

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Dec 22nd

FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR are presented to the glory of God.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

12-15-24: 8:00 am: 37 10:30 am: 134 Online: 48 Total: 219
Fellowship Breakfast: 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, Gene Hagedorn, 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 22 – DEC 28

<u>Today</u>	8:00 am	- Early Worship Service
	9:15 am	- Adult Sunday School
	10:30 am	- Late Worship Service/Baptism/Communion
<u>Monday</u>	7:00 pm	- DAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS BREAK (NO SCHOOL)
<u>Tuesday</u>		OFFICE CLOSED – CHRISTMAS EVE
	7:00 pm	- Christmas Eve Service
	11:00 pm	- Christmas Eve Service
<u>Wednesday</u>		OFFICE CLOSED – MERRY CHRISTMAS!
<u>Thursday</u>		OFFICE CLOSED

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!

BAPTISM TODAY during second service are for Hudson William Hayes born on September 19, 2019 to Nathan and Brittany Hayes (Paul), and Parker David Moore born on September 21, 2019 to Brian and Brooke Leigh Moore (Paul).

POINSETTIAS are displayed on the altar today and through Christmas Eve in honor and in memory of FSJ loved ones and friends. Please look over the insert in the bulletin. If you find any errors or omissions, please let Jennifer know in the office (office@firststjohn.com) as soon as possible so the insert can be corrected before Christmas Eve. Thank you!

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL will meet today at 9:15am in the lounge. This will be the last time they meet before breaking for the New Year.

NO J.A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL There will be NO JAM Sunday School today. We will resume again on Sunday, January 5th.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES will be held on Tuesday, December 24th at 7:00 pm and 11:00 pm. There will be NO services on Wednesday, December 25th. Merry Christmas to all our friends and family!

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.

WREATHS AVAILABLE this past week the wreaths from **Wreaths Across America** were placed on the over 100+ veterans in our cemetery. Thanks to all who helped place the wreaths and those who donated to cover the cost of the wreaths. There are some extra wreaths we were given that are free and available to anyone who is interested, They are located in the boxes next to the garage. Please feel free to take.

ADOPT-A-FAMILY UPDATE THANK YOU, CHURCH FAMILY! This year we "adopted" a family of eight for Christmas. Twenty-six First St. John families donated 41 requested items, but many of you went way beyond. We also received extra clothes, stuffed animals, candy and cash donations. The mom was very grateful, and I think we went a long way in making their Christmas a little brighter. Thank you all so much.

~ Toni Wilbarger

COOKIE SALE UPDATE Thank you to all who participated either by baking cookies or donating items for the WELCA cookie sale that took place last Sunday in between services. Thanks to all who purchased cookies, we raised \$588! Thanks to everyone. We are so appreciate your efforts and generosity!

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

JAM CHRISTMAS PROGRAM: A very special thank you to all of our JAM teachers, volunteers, parents, and kids for sharing a special Christmas program with us last Sunday! It was wonderful to see the story of Jesus' birth told to us by the children! Thank you!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING RESULTS Thanks to all the members who participated in the Congregational meeting. The financial budget for 2025 passed with 89 votes for, and 6 against. All new board committee members passed unanimously. We look forward to a great 2025!

NOVEMBER FINANCIAL UPDATE For the month of November (2024 - 4 Sundays), FSJ income was \$28,939 & the expenses were \$26,590 for a **positive net income of \$2,349!** FSJ year to date finances has a deficit of \$19,607, which is an 10.70% improvement over the month of October. The entire FSJ staff & trustees did an excellent job in holding expenses down; most of the expense categories were below budget for the month & the congregation stewardship was strong. Thank you to the entire church family!

~Bill Nelson - Treasurer

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.

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.

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.

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.