

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Dec 15th

FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR are presented to the glory of God in honor of Courtney Miller's 19th birthday on December 14th, given by Matt, Jessica, Natalie, & Vanessa Miller; In honor of Carol & Richard Haar's 11th wedding anniversary, given by the Haar Family; and in honor of Jerry & Ginny Nissen's 60th wedding anniversary.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

12-8-24: 8:00 am: 42 10:30 am: 97 Online: 24 Total: 163
 Adult Sunday School: 10 JAM Sunday School: 12

OUR KNOWN HOSPITALIZED:

Dick Crouse ~ Gardens of St Francis

PRAYER CHAIN CRITICAL/NEW: Angela, Jerry Brittan, Peggy Burke, Carol Crosser, Dick Crouse, Doris, Ann Dudics, Duke, Norman Eck, Martha Everett, Linda (Stieben) Hagedorn, Jody, Kaitlyn, Deborah Kidwell, Kaylea Kochanski, Rebecca Kohn, Helen K., Lisa, Paul Lambrecht, Marc LeDuc, Family of Judy Lepiarz, Rick Lepiarz, Diane McGovern, Chad Milner, Sue Moszkowicz, John Puhl, Shonna, Skylar, June Smarkel, Traci Spencer, Marilyn Ulrich, Steve Welling, Dave Wilbarger Sr., Family of Arlene Wilbarger, Donna Winslow, Eileen Young, Anne Zielinski.

*****To better manage the prayer chain, only critical and new requests will be printed in the weekly announcements. All ongoing requests will be posted in the lounge, and narthex (lobby), and be included in the monthly newsletter. If you have any additions or changes to the prayer chain, please email office@firststjohn.com*****

CALENDAR FOR DEC 15 – DEC 21

<u>Today</u>	8:00 am	- Early Worship Service/Communion
	9:15 am	- J.A.M. Sunday School Christmas Program Rehearsal
	10:30 am	- Late Worship Service/JAM Christmas Program
<u>Monday</u>	7:00 pm	- DAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
<u>Tuesday</u>	2:00 pm	- WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA PLACEMENT
	7:00 pm	- DAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
<u>Wednesday</u>	7:00 pm	- DAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
<u>Thursday</u>	5:30 pm	- Choir Rehearsal
	7:00 pm	- DAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
<u>Friday</u>	5:15 pm	- Piano Recital (church/lounge)

WELCOME TO FIRST ST. JOHN: If you are visiting with us, please sign the guest book, located in the Narthex (lobby).

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Please remember to silence your cell phone before church begins. Thanks!

FOR YOUR SECURITY, please make sure to secure any valuables and lock your car. Unfortunately, as a property with heavy foot and car traffic, unlocked vehicles can be an easy target. Lock it up, keep it safe!

SPECIAL MUSIC Please welcome Elsie Hagedorn who will be singing during the 8:00 am service today. Please make sure to thank her for sharing her talents today!

JAM KIDS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM will take place during the 2nd service. They will be presenting "The Story of Christmas". Please join us and thank the children for their hard work and voices! Enjoy!

NO ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL today due to the Christmas Cookie Sale in the lounge. We will meet again on Sunday, December 22nd before breaking until the New Year.

J.A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL Join us every Sunday at 9:15 am in the JAM Room in the church basement for children ages 3-5th grade! We hope you will join us!

NO NURSERY TODAY during the 10:30 am service due to the JAM Kid's Christmas Program.

CHRISTMAS COOKIE SALE is taking place TODAY, after both services. Please stop in the lounge to support the WELCA cookie sale fundraiser. There will be a variety of cookies on display for purchase. Make sure to get yours before they are gone!

LIVESTREAM SERVICE WEEKLY Did you know that you can watch a livestream of our 10:30 am Sunday Service? You can find it by visiting www.firststjohn.com/LIVE, or by using the Online Worship link in the middle of the home page or the top navigation ('Worship' then 'Online Worship') on any page.

ADOPT-A-FAMILY LAST DAY TO DONATE TODAY! Each year, we participate in the Adopt-A-Family program sponsored by the East Toledo Family Center. This year we adopted a family of 8 for Christmas who recently lost everything in a house fire. The children in the family range from ages 2 months to 14 years old. If you pulled one of the ornaments, please place your unwrapped gift in the boxes by the Christmas tree in the narthex or the box in the lounge. If you were unable to bring your gift today, please make arrangements with Toni Wilbarger for drop off as we plan to sort and get the gifts to the family this week ahead of Christmas. Thank you to all who participated to make the holidays a little brighter for this family!

2024 POINSETTIA SALE DEADLINE TODAY! Please see the order form located in the bulletin or included in the November Newsletter. Extra order forms will also be printed and available in the back of the church. Each poinsettia is \$15 each and you can choose between red or white. The deadline for placing orders in time for Christmas is today, Sunday, December 15th. **Payment must accompany orders.**

MISSION SUNDAY TODAY! Our December Mission Sunday is today! We again are collecting canned goods and items for the LSS Food Pantry and also personal needs items for our very own pantry. Please place your items in the shopping carts located in the back of the church.

THANK YOU! A huge THANK YOU to all who participated in this year's family Christmas Dinner. A great time was had by all. A big thank you to all those who donated their time to set up, serve, tear down, or donate a raffle basket. Also, a very special thank you to Bob and Dick Haar for setting up the chairs, and Bob Haar for providing the karaoke entertainment!
~Sue Ann Rogers, WELCA President

WREATHS IN CEMETRY We will be placing the wreaths from the Wreaths Across America program in the cemetery on the veteran's graves on Tuesday, December 17th at 2pm. Volunteers are welcome to help!

FSJ QCD's First St. John family, your church is considered a "qualified charitable distribution". Which means that you could reduce your adjusted gross income (AGI) & lower your tax bracket on the amount of taxes you pay with a donation from your retirement fund. But remember, the QCD must be completed by Dec. 31st, 2024, to count toward your annual required minimum distribution & the monies are directly transferred from your IRA custodian to the church. Please see Bill Nelson with any questions.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES will be held on Tuesday, December 24th at 7:00 pm and 11:00 pm (candlelight service). Please make plans to join us as we celebrate the birth of our Lord!

BE A PART OF OUR SCOUTING MINISTRY! The Scouting ministry meets the first Monday of each month at 7pm in Room 204 (Catechism Room). The next meeting is planned for December 2nd at 7pm. We officially have been designated Troop #58! They are in desperate need to fill a few adult volunteer positions so please consider helping to start this ministry which will impact our community. If any questions, please contact Mike @ (419) 262-7583. Also, if you have a child, or know of a child that would be interested in signing up for the scouting program, there is now a button on our website that you can click to fill out an interest form (www.firststjohn.com).

MONTHLY MINISTRY This month's monthly ministry focus will be the Isaiah 117 House in Lucas County. The Isaiah 117 project exists to reduce trauma on removal day for children who are being placed in the foster care system. The house helps lighten the load for caseworkers and ease transition into foster care by creating a 'home' environment where children on removal day can go instead of an office while caseworkers work on placement. This home provides the comforts of home and lessens the impact. Please put your donation in the yellow envelopes located in your pew and place them in the offering plate. Please make checks payable to First St John Lutheran, but indicate "Isaiah 117" in the memo line.

PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY donation item for the month of December are band aids and disposable razors. Items can be deposited in the bright green bin in the lounge or the pull-out drawer in the narthex (lounge) or drop them off at the office during the week.

2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES The 2025 envelopes are now available for pick up! They are on the long white tables in the lounge in alphabetical order. Even if you contribute using Vanco, you will still get envelopes to be used for special services or other donations if requested. If you are interested in receiving paper envelopes, please contact Jennifer in the church office.

DAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM COOKIES NEEDED The Day School Christmas Programs are coming up December 16-19th. We realize the church is having a cookie sale on December 15th, but we will also need donations of cookies for the family receptions after the programs. If you could drop off an extra dozen or two, the Day School would really appreciate it! Please plan to drop off by Monday, December 16th during 9am-4pm and make sure to label them for the Day School Christmas program. These can be placed in the refrigerator in the lounge if needed. Also, if you could help serve that evening during any of the performances, we would really appreciate it. Please contact Andrea in the Day School office at 419-691-6480.

PORTALS OF PRAYER the new Portals of Prayer for January through March are now available. Please pick up a copy in the lounge or in the back of the church.

CHECK OUT A BOOK/DEVOTIONAL! As a reminder, the First St. John Library has a wealth of Christian literature available to be borrowed. A few new books have been donated and are showcased on the table in the lounge. One particular devotional is for caregivers of Alzheimer's and dementia patients. Come check out our book selection on the table in the lounge! For any assistance or questions, please see Emily Kruse or call the office at 419-691-7222.

HOMEBOUND COMMUNION If you or a loved one would like a homebound communion visit please call the church office. Bob Haar is temporarily communing the homebound at their request and he will call you to setup an appointment.

QUILTING MINISTRY The Quilting Group will begin meeting on Monday, January 6th at 9:30am. Most of the help needed involves tying layers of a quilt together (you just need to know how to tie a knot). Bring a sack lunch. If there is bad weather, they follow Oregon Schools for cancellations.

DECEMBER DARTBALL the Dartball teams are back in action next week on December 16th at 7:30pm. Team FSJ #1 will play at Messiah, and FSJ Team #2 will play at St. Petri.

SPECIAL MUSIC DESIGNATED FUND A special music fund was recently created specifically to support the talented musicians invited to play at our church. Money from this fund will be used at the discretion of Dr. Tony, our Church Musician, when securing guest musicians. To contribute, donate cash or checks made out to First St John Lutheran Church and simply indicate on your envelope and/or check memo line, that your contribution is to be directed to the Special Music Fund.

THE LAYETTE MINISTRY is the Rebecca Circle's mission as part of WELCA. It is an ongoing mission throughout the year. We will be sending this year's donations to hurricane victims in Tennessee and North Carolina. We are so thankful to everyone who donated the beautiful and useful items. Some of the items were donated to the relief efforts for the Hurricane this past week. The layette box will remain in the lounge until the end of the year. Below is a list of the items we accept.

- lightweight cotton t-shirts (no onesies) *
- long or short-sleeved gowns or sleepers (without feet) *
- receiving blankets, medium weight cotton or flannel, or crocheted or knitted with lightweight yarn, between 36" and 52" square
- cloth diapers, flat fold preferred
- jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt with a hood, or include baby cap *
- pairs of socks
- hand towel, dark color recommended
- bath size bars of gentle soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping (no mini or hotel size bars)
- diaper pins or large safety pins

* **Clothing sizes can be up to 24 months**

JANUARY MEMBERSHIP CLASS Pastor will be hosting a membership class in January for all who have newly become members, or are interested in membership. If you are interested, please reach out to Pastor Rayl (pastor1@firststjohn.com) or call the church office 419-691-7222.