St. John's Lutheran Church & Pre School

The Good News Gazette

December 2025

315-986-3045
Office M-FRI 8:30am-12:30pm
www.pumpkinhook.org
Phone(315)986-3045

Worship:
Sundays 9:45AM live & streaming
Wednesdays 7PM live & streaming



'Peace, Joy, Hope And Love, Through OUR Savior, Jesus Christ!'

President's Message

Steve Maier



As we enter December and the season of Advent, we know this time of year can bring a mix of emotions. For many, it's a season filled with joy and celebration—but it can also be a time of stress, busyness, and uncertainty, especially as we continue adjusting to changes in our church family.

That's why we want to take a moment to say thank you!

Since our Pastor's departure, so many of you have stepped up in big and small ways—helping with worship, volunteering behind the scenes, offering encouragement, and making sure our ministries stay strong. Your generosity has also been a blessing, with faithful giving that's helped us stay on track and continue serving our community.

In the middle of all the hustle and change, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. But this season reminds us of something deeper: the hope we have in Jesus. He is our constant, our peace, and the reason we gather as a church family in the first place!

So, let's keep our hearts centered **on Him.** Let's continue to support one another, pray for one another, and walk forward together in faith.

Thank you for being the hands and feet of Christ. We are so grateful for each of you.
Wishing you peace, hope, and joy this Christmas season!

Moving Foward



This Christmas season things will be different without having a pastor to lead every service. Is that a bad thing? I don't think so. I think you will find that plans for this advent and Christmas season will be uplifting for all! We will be having lay led messages/skits for midweek services, new advent candle lighting starting each

Sunday service, and a special Christmas eve program and a Christmas day service with Communion. I encourage you, if you haven't been to a Worship service in a while to please come and join us for a service or two. And guess what? If you would like to be involved, please talk to someone in Worship, Music and the Arts. Thank you!

Encouragement in Prayer for December

Martha Barmaster



We are going to study the armor of God next month after the holidays.

Christmas is coming, a time of celebrations with families and friends. We are going to dig deeper into the story of the shepherds. They were the very first to hear of Jesus' birth. Starting with Luke 2:8-10,13-14.

Luke 2:8, "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. This is clear proof that Christ was not born in December. Shepherds never kept flocks in the open in the winter from October or November through to the next Spring. It was customary to send flocks out after Passover to stay until the first rains of October or November. It cannot be proven exactly when Jesus was born. Verse9 "And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." The Shekinah, or glory, always symbolized God's presence. Verse 10 "and the angel said unto them, fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." What would we have done if we had been with the shepherds? These were men who fought off wolves and lions to protect their flocks. Personally, I could never raise a flock of lambs to adult sheep. I would have a name for every lamb who would be trained to come to my call and my protection. Jesus is our Good Sheperd. John 10:11, Jesus said" I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep. John 10:14, Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd and know my sheep." Do we know Him and trust Him to lead us? I pray I do and pray you do,too. Our church is in transition right now. We pray for our Good Shepherds wisdom and direction; and we trust in His will for His church at St. John's. The angel said he was bringing good tidings of great joy to all people. That includes us today- Good News- Jesus is born! Emmanuel- God with us!

Verse 13" And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, verse 14" Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." There was a multitude of the heavenly host. On star-filled night, it's beautiful! You may see the Big Dipper or the North Star. And there is some light. But a "multitude of the heavenly host"! How many is that? The bible doesn't say how many, but I dare say it was a whole lot brighter than a star-filled night. And they were praising God. We have a beautiful choir. But imagine what a beautiful chorus a multitude of angels were singing on a quiet night on a lonely hillside. Their song was understandable and clear, concise and to the point. It was in perfect heavenly harmony, heralding the birth of the Baby Jesus!

"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." Men killed the 'Prince of Peace' and yet they vainly talk of peace, but there will be none- no 'perfect' peace will exist until Christ returns, as we say in the Apostle's Creed, He will come to judge the living and the dead. The first time He came

as a baby, our Savior- the second time, as King a Kings and Lord of Lords, to judge those who have not accepted Him as their Savior.

The angels sang ”on earth peace, good will toward men!” God has always wanted this. He seeks to convince men that He desires only their good. 1st Timothy 2:4 says,” God wills all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth!”

So, this holiday, let us not forget the true meaning of Christmas. In the midst of all decorations, presents, friends and family. Let’s remember a Baby was born. A baby named Jesus, Emmanuel. “God with us, for he shall save His people from their sins”, Matthew 1:21,23. Please have a blessed Christmas! Happy Birthday, Jeus! Amen!

Elders

Jen Barnes



Caring for others
One of the most important things we as a congregation can do during our vacancy is to care for each other! When you realize you haven't seen somebody in church in a while, please reach out to them, If you don't have their contact information contact the church office so that an elder can reach out. If you have not been contacted and wonder why, please contact the church office, because your contact information may not be correct ! For each one of us, remember your church family in your prayers over this Advent season. Thank you!

Monthly Ladies Luncheon



Vicky Payne

Please remember ladies, the second Wednesday of each month (December 10th) is our monthly ladie’s luncheon at 12:30 PM @ Flaherty’s. Please join us! Thank you!

Pumpkin Hook Pantry



As you can guess the pantry has been getting lots of traffic over the past few months. Thanks to the food drive for Danny's eagle project and the food collected from scouting for food, we have quite a bit to restock it. This is where we need your help please. If you would be willing to stop once a week and restock the pantry, please let Jen Barnes know, thank you.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS



Please help beautify our altar for CHRISTMAS! Sign-Up Sheet is at our welcome center.

Financial Secretary

Max Hogenes



Our Financial Health as of November 2, 2025

YTD Giving Comparison

Giving = $182,595

Prior Year = $168,511

$14,084



YTD Giving Vs. Expenses

Giving = $182,595

Expenses = $194,877

$(12,282)

	YTD	Weekly
2025 YTD Giving	$182,595	$4,160
2025 Approved Expense Budget	$239,484	$4,605
		$(445)

Upcoming Activities

Kim Baxter



Sunday, **December 7th** – Voters' Meeting @ church, 11AM.

Monday, **December 8th**– COUNCIL @ church, 7PM.

Wednesday, **December10th**– Ladie's Luncheon, 12:30PM @ Flaherty's.

Friday, **December 12th**– Euchre/Family Game Night @ church, 7PM.

Sunday, **December 14th**– Cookie Decoration @ church, 11AM.

Wednesday, **December 24th**– Christmas Eve Worship @ church, 7PM.

Thursday, **December 25th-** Christmas Day Worship 10AM/Holy Communion.

Sunday, **December 28th-** David the Movie @12PM.

Pre School News

Cheryl Power





We hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and we are so thankful and grateful to our Lord for our preschoolers, their families and all of the support we receive from our congregation. Only three weeks of schooling in the month of November, but it was full of fun activities. The three's were thankful for God and my family for my feet and for friends and did color review.

They also worked very hard preparing a Thanksgiving feast for their families which happened on November 20th.The fours had a week of dinosaurs-you may have seen the murals on the wall. We've done these project for about 57 years. Our fours also worked on decorations for Thanksgiving. They made a thankful wreath, family tree and a turkey decorations all while preparing for their Thanksgiving feast.They made applesauce, corn muffins, and sweet rolls during class.
We thank all who were able to join us for our feast-our students were so excited to have you join them.
We give thanks to the Lord for he is good. May God's blessings be with you and your families all throughout the Christmas season!
Sincerely, Cheryl Power, Director, St John's Christian Preschool

Missions & Ministry

Candy Aldrich



ST. JOHN'S CHRISTMAS ANGEL TREE
Once again, we will be distributing Christmas food and gifts to families in the area.
We have approximately 20 children on our list this year. The children are all on our signup genius list, and the address is:
www.signupgenius.com/go/30E094BAFAC23A7F49-60389958-angel
Also we are in need of some food items. The site for that is:

http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E094BAFAC23A7F49-60620558-angel

HOW YOU CAN SAVE ST. JOHN'S MONEY

At Christmas, St. John's loves to distribute baskets of food and gifts to families in need. St. John's members are always generous and loving in their donations. We also include gift cards for Walmart so the families can purchase perishable items. The cost of the gift cards comes from our Missions & Ministry budget.

If you are a member of Thrivent Financial, you can help defray some of that expense with no cost to yourself. Thrivent offers the opportunity for members to apply for Thrivent Action Team funds. Thrivent will award $250 for specific projects. If one or two members could apply to Thrivent for fund, we will be able to cover gift cards, "special items" (pj's, socks, underwear), and miscellaneous food items. (Applications need to specifically name the project: either Angel Tree gifts or Angel Tree food.) The money saved can then go to other church expenses.

If you are willing to do this, please let us know which category you will designate in your application. Call or text Candy Aldrich @ 585-520-8468. As always, thank you and Merry Christmas!

Board for Worship, Music & the Arts

Linda Braun

"For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." ***– Romans 12:4-5***



ADULT CHOIR: During the advent season we will be using a new format. Each Sunday will include a devotional, song and candle lighting.

Christmas Eve will include a silent nativity. Christmas Day will include lessons and carols, led by Vicar Bozie. The Christmas Day service will include Holy Communion.

11/30	Advent Week 1 - Hope	*Silent Night*
12/7	Advent Week 2 - Peace	*When Peace Like a River*
12/14	Advent Week 3 – Joy	*Joy to the World*
12/21	Advent Week 4 - Love	*Away in the Manger*
12/24	Christmas Eve	*All on a Starry Night*
12/25	Christmas Day	*Go Tell it on the Mountain*



Thank you to everyone who has taken an active role in our worship services. A special thank you to Barbara Zoller for helping to support our Children's Messages during our worship services. She has created materials for each week. If you would like to deliver the messages simply sign-up on the board in the entryway. Materials are located in the Office in a hanging folder bin.

ADVENT: Do you have questions about our church beliefs and traditions? Copies of LCMS family devotionals on the Welcome Center. Source: LCMS website Worship and Congregational Life - Frequently Asked Questions - The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

QUESTION: Why does the church year begin at Advent, what is the history of Advent, and what is the history behind the Advent candles and wreath?

ANSWER: The word "advent" is from the Latin word for "coming," and as such, describes the "coming" of our Lord Jesus Christ into the flesh.

Advent begins the church year because the church year begins where Jesus' earthly life began — in the Old Testament prophecies of his incarnation. After Advent comes Christmas. Advent focuses on Christ's "coming," but Christ's coming manifests itself among us in three ways — past, present, and future.

The traditional use of Advent candles (sometimes held in a wreath) originated in eastern Germany even prior to the Reformation. As this tradition came down to us by the beginning of this century, it involved three purple candles and one pink candle.

The purple candles matched the purple paraments on the altar (purple for the royalty of the coming King). The pink candle was the third candle to be lit (not the fourth) on Gaudete Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent. "Gaudete" means "Rejoice!" in Latin, which is taken from Phil. 4:4.



Board of Christian Education

Our Teen class is active and welcomes any teen to join them. Our Sunday School class continues to meet at 8:45 Sunday Mornings.

An adult Bible Study continues on Tuesdays at 11am at church. All are welcome!

A Special Thank you to the people in our congregation who contributed to the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. Twenty-One boxes were delivered to the drop-off location in Walworth. For more information about the program check out: Operation Christmas Child | Shoebox Outreach of Samaritan's Purse. Thank you to everyone who participated!

Long Term Prayer List- December 2025



Members of St. John's

Gordon Hill	Doug Snyder	
Karen Carey	Mia Howie	Chuck Thomas
Helen Schwartz	Kay Minwell	Emily Vokes
Richard Scofield	Heidi VanAken	Sandy Bastian

Family & Friends

Nadine Printup & Blaise Readon (Mary Meade)
David & Debbie Kuehnert (Don Kuehner's siblings)
Don Nugent (Chuck Thomas' father)
Wayne Grewe (brother of the Buckinghams & Sharon Jenkins)
Jane Barmaster, Autumn, Emily, Charlene, & Katie (Martha Barmaster)
The Cole family (family of Vicky Cole)
Kathleen Goodberlet (granddaughter of Jack & Maryann Bauer)
Joe Davenport (friend of Sharon Green & Candy Aldrich)
Bob & Lynn Steamer (sister & brother-in-law of Roger Carpenter)
Jeff, Peggy & the Coons children (family of Pat Coons)
Jo Donahue (Shawn Patience)
Pete Poulakis (family of the Plumbs)
Keshap grandchildren (Bob & Barb Leisten)
Carl Ellerman (Candy Aldrich)
Jack Torrence (Karen Meyer)
Amy Klino (Lisa Maier's friend)
Erik (David Heckman's friend)
Stephen Fredrickson (Candy Aldrich)
Sharon Evans (friends of Barnes and Smiths)
Karen Butler (Candy Aldrich's sister-in-law)
Minister to Family (Betty & Rick Carr)
Gary & Carol (friends of Mary Ballou)



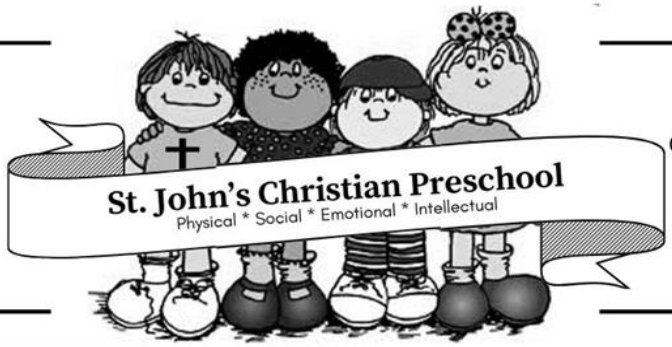
Military and their Families

ET3 Adam Hopseeker (the Barnes family)
SS Brian Heckman (the Heckman family)
LT Paul Kuehnert (Don Kuehnert
LC Mercedes Buckingham (Sharon Jenkins)

For additions or changes please call the church office (315) 986-3045.

Founded 1968

153 Church Avenue,
Farmington, NY 14425
preschool@pumpkinhook.org
315-986-3045



Director: Cheryl Power
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December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 Sunday 11/30/25 8:45a Sunday School 9:45a 9:45 Church service L	1 6p Tigers meeting	2 11a Bible study 6p Arrw of Ight in LL5 6p Wolves LL1	3 WOW! December 3, 2025 7p WOW Worship Led by V	4 7p Adult Choir Practice	5	6
7 8:45a Sunday School 9:45a Church Service Led b 11a Voter's meeting	8 Council 7PM	9 11a Bible study 6p Bears Ed bldng 6p Weblos LL1	10 7p WOW Worship Led by V	11 7p Adult Choir Practice	12 7p euchre	13
14 8:45a Sunday School 9:45a Church Service 11a cookie decoration	15 6p Tigers meeting	16 11a Bible study 6p Wolves LL1	17 7p WOW Worship Led by V	18 7p Adult Choir Practice	19	20
21 8:45a Sunday School 9:45a church service	22	23 11a Bible study	24 7p Christmas Eve Service	25 10a Christmas Day service l	26	27
28 8:45a Sunday School 9:45a church service 12p David the movie	29	30 11a Bible study	31 7p NO Worship	1	2	3

St John's Lutheran Church

153 Church Ave. Farmington, NY 14425

*"Walking together in **faith** "*

St. John's Lutheran Church

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*"Growing God's **family** through Jesus "*



'Merry Christmas!'