
◆ First St. John Journal ◆

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Why Being Thankful Is a Powerful Way to Live Free

By Debbie McDaniel

“The Lord is my strength and my shield; My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart exults, And with my song I shall thank Him.”

Psalm 28:7

We have so much to be grateful for in this life, every single day. But reality is that sometimes constant life demands, battles, and worries give more room to defeat than to a heart of thanks. Or we forget, in the midst of busyness and pressures, just to pause and give thanks for all that God has done and continues to do in our lives.

Sometimes it really is a sacrifice to offer praise and thanks. We may not feel like it. We're struggling. We're weary. Or maybe, we feel like He let us down. We think God seems distant, like he's far away, or doesn't really care about what's troubling us. Painful life blows and losses might have recently sent us spiraling.

But here's what can make a lasting difference. We have a choice, every day, to give Him thanks. And with a heart of thanksgiving, we realize that no matter what we face, God doesn't just work to change our situations and help us through our problems. He does more. He changes our hearts. His power, through hearts of gratitude and focused minds on Him, releases the grip our struggles have over us. We're strengthened by His peace, refueled by His joy.

No matter what our current situation, or the struggles we may be facing, here's what choosing to be thankful does:

- It gets our eyes off ourselves, and helps us to focus back on God.
- It reminds us we're not in control, but that we serve a Mighty God who is. It keeps us in a place of humility and dependency on Him, as we recognize how much we need Him.
- It helps us to recognize we have so much to be thankful for, even all the little things, which often we may forget to thank Him for. It takes our atten-

tion off our problems and helps us instead to reflect on the goodness of His many blessings.

- It reminds us God is the Giver of all good gifts. We were never intended to be fully self-sufficient in this life. A grateful heart reminds us that ultimately God is our Provider, that all blessings and gifts are graciously given to us by His hand.
- A heart of gratitude leaves no room for complaining. For it is impossible to be truly thankful and filled with negativity and ungratefulness at the same time.
- It makes the enemy flee. The forces of darkness can't stand to be around hearts that give thanks and honor to God. Our praise and thanksgiving will make them flee.
- It opens the door for continued blessings. It invites His presence. God loves to give good gifts to His children. He delights in our thankfulness and pours out His Spirit and favor over those who give honor and gratitude to Him.

Maybe you're in a hard place right now. Maybe you feel like God has left you on your own to fend for yourself, or the battle seems too hard. Maybe there's never enough money left at the end of the month and you can't figure out how to make things work. No matter what, in it all, be assured God is with you and He cares. Choose a heart of gratefulness today. Make a list of all that God has blessed and filled your life with, that it's been easy to take for granted at times. Trust He knows what concerns you and is at work even now, to bring you through this uncertain season. Thank Him for providing all you need.

FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST NEWS

The next fellowship breakfast will be held on Saturday, November 8th at 8:30 am at American Table on Wheeling Street. Please make plans to join us for some great food, discussion, and fellowship! All are invited!



CIRCLE INFORMATION

The next women's board meeting is Monday, Nov. 20th at 6:30 pm in the lounge. All are welcome.

Ruth Circle Meeting: Tuesday, November 4th at 11:00 am in the lounge.

Miriam Circle Meeting: Wednesday, November 5th at 9:30 am in the lounge

Rebecca Circle: Saturday, November 1st at 11:30 am in the lounge.

Hannah Circle Meeting: no reported at time of printing. Please contact Debbie Smith.

ELDERS FOR NOVEMBER

	<u>8:00 AM</u>	<u>10:30 AM</u>
2nd	Kevin Ruedy Mike Winslow	Bill Nelson Matt Miller
9th	Jeff Smith Matt Miller	Dick Haar John Roth
19th	Bob Haar Sherrie Haar	Tom Gaskins Terry Ruedy
23rd	Bill Nelson Matt Miller	Kevin Ruedy Mike Winslow
30th	Ted Hagedorn Jeff Smith	Dick Haar John Roth



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

The deadline to turn in your boxes is Sunday, November 23rd. Empty boxes with labels inside are in the lounge, the JAM room in the church basement, and outside the church office. No candy, liquids, toothpaste, bar soap, war-related toys, or breakable items. You can bring your box to worship or drop it off during the week. Questions? Call Deb Ladd at 419-250-1460. Please help us share God's love with children around the world.

FOOD DRIVE

Lutheran Social Services is seeing an influx of clients with food insecurity. The Day School children will be collecting for LSS to help earn an ice cream party, so you can donate in their bins to help them out or leave items in the cart located in the back of the church. Some items LSS struggles the most to keep on the shelves our canned vegetables, canned fruits, and shelf-stable or powdered milk, however they will take any canned or shelf-stable goods (just no glass jars or expired items). If you are able to pick up a few extra items this week to donate, every little bit helps.

WE ARE HIRING!



FSJ is looking to fill the Office Manager position for the church with Jennifer's departure. They must be proficient in Microsoft Office, and Publisher software specifically is a bonus. Excellent written, verbal, and telephone communication skills is required. The ideal candidate will be a self-starter, very organized, able to work with volunteers and people of all ages and give attention to detail. Competitive salary, full time position (30-35 hours a week). Anyone interested should contact Pastor Rayl and email a resume to pastor1@firststjohn.com.

FLOWER SIGN UP SHEETS

The 2025 sign up sheets for altar flowers for January through October will soon be placed in the red flower sign up book. This book is located under the main bulletin board in the narthex. We hope to have the new sheets in the book by mid-November. Keep in mind you can also call the church office to add flowers to the schedule on the Sunday you prefer.

ADDRESS CHANGES/CORRECTIONS

To keep current information for office records, if your name, address or phone number changes, please notify the office by faxing 419-691-7220, or mailing this form to: 2471 Seaman St./ Toledo, OH 43605. Email: office@firststjohn.com

Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____ Phone _____



Cookie Sale!

WELCA is hosting a cookie sale fundraiser with proceeds benefitting our very own property management group to help with maintenance and repair of the church. Cookies will be sold on Sunday, December 21st after the 1st and 2nd service.

Baked Goods Needed: If you can help by donating cookies for our sale, we'd greatly appreciate your help! All types of cookies, fudge, bars, or bark accepted. Please plan to bring your baked cookies on Saturday, December 20th between 10am-12pm. A sign up sheet will be in the bulletin and on a clipboard in the lounge.



PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY FOCUS FOR NOVEMBER

Our November focus item is sanitary pads (24 pack or larger). You can deposit items in the bright green bin in the lounge or drop them off at the office during the week. Remember, monetary donations are always welcome. Thank you!



CHRISTMAS PARTY

The church Christmas party sponsored by our church council, will be Sunday, December 7th after second service, food served by noon.

All our invited to attend, but reservations are required. Butch's Country Catering will provide Beef Stroganoff, mac & cheese, salad, and a roll & butter. Desserts and beverages will also be provided by the board. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex (lobby) to write your name and the number of people that will be attending. The deadline for reservations will be **November 23, 2025**. At the Church Christmas Party, there will be a silent auction of Gift Baskets. If you could, we would appreciate if you could donate a gift basket or if you do not have time to put together a basket, could you consider donating Gift Cards.

**DECEMBER NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE: November 22nd**

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES



Births

None.

Baptisms

None.

Marriages

10-18-23 *Kristina Kindle and Paul Meeks.*

Deaths

10-25-23 Herbert C. Frey

Transfers to/from First St. John

None.

WE REMEMBER...

All Saints Sunday is November 5th and we will remember the saints of First St. John who entered the Church Triumphant during the past year:

<i>Eleanor Lang</i>	<i>10/10/1933 - 01/24/2025</i>
<i>Richard Crouse</i>	<i>05/28/1939 - 04/23/2025</i>
<i>Sue Moszkowicz</i>	<i>07/14/1954 - 04/24/2025</i>
<i>Bruce Wohlgamuth</i>	<i>09/15/1940 - 05/04/2025</i>
<i>Lola Crouse</i>	<i>03/26/1939 - 08/12/2025</i>
<i>James A. Fox</i>	<i>04/03/1940 - 08/30/2025</i>
<i>Florence Partin</i>	<i>02/04/1929 - 09/21/2025</i>

*And we also remember
these friends & family members:*

Ken & Lola Abbey, Dick & Joan Bailey, Fred & Helen Bailey, Richard Bell, Sally Bell, Ernie Bollinger, Bonnie Campos, Raylene Drager, Sandra Counterman-Frazier, Bob DeWitt, Gary DeWitt, James Gallaher, Paulette S. Giamo, Barbara Nissen Gilbertson, Clarence & Iva Grant, Larry Grant, Larry Haar, Joann Harrell, Tom Hartford, Judith Hirth, Floyd Hagedorn, Joanne Harrell, Rev. Gerald & Ilean Labuhn, Jim Ledford, Joyce Martin, Annette McGorty, Mariann Miller, Carl "Dutch" Morrison, Paul Mullen Sr., Chuck Neal, Cindy Perkins, Andrea Schumaker, Arnold & Edythe Scherer, Tim Smith, William Stahl, David Winslow, Sharon Winslow, William Winslow, Kenneth Yard.

FIRST ST. JOHN PRAYER CHAIN (as of 11/1/2025)

Crisis Prayer List: *For those who need prayers in urgent matters such as surgery, emergency medical care (ICU), etc. Will be moved to "Chronic Prayer List" after one month unless we're contacted about special circumstances:*

Betty Anderson
Peggy Burke
Norman Eck
Family of Marty Everett
Lynn Folk
Bob Hecklinger
John
Mary Ellen Miller
Peyton
Connie Singlar
Marissa Smith
Paige Smith
Susan Smith
Levi Wallace

On-Going Concerns: *For those who need prayers for ongoing serious situations such as cancer treatments, medical struggles, recovery and/or personal situations. Will be moved off the list after 3 months unless we're contacted about special/continuing circumstances:*

Lori Ansted
 Deb Ackerman
 Bennett
 Elizabeth Bland
 Karen Bless
 Amy Brumley
 Debbie Campbell
 Brenda Chambers
 Patrick Cleough
 Marjorie Counterman
 Olivia & Delaney Dawkins
 Doris
 Ann Dudics
 Duke
 Isaac Evans
 Brian Everett
 Janet Fern
 Joe Frobase
 Jody
 James Goorman
 Grace Harris Greenbank
 Bob Hecklinger
 Holly Henneman
 Gary Henningsen
 Katrin Howard
 Kathy Johnson
 Linda Joshi
 Kaitlyn
 Helen K.

Sharon Kassay
 Cindy Knavel
 Tom Kohn
 Marc LeDuc
 Diana McGovern
 Bonnie Meier
 Patty Meyer
 Deborah Miller
 Donna Miller
 Chad Milner
 Janet Mooney
 Mary Bell Moore
 Karen Morrison
 Logan Murphy
 Bill Nelson
 Teresa Nye
 Pam Pirolli
 Janet Quiroga
 John Ranchan
 Sherry Reamsnyder
 Rita Riegle
 Steven Riegle
 Rhonda
 Sandra
 Laura Scherer
 Bill Shedron
 Mary Alice Sheehan
 Shelley Sherman
 James Spenthoff
 Julie Swanson
 Tom Tedrow
 Joyce Trowbridge
 Terry Vogalsang
 Deb Dusseau Warnke
 Katelyn Weirich
 Steve Welling
 Jeff Wilbarger
 Jean Wilson
 LeAnn Winslow
 John Yard
 Ruth Zasada
 Raetta Zeisler
 Bernie Zielinski

Please check the list and notify any prayer chain contact if a name can be removed.

Prayer Chain Contacts

Carol Abbey 351-9795 or cabbeyrn@aol.com

Lynn Folk	419-309-7977
Donna Koehn	419-705-9560
Darlene Lorenzen	419-351-6293
Gloria Ross	419-836-7166

**THANKSGIVING FEAST
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

The Day School's Thanksgiving Feasts will be held November 17th through the 20th. If you have time and would like to help prepare and serve the meal, volunteers are appreciated. We need help each day from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm. Please call the school office at 419-691-6480 if you can help, even if it's only for an hour.

The children help prepare the food, which includes "stone soup," pumpkin bread, and vegetables in cornucopias. What a great opportunity to mingle with school families and give them a glimpse of the friendly atmosphere of First St. John!

DAY SCHOOL NEWS

The holiday season has begun and we are busy at the Day School with holiday parties and events. The students are working hard on holiday songs and practicing for their Thanksgiving Feasts and Christmas programs. As the school progresses each one of the students is learning new things and enjoying new friends and experiences.



We would like to thank everyone who helped with the Halloween Fundraiser. It was a great success and the families from our Sunday School and Day School had a great time.

Each November the children and families gather together for the Thanksgiving Feasts. If you have the time and would like to help prepare and serve during our Thanksgiving Feasts, volunteers are needed and appreciated. Help is needed Monday through Thursday (November 17-20) between the hours of 9:30 and 1:30. Please call the school office at 419-691-6480 if you are interested in helping. Sunday School and Day School children on October 19th. See the attached information for information on how to help. .

— *Andrea Buckley*

2025 POINSETTIA SALE

Sponsored by the Altar Guild

Fill in the form below to place your order for poinsettias to be used during worship at Christmas time. You can place this form with payment in the offering plate, drop it off at the church office during the week, or mail it in. Payment must accompany orders. Please make checks payable to: **First St. John Lutheran Church**

**Deadline for placing orders is
Sunday, December 14, 2023.**

No. of plants @ \$15.00 each _____

Color (circle one): **Red** **White**

Enclosed \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

In Loving Memory of (Deceased):

In Honor of (Living):

MEMORIALS

SUNDAY SCHOOL

In memory of **Alfred Szabo, Jr.** by Annie (Szabo) & Doug Diefenthaler. Suzie (Szabo) & Mark Wixson.

CEMETERY FUND

In memory of **Jim Fox** by Lucy Fowler, Deborah Johlin Bach, Carey & Lori Likens, Virginia Nissen.

PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY

In memory of **Jim Fox** by Irene Meech, Cindy & Terry Toth, David & Cindy Bench, Joan Kinsey, Rebecca Circle, Esther Bell.

DEBT RETIREMENT

In memory of **Jim Fox** by Cindy & Eric Johnson, Terry & Jane Schuetz, Kevin & Kathy Fox, Bill & Donna Nelson.

In memory of **Florence Partin** by Jean Garey.

ALTAR GUILD

In memory of **Florence Partin** by Penny DeWitt, Eileen Young, Esther Bell.

WELCA

In memory of **Florence Partin** by Chuck & Betty Hyre, Marge Bollinger, Mary Ellen Miller, Bob & Sherrie Haar, Larry & Darlene Paul.

In memory of **Jim Fox** by Larry & Darlene Paul.

SPECIAL MUSIC FUND

In memory of **Florence Partin** by Louise Diersch, Terry & Jane Schuetz, Elaine & Kathleen Gladieux, Jim & Dianne Schumaker, Cindy & Eric Johnson, Darlene Lorenzen, Donna & Bill Nelson, Carlene Trost, Diana Schreiner, Jodie & John NaAway, Jeanette Reinton & David, Paul Molnar, Emily Kruse, Rebecca Circle.

WELCA NEWS

Hello November!

The Board met on October 20th. Four members were present. The Board finalized the rest of the year events.

The Family Christmas party will be held on December 7th, after 2nd Service in the Fellowship Hall upstairs sponsored by the Church Council. Butch's Country Catering will provide beef stroganoff, mac and cheese, salad, roll and butter, The Board will provide the desserts and beverages. The sign up sheet is in the Narthex on the table.

Our annual gift baskets will also be auctioned off again this year. All circles, choir, bell choir, adult Sunday School, Jam, and church council are welcomed to donate a basket this year or if you just want to donate an item. The food will be served at 12:00 pm.

We will also have a Cookie Sale on December 21st, after both services. If you wish to donate cookies, please bring them in on Saturday December 20th between 10 am and noon. Let us help take some of the baking off your shoulders.

Everyone have a Safe and Happy Thanksgiving!!

— President, Sue Ann Rogers



WINTER COAT DRIVE!

We are a collection site for The East Toledo Family Center's winter coat and gear drive this year. They are especially looking for new or gently used coats (working zippers please) as last collection season the demand was higher than they were able to fulfill. They will also take new hats, and gloves, or monetary donations (See Jennifer in the office). Collection bins are located in the front lobby of the Education Building and in the lounge. The collection will take place from now until **November 8th**.