We can't express enough thanks to everyone who has shared their time and talents into getting this project done. Please consider donating to this project to help us complete it and make it a fresh space for a new pastor. We are unbelievably blessed with dedicated people in this congregation.

If you would like to volunteer for any carpentry or painting work, please contact Marv Baty, Scott Wold, or Brian Ruschmeier.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Blessings on your special day!

Ben Crowther	03	Dayton Hallaway	13	Jane Lenzen	24
Isabella Westerlund	03	Jean Root	17	Bunny Dotzler	25
Jacob Redepenning	04	Jessica Carpenter	20	Jon Redmann	25
Teri Baty	05	Jozee Fossum	20	Laura Schlagel	25
Alice Fageroos	06	Dennis Lamke	20	Scott Wold	25
Rachel Bartz	07	Mark Wold	20	Ronald Christian	26
Mikael Perrine	08	Lois DuChane	21	Tim Landrus	28
Laura Sutton	09	Alicen Bartel	23	Jace Novotny	28
Jenna Harmon	10	Alexis Erdman	23	Steve Shirilla	28
Drew Olson	11	Jim R. Bender	24	Jeff Ruschmeier	29
Beth Borseth	12				

**The birthdays listed are from our church records. Any mistakes are unintentional. Please notify the office of any mistakes, deletions, or if you do not want your birthday listed.*

Lent



HELP NEEDED WITH LENT SUPPERS

We will be serving Lenten suppers at 5:00 pm each week. The St. John's Circle is looking for groups (i.e. Circle, Bible Study Groups, Sunday School, ACT, family, etc.) to sign up for these dinners. Please contact Joy Janzen at 218-927-6119 by February 9 to sign your group up for a Wednesday night. Dates are Wednesday, March 5, 12, 19, 26, April 2 & 9.

ANNUAL REPORT TO BE MAILED SOON

Annual reports will be mailed out soon. Please keep these reports handy, as they include address and phone numbers for the majority of our members. They also include schedules for communion fillers/cleaners, head ushers, what group you belong to and other valuable information. Please be sure to update your information with the church office, so that we can keep it accurate and up to date. Thank you.

TOGETHER IN MISSION | NEWS FROM THE NEUENDORFS

In late December we received the following from Pastor James & Deaconess Christel Neuendorf, who are our Together in Mission Missionaries, serving in Puerto Rico:

We celebrated Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in all three congregations! On Christmas Day we had the privilege to receive Mercedes who is a deaconess and church member from Santiago, Dominican Republic (from Pueblo Nuevo) in Bayamon! What a joyous time to share together with our brothers and sisters in Christ from all across the Caribbean. Emmanuel!

Our Wednesday night Bible Study time moved to a Vespers Advent service in preparation for Christmas. We gave out two devotionals for members and to those who have come to church activities. One set is a weekly look at the specific theme of Advent, and the other a daily devotional through 1 John.

On the third week of Advent, Cordero de Dios organized a Parranda (time of singing from house to house) for a home that cares for elderly people. After church, we gathered and practiced a whole set of Puerto Rican Christmas songs and Christmas hymns and then we were off! One of the residents at the home is the grandmother of a church member. She truly enjoyed the visit which we hope to repeat in this next year. James had the opportunity to share Luke 2 and the hope we have in Christ's birth. This event was one of the first PR4 Life events that the congregation organized.



During the week of Thanksgiving, I, Christel, had the opportunity to co-teach a course with Pastor Samuel Perez (Director of the Bible Institute for el Sínodo Luterana de Mexico) on The Lutheran Confessions in Mexico to the deaconess students that I mentor.

At the same time, the deaconesses who had graduated from the previous cycle participated in a continuing education course, Go and Be Reconciled.

Since our time overlapped with Thanksgiving, the women (and their husbands) made a very special Thanksgiving meal! From the decorations to the food to the time spent together, it was an incredible night shared with brothers and sisters from all over Mexico.

If you would like to give toward the support of our Together in Mission Missionaries, please place your offering in an envelope marked "Together in Mission."