

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2025

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Together IS a Wonderful Place to Be!

As we step into a new year, my heart is filled with gratitude for all that God has done in and through our church in the past year. We have seen His faithfulness, His provision, and His grace in countless ways. Each one of you has contributed to making this church family what it is, and I am truly thankful for your love, dedication, and commitment to serving the Lord together.

As I reflect on all the services church volunteers have done throughout the year, I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for the incredible dedication and service each of you have shown to our church community in your own special way. Your hard work and unwavering commitment help make our church a place of warmth, love and service to others. Whether you're helping behind the scenes, organizing events, using your talents to make improvements, or serving others, your contributions have made a meaningful impact.

The selflessness and care our members put into everything done reflects the spirit of Christ in ways that inspire us all. Your generosity of time, energy, and love does not go unnoticed, and we are truly blessed to have each of you as part of our church family. Thank you for your ongoing support and for everything each of you do.

Looking ahead to the new year, I pray that 2025 will be a year of growth, both in our personal faith and in our collective mission as a church. May we continue to seek God's will, follow His lead, and serve Him with passion and joy. I believe that God has great things in store for us as a church family, and together, we will continue to be a light in our world.

Let us enter this year with hearts full of hope, trusting that God will lead us in every step we take. Whether we face challenges or blessings, let us always remember that He is with us, guiding us with His love and grace.



I am excited to see how God will work in our lives and in the life of our church in the year to come. Thank you for being a part of this wonderful church family. May God bless you and your loved ones in 2025, and may His peace and joy fill your hearts as we walk together in faith. ***Happy New Year, and may it be a year filled with God's abundant blessings!***

**EVERYONE IS
INVITED TO A**

**FAMILY
FUN
DAY**



**POTLUCK
LUNCH &
SLEDDING**

**SUNDAY
JAN 19
12:00 PM**

Lunch starts at noon at the Schultz's. Bring a dish to share. Hot cocoa will be provided along with a great inside view of the hill if you need to warm up. Bring a sled if you have one.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

YOUTH NEWS

HAPPY NEW YEAR! WELCOME 2025!

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS CONTINUE

We kicked off the Christmas season with a special Sunday filled with joy and togetherness. Our young people hung their personalized ornaments on the Christmas tree followed by a beautiful performance of "Emmanuel, What a Beautiful Name," featuring a touching solo from little Cooper. In addition, our 9th grade students received their ornaments to hang on their trees at home, a tradition we all look forward to. It's truly a day that brings Christmas joy to all of us!"



WAIT... HOW BIG WAS THAT FISH?



We're excited to announce that we'll be having a family ice fishing day this winter! Stay tuned for more details—this is sure to be a day full of fun and adventure. And, of course, we can't wait to hear all the stories about the big one that got away!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Starts again Jan 12

HAND BELLS

Starts again in Feb

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.

CLOSING OUT 2024

As 2024 comes to a close, ACT has wrapped up a season of meaningful activities and community-building. After serving a delicious Harvest Breakfast in mid-November, we transitioned into the Advent season by helping decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. In mid-December, we dedicated a Sunday to serving fellowship, followed by baking, icing, and packaging a variety of Christmas treats for our fundraiser. Thank you to all who supported this successful event, and a special thanks to the parents and families who contributed—this project truly would not have been possible without your help!

A group of our 7th and 8th-grade students also participated in the annual children's Christmas program, bringing the Christmas story to life in a special way.

Throughout this past month, our discussions have focused on gratitude in all circumstances—the good, the challenging, and even the mundane (like taking out the trash). We've been reminded that no matter what, there is always something to praise God for. Alongside this, we've spent time building relationships with one another, sharing our life goals, and diving into the Book of Job.

To end the year on a high note, we will wrap up December with a Christmas party, including an exciting Escape Room activity centered around Christ's birth and the true meaning of Christmas.

ACT will take a short Christmas break and return on January 8th. We look forward to continuing our journey together in the new year!



HARVEST BREAKFAST



ST. JOHN'S WOMENS' CHRISTMAS PARTY

GOOD FOOD, FRIENDSHIP, AND LAUGHTER



Our women gathered for a joyful afternoon during their Annual Christmas Party. They shared a delicious potluck lunch, played games, sang Christmas songs, and enjoyed each other's company. In the spirit of giving, each brought a food item to donate to the Aitkin Food Shelf. After the party, the ladies visited shut-ins, delivering beautiful poinsettias to spread some Christmas cheer and brighten their day.



NEW BIBLE STUDIES IN JANUARY

In January, we are excited to bring back Men's Bible Study and introduce a new Mom's Bible Study, in addition to our Women's Bible Study. The new mom's group is primarily geared towards women rearing children and teens. All are invited to attend these groups and to grow your Christian faith together with others.

Women of the Bible

Join us for
Women's Bible Study
Tuesdays at 1:30 pm

Back together on Jan 7

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

ROMANS

ALIVE IN CHRIST

"THE RIGHTEOUS WILL LIVE BY FAITH."
ROMANS 1:17

WEDNESDAYS AT 9:00 AM
STARTING JANUARY 8

We invite Mom's of children and teens to

inspired

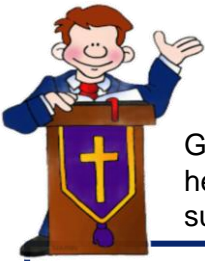
by the Holy Spirit

Four Habits for Faithful Living

a new Bible Study starting January 16

THURSDAY NIGHTS
AT 7:00 PM

contact Lisa Flerlage for more information



PASTOR COVERAGE

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

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

01 / 05 Pastor Peterson
01 / 12 Pastor Milo
01 / 19 Pastor Thomson
01 / 26 Pastor Johnson
02 / 02 Pastor Peterson
02 / 09 Pastor Milo
02 / 16 Pastor Thomson
02 / 23 Pastor Johnson

SHUT-IN VISITS

Pastor Thomson & Pastor Worrel

VACANCY PASTOR

Pastor Thomson
239-276-9460

If you have any "Pastor" questions, please contact Paul Zenke at 218-927-4837.



CALL COMMITTEE PASTOR CALL UPDATE

U P D A T E

Thank you to all who attended the December 8 Congregational meeting. We reviewed the benefits and limitations to calling from the field versus calling from the Seminary. Members were allowed to share comments and ask questions. In the end, most of the members present voted to continue calling from the field.

We have received two names from members and received information on those along with five others from the district that we will be reviewing. The good news is that we have pastors already booked through June. God continues to bless St. John's.

USHERING SERVICE UPDATE FOR 2025

In 2025, we are approaching the service of ushering a little differently. Ushers play a simple but essential role in ensuring that each Sunday service runs smoothly, and we are grateful for all who serve in this way. Instead of assigning ushers to specific months at the beginning of the year, we will now have a sign-up sheet available on the bulletin board in the entryway. We ask that all confirmed youth (both male and female) consider signing up to help on a week or two of your choosing. We believe it's important for our youth to be mentored by our more experienced ushers to ensure that this service is a positive and fulfilling experience for everyone involved. Thank you in advance for your continued support in helping make our worship experience meaningful and well-organized.





PARSONAGE UPDATE

The parsonage project continues to progress. Many projects are nearing completion and items are getting checked off the list.

The huge job of repairing and painting windows is complete and look 1000% better. This effort to repair the windows saved us about \$30,000.

The two bedrooms on the main level are complete. The floor in the north bedroom was a mishmash of different woods, so the room was carpeted. The other room's floor was cleaned and resealed. It looks great!

The kitchen is nearly complete. By print of this newsletter, the custom cabinetry will be complete. The plumbing, sink faucet and dishwasher have been installed and the kitchen will be ready to have other appliances installed.

After laying the new flooring in the main level, new oak baseboards and trim has been installed and really completes the main level living spaces. Finally, the closet by the front door is complete.

Still a lot to be done, but the parsonage is looking great.

Again, thank you to our wonderful volunteers who make this project happen. We can't express enough thanks to everyone who has shared their time and talents into getting this project done. We are unbelievably blessed with dedicated people in this congregation.



Be in the Know

KEEPING MEMBERS INFORMED + INVOLVED



INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS (JAN 5)

On Sunday, January 5, the officers who were elected at the October Voters' Meeting will be installed during the 9:00 am service.

Newly and re-elected officers for 2025 are: Paul Zenke (President), Luke Hamdorf (Vice-President), Teri Bati (Secretary), Debbie Schultz (Treasurer), Gina Wold (Financial Secretary), Brian Ruschmeier (Trustee), Tom Hawkins (Deacon), and Janice Hawkins (money counter).

We appreciate everyone's service and commitment to making St. John's Church an inviting place to worship.



QUARTERLY VOTERS' MEETING – JAN 26

The St. John's Quarterly Voters' Meeting is scheduled for January 26 following our 9:00 am worship service. All new members and confirmed members (age 19 or older) are encouraged to attend and eligible to be voting members.

Come, let your voice be heard, and be a part of the decision-making process of this church. Our church thrives when we come together on big decisions.

The Church Council, followed by Deacons, will meet on Thursday, January 9th at 6:00 pm to finalize the agenda for the Voters meeting.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Blessings on your special day!

James Flerlage	02	Atlanta Hagman	14	Greg Rono	21
Jeff Butler	04	Mary Mikes	16	Jeff Schlagel	21
Maureen Nelson	04	Sabin Christian	19	David J. Wilke	21
Brandon Perrine	04	Stella Sterling	20	Kathryn Futhey	24
Belinda Hammond	06	Steven Holm	20	Terry Lenzen	24
Rachel Converse	07	Julie Lemire	20	Robert Haugly	26
Tanner Wold	09	Vicki Patrick	21	Frannie Olson	27
Vickie Fossum	10	Dominick Patrick	21	Brooke Peysar	30

**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.*



A note from

Teri Miller-Baty
RN-St. John's Parish Nurse

RESOLUTIONS

The ancient Babylonians are said to have been the first people to make resolutions for a new year some 4000 years ago. Jews have High Holy Days which include Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Simchat Torah where they mark the beginning of the Ten Days of Repentance. Romas offered sacrifices to the deity Janus and made promises of good conduct for the coming year. For early Christians, the first day of the new year become the traditional occasion for thinking about one's past mistakes and resolving to do and be better in the future. Some contemporary Christian congregations celebrated the Covenant Renewal Service commonly held either on New Years Eve or New Years Day. Known as watch night services, they include reading from Scripture, hymn singing, prayer and making personal resolutions and serve as an alternative to raucous celebrations.

There was a time that I spent New Years Eve with my friends, counting the seconds to midnight, but now I am lucky to last until the ball drop in Times Square. I tend to share this quiet evening with my husband and think about God's blessing to me any my family.

May God bless you and yours this new year, *Teri Miller-Baty, RN Parish Nurse*

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!