

THE EPISTLE

St John Evangelical Lutheran Church

December 2020 / January 2021

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

St. John Family,

I was recently on a virtual continuing education event called Christ, Covid and Christmas. All of the speakers acknowledged the strangeness of this year. One of them suggested that we should stop expecting a "Merry" Christmas this year and just plan on a Christmas. On the surface, that sounds pretty depressing, but this year, I think it is honest.

Nothing about this year will be the same and it is really important that we give ourselves time to be sad. We grieve things that we are missing. We grieve people that we have lost. We grieve our comfort and familiarity, the way things have always been. We are lonely for family and friends. It is important that we acknowledge this and not try to force a "holly, jolly" feeling all the time. When we do, the stress often comes out sideways and we end up snapping at the people that we love.

So often these days, my heart is heavy, or I'm simply annoyed and the few people I am around these days are getting on my last nerve. In all of this, I'm not feeling very ready for the baby to come. My heart isn't right or ready. The world isn't right or ready. The church doesn't at all seem ready. But the thing is, Jesus came to a world that was utterly unprepared to meet the savior, God made flesh. But Jesus came.

Into this world that doesn't seem ready, Jesus comes and will come again.

The Coming of God by Ann Weems
Our God is the One who comes to us
in a burning bush,
in an angel's song,
in a newborn child.

Our God is the One who cannot be found
locked in the church,
not even in the sanctuary.

Our God will be where God will be
with no constraints,
no predictability.

Our God lives where our God lives,
and destruction has no power
and even death cannot stop
the living.

Our God will be born where God will be born,
but there is not place to look for the One
who comes to us.

When God is ready
God will come
even to a godforsaken place
like a stable in Bethlehem.

Watch . . .
for you know not when
God comes.

Watch, that you might be found
whenever
whenever
God comes.

Blessings, Pastor Angel

Online Worship Schedule

Daily Compline Evening Prayer (Virtual) Facebook Live 9:00p.m.
Sundays Outdoor Worship 10:30a.m.
Sundays Sunday School (Virtual – Zoom) 9:00a.m.
Kids Sunday School

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81837968066?pwd=RHd5N2pXUGJBY2Z4S3ltYVVVxSGZEZz09>

Meeting ID: 818 3796 8066. Passcode: 692534

Adult Sunday School

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83253715660?pwd=SnVhaTNneVBEOJWm1oNDhCdjRRZz09>

Meeting ID: 832 5371 5660

Passcode: 011686

Mondays Bible Study (Virtual - Zoom) 3:30p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/91674711174?pwd=aFF6eXJKNOVSbUcyYjZaE1qZERzQT09>

Meeting ID: 916 7471 1174

Password: 056629

Dial: +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Wednesdays Fellowship Time (Virtual - Zoom) 7:00pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84416906335?pwd=azF6WGZ6d1NBSnpVclpTaGtGYnlwdz09>

Meeting ID: 844 1690 6335 Passcode: 963723 Dial: +1 929 205 6099 US

St. John Officers and Committees 2020

President: Barb Landis

Vice President: Kim Derr

Secretary: Joyce Rohrbaugh

Treasurer: Carol Endslow

Stewards: Jacklyn Endslow, Andy Mosher, Erin Slates

Elders: Melissa Puster

Trustees: Bob Burgett, Lee Sigler, Floyd Spreng

Drive-in/Outdoor Worship is weekly at 10:30! We have simplified the set up which hopefully will allow us to worship in the parking lot in everything but the worst of weather. Bring a mask in case you get out of the car.

Volunteers needed for Outdoor Worship: For our outdoor service we need help with the following: Usher, Parking Assistant and Sound/Recording. Please contact Beth Lackey (via email or text) to sign up to help. This help is needed every week or we will have to return to online Worship only.

Special Music

Music greatly enhances our worship time together. We would love for folks to prerecord some special music that we could use in our drive-in services as well as for Christmas offerings. Please let Pastor Angel know if you would like to provide some and to check about copyright streaming rights!

Advent Devotions

There will be a table set up in the basement of the church with advent devotionals and materials to pick up to help you mark the season. Also consider making use of some of the online offerings, one example of which is found here: https://storyboardingchurch.wordpress.com/2020/11/10/all-i-want-for-christmas-devotional/?fbclid=IwAR1bTChfrPWCY77u1ayD8a_I5-VkvR4dZnycGyKNIph5tGF0dh32PfrOgE

Annual Meeting

Our 2021 annual meeting will take place on Sunday, January 24th right after our 10:30 Drive-in service. Reports will be emailed ahead of time and paper copies will be available that day. We will elect officers for council through paper ballots passed out before the service and collected after voting.

WELCA Care Boxes

Our St. John WELCA group will still be providing care boxes to our members who could use some extra Christmas well wishes! These boxes will be set up in the basement of the church from Sunday, Dec. 6th to Sunday, Dec. 13th. If you would like to contribute any items please come and add them to the boxes at this time. We are planning for twenty boxes.

Worship Survey

The Pandemic Worship committee has created a survey to help us better understand the needs and comfort level of the congregation. It should take 5 to 10 minutes to complete. Please fill out the online survey at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeP_nBqOYtFIBCcFwStjORr2UeNN_bsz-hirqKvPvG1UZ5M7Q/viewform?usp=sf_link

The deadline is December 7th. If you are unable to access it online, please contact Dean Slates and he will put you on a list to be contacted by phone.

Offering

Thanks to your generosity, St. John is not just surviving during these tough times, we are able to do ministry. We are able to honor our commitments those who rely on us, we are able to provide help where needs are great right now, and we are able to be nimble and adjust to the needs of the community during this time. We will continue to fulfill God's mission to spread the good news, to love Jesus and each other, even as it looks different than it has in the past!

Thank you so much for your part in that mission by sharing what God has given you!

If you are looking to give, you can mail your check to St. John, 46 Co. Rd. 2575, Lakeville, OH. Or give online through our website or Facebook page. Thank you also for all that you are doing to care for each other and for you neighbors. These are also offerings to God!

Junior Youth Group

Sunday December 20th at 2pm we will have a junior youth group meeting via zoom. We will do a craft together and talk about the Christmas story! Please let Pastor Angel know if you didn't get the craft kit. You will need school glue and maybe a paintbrush.

Topic: December Nativity Suncatcher
Time: Dec 20, 2020 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89494626927?pwd=dmZtekhMMWVlOGxnTDI5WDIwNkhnZz09>

Meeting ID: 894 9462 6927
Passcode: 026013

Christmas Worship Schedule

Monday, December 21st	Quiet Christmas	7pm - Prerecorded, on YouTube and Facebook Shared with Pastors of the Richland/Ashland Conference
Monday, Dec. 21st to Saturday Dec. 26th	Nativity display in the pavilion	Come any evening to say a prayer and "light" a glow stick in front of the Holy Family. Glow sticks will be provided!
Wednesday, December 23rd	Hymn Sing Fellowship	7pm - Zoom using the usual Fellowship link Sing favorite Christmas hymns and carols led by Burgetts and Puster's.
Thursday, December 24th	Christmas Eve Service	7pm. - Prerecorded on YouTube and Facebook
Sunday, December 27th	Pajama Christmas Service	10:30am - Prerecorded on YouTube and Facebook With special appearances from some of our kiddos!

Calendar - (All subject to change)

December 2020

- 1 Giving Tuesday
- 7 Pearl Harbor Day
- 13 NEO ELCA Synod Bishop Installation
via YouTube LiveStream
- 15 Mutual Ministries Committee 5:30 PM
St. John's Council 7:00 PM
- 19 Big Ten Conference Football Champion Game
- 19-20 Ohio Auxiliary Deer Gun Hunting Season
- 21 Winter begins Quiet Christmas Service -Virtual at 7 PM
- 24 Christmas Eve Service. . . Virtual at 7:00PM
- 25 Christmas Day
- 27 Sunday Service . . . Virtual at 10:30AM
- 29 Full Moon
- 31 New Year's Eve

January 2021

- 1 New Year's Day Holiday observed
- 2-5 Ohio Deer Muzzle Loading Hunting Season
- 4-7 Ohio Deer Muzzle Loading Hunting Season
- 6 Epiphany Old Christmas
- 11 NCAA National Championship Football Game
National Milk Day
- 14-16 NEO Sportsman's Show at Mt. Hope
- 18 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday observed
- 20 Presidential Inauguration Day
- 22-23 North Central Dairy Grazing Conference in Mt. Hope
- 24 Annual Meeting After Church
- 31 Installation of Council, WELCA & Sunday School officers

Christmas Gift—Farmer's Field School for a Woman

The kids and I would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas. In your honor, we have donated money to send a woman farmer to field school through ELCA's GOOD Gift Program.

"Women are the force behind half of the world's food production. But they don't always have the same access to the land, supplies and education that their male counterparts do. It's been estimated that if female farmers around the world had equal access to these resources, the resulting food production would put a significant dent in the number of people living with hunger. With an opportunity to attend farmers' field school, they'll learn the latest advancements in agriculture, marketing and leadership, and help nourish their families and communities."

Blessings and love!
Pastor Angel, Sophie,
and Asher



Book Club

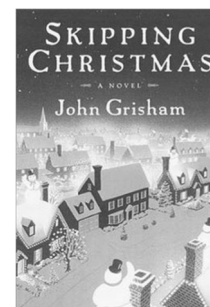
St. John Book Club will meet on zoom on Monday, December 7th at 7pm to discuss John Grisham's book, *Skipping Christmas*.

Topic: St. John Christmas Book Club

Time: Dec 7, 2020 07:00 PM Eastern Time

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81458309527?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81458309527?pwd=ZFdWV09JMWV0WmtxQmxpbURRNINrQT09)
pwd=ZFdWV09JMWV0W
mtxQmxpbURRNINrQT09

Meeting ID: 814 5830 9527
Passcode: 435188
Phone in : +1 312 626 6799
US (Chicago)



Helping others with a Blessing Bag: Pat and Wink continue to collect and deliver "Blessing Bag" necessity packages to the homeless population in Wooster. If anyone would like to contribute to this outreach, there will be a box in the church basement, on the table near the side basement door where you can place any donations. Thank you in advance for sharing any of the suggested items: socks, small soaps and shampoo, deodorant, razors, chapstick, small sunblock, feminine products, wet wipes, bandages, nail clippers, single serving meats (tuna) and snacks (like raisins, granola bars, trail mix, nuts and crackers).

Food Pantry needs: Remember those in need and deliver directly to a Pantry of your choice.

Loudonville Food Pantry needs: Helping Hands is

open however they are not accepting donations at this time.

Lakeville Food Pantry needs: Kleenex, canned fruit, salt, jelly.

December 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4 John Mosher	5 Henry McDonnell
6 Ron & Carol Endslow	7	8	9	10 Rebecca Mosher	11 Shannon Endslow Sarah Maguire	12
13	14 Charlie Puster Bill Spencer	15	16 Jared & Stacey Sigler Jonathan Erbacher	17	18	19 Larry Smith
20	21	22 Luke Taylor	23	24	25 Christmas: Birth of Jesus Christ	26
27	28	29	30 Jo Ellen Zilko	31		

January 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 <u>New Year's Day</u>	2
3	4	5	6	7 Rich and Barb Landis	8	9
10	11	12 Carol Endslow	13	14	15 Brenda Pennington	16
17 Terry Murphy	18 Faith Sigler <u>ML King Day</u>	19	20 Alexandra Sigler	21 Kayelyn & Summer Endslow	22 Linda McCullough Olin Abele	23
24	25 Veronica Nagy	26 Rhett & Rhea Spreng	27	28	29	30 Steve Schwarzwalder
31						

St John Evangelical Lutheran Church

46 Ashland County Road 2575

Great ministry happens at St. John. Our worship is energized with the gift of the Holy Spirit and much musical talent, our Sunday School is enlivened by a sense of community where people, young and old, are encouraged to dig deeply into God's word, and all of our gatherings are blessed with abundant and delicious food.

Even more importantly, the people of St. John take very seriously God's call to serve each other and their neighbors. They generously give of their time, talents and money to support their whole community. When people here at St. John talk about what they love most about their congregation the most common answer is "it's home." This comes from lifelong members and those who have just recently started to worship

