



St. John's Lutheran

MESSENGER

A Publication of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church located in Miamisburg, Ohio, Established in 1819 December 2022

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13:2

I have been at St. John's for less than a month and I already know you understand the Biblical call to offer hospitality. My husband Chris and I have felt very welcomed into your midst as you have introduced yourselves and offered kind greetings. You also show great hospitality as a church family by generously offering meeting space in the church building for community groups including the Dayton Tamil Language Academy, 12 Step groups, Girl Scouts and others. Well done, faithful servants of God!

Offering hospitality is an important concept in scripture. In Biblical times it was an expectation that you would house and feed those who came to your door, even if they were strangers. Look up the story of Abraham and the three visitors in Genesis 18, or the story of Elizabeth welcoming Mary when they were both pregnant in Luke 1. Then there is this wonderful verse from Hebrews quoted above.

This season provides endless possibilities to offer hospitality to those we encounter each day. What might it look like to offer hospitality to store clerks, drive thru cashiers, office receptionists, co-workers? Hospitality is a posture not a place. Hospitality means creating space for another—which can either be in our home or in our heart. Even if it's only for a moment, "holding space" for another can be a way to offer the love of Christ.

At St John's, as we prepare for the coming of Jesus, we work to offer hospitality to folks we will probably never meet in the flesh. The Christmas Forest and the winter clothing collection are both ways to offer hospitality to strangers. When we care for the vulnerable we communicate to them that they are beloved to God and to us. A generous spirit extended to others honors Jesus, who himself was poor and born in a stable.

Hospitality is a posture, not a place. This Advent, be on the lookout for ways you can offer care to others simply by being a listening ear. By offering kindness instead of criticism. By building others up rather than tearing them down. Welcoming rather than excluding. Offering grace rather than judgement. We can offer hospitality to strangers, friends and family in these ways.

I look forward to observing this season of Advent with you as we wait for Jesus to take on flesh and come among us. I am eager to celebrate his birth on Christmas Eve as we remember the great hospitality God has shown us by coming into our world.

See you in church!
Heidi Johns, Interim Pastor

President's Chapel

Dear Siblings in Christ,

December 1st, 2022

Yes, it is really December and we are now in the Season of Advent as we prepare the way for the arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ. It seems to me as the years go by how quickly the season comes upon us, as we just celebrated Thanksgiving on November 24th, and suddenly thoughts change to decorations, gifts, baking, and the bustle of the Holiday Seasons. But today, I want to put in perspective that grace and mercy is not meant to be stashed in our Sanctuary. We need to live it in our Community, and to illustrate that properly, I need to roll back the clock to October and describe to all the amazing cultural and enlightenment experience Linda and I recently had.

On October 23rd, Linda and I were graciously invited by our Tamil School Leaders to attend the annual Hindu Festival of "Diwali" in Beavercreek. Diwali (also called Divali or Deepavali) is a "festival of lights" that celebrates the triumph of light over dark and good over evil, and the blessings of victory, freedom, and enlightenment. The name comes from Sanskrit dipavali, meaning "row of lights." On the night of Diwali, celebrants light dozens of candles and clay lamps (called diyas), placing them throughout their homes and in the streets to light up the dark night. Linda and I accepted the invitation, which is considered a great honor if you are a non-Hindu. When we arrived, we were graciously welcomed and taken to very prominent seats in their auditorium to witness the heart of the Diwali celebration. This included fantastic adult and children's dancing, a traditional Diwali fashion show with dresses in gorgeous Diwali colors of deep blue, purple, bright yellow, and maroon. We witness a spirited moral debate about the good and evil of the cell phone, which while mostly in Tamil, left a strong impression of how passionate the balance of good over evil was emphasized. What I did not expect was after the main event I was invited on stage, where the Tamil Principal and The Beavercreek Sangram Leader (like our pastor) presented Linda and I with roses and a public thanks to St. Johns for helping them set up the language school. After the main ceremony closed, the entire room stood up and sang our National Anthem, clearly showing how grateful many were for being able to settle in the US after decades of war in their home in Sri Lanka, and of their freedom to worship without persecution. The day was closed with sampling an amazing array of Hindi foods in a giant community meal. During dinner, many families came up to Linda and I, thanking us profusely for allowing our Church to host the Tamil academy.

So why am I taking this time and column to write about this? Because I wanted to tell you that through our grace and our courage, we have supplied them with a safe place to preserve their culture with their children, teach them the language of their home, and to integrate into our community. Pastor and I are meeting with their leadership in 2 weeks, because they are also very interested in participating in some of our community outreach activities like the hunger ministry. The light and love of St John's has shown them another example of a pathway to light. While we may not share identical religious traditions, it is clear this relationship is far more than "owner- tenant." So as

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we prepare for Christmas, and the arrival of God's son who was sent to overcome once and for all the sin of the world, consider that our Christmas trees and decorations represent our own "festival of lights." Surely we can all agree that God's peace and grace can transcend the differences within our own communities. I certainly pray it to be.

Gods' blessings to all,

Brian

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

December 11th, the children will be presenting "Bossie, the Cow at the Manger" during the service. Please come to enjoy the program the children always put on for us.



*Please join us Tuesday, December 24th
at 7:30 p.m. for the
Christmas Eve Service
with guest harpist,
Veronika Stanichar*

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Orders for your Christmas Poinsettias must be turned into the church by Sunday, December 18th. Look for the order forms which will be included in Sunday's bulletin and place in offering plate or call the church office, 937-866-3780 to place your order. Poinsettias will decorate the church on Christmas Eve and may be taken home following the services. Donations may also be made to Helping Hands.

WELCA CHRISTMAS PARTY

All women are invited to Cheryl Page's home at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, December 5th for WELCA's annual Christmas party. There will be a gift exchange, food and fellowship, and it's a lot of fun. If you are planning on coming, please bring a wrapped gift for the exchange.



CHRISTMAS FOREST

The Christmas Forest has tags for three families with a total of six children, from the Miamisburg School District. There also is tags for Jeremiah's Letter and Helping Hands. Items must be at church by Sunday, December 18th. Monetary donations will be used to purchase gifts. Please contact Cheryl Page (937-602-7952) for more information.

MITTEN TREE

The mitten tree is located between the double doors and ready to be decorated with mittens, gloves, scarves and hats. What is collected will go to Miamisburg City Schools to help keep our Miamisburg youth warm this winter!

SONRISE BREAKFAST

We are collecting coats, hats, gloves, blankets, shoes, and any items to help people stay warm in the winter. If you have any that you don't need, please put them in the bin in the narthex. If you would like to help with Sonrise breakfast, contact Beth Knight.

*The office will be closed Monday, December 26 thru
Monday, January 2nd.*

We will reopen on Tuesday, January 3rd, 2023.



ALL SAINT'S SUNDAY

On Sunday, November 6th we celebrated our saints that had passed last year, Suzie Page brought a picture of Oscar and Debbie Humphrey brought a picture of her husband, David.



Dear People of St. Johns,

Thank you so much for the generous gift, the card with so many messages and the parting reception you gave me.

It was a privilege to walk with you over the last many months through a time of transition and uncertainty in the pandemic to emerge stronger than before as life resumes.

God bless you as you pursue God's mission for your ministry!

Pastor Joan

SUNDAY ZOOM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85711628176?pwd=V0dOK21vekJqNTIwM3hOT2UyNzkyQT09>

Meeting ID: 857 1162 8176

Passcode: 071964

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,85711628176#,,,,*071964# US (New York)

+13017158592,,85711628176#,,,,*071964# US (Washington DC)

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 857 1162 8176

Passcode: 071964

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kdSEte9ZyO>

REMINDER

You can always find the Zoom link for the simulcast Sunday services on St. John's website:

www.stjohnsmiamisburg.org

Click on the "In-Person Worship and Simulcast Link" menu option near the top of the home page.



Budget Report for October 2022

Income for October 2022: **\$5,276.86**

Expenses for October 2022:

Outreach	\$333.00
Staff	\$2,636.69
Facility Upkeep/Administration	\$2,135.52
Property Insurance	\$0.00
Utilities	\$811.88
Committees	\$414.12
	\$6,331.21

October Budget Balance (income - expenses): **(\$1,054.35)**

YTD Income: **\$69,364.27**

YTD Expenses: **\$57,193.59**

Description of categories:

Outreach: Benevolence, special benevolence.

Staff: Pastor's pay and expenses, staff salaries and benefits, FICA, worker's comp.

Facility Upkeep/Administration: Maintenance/repair and office expenses.

Property Insurance: paid once a year in October.

Roof Loan Payment: Fellowship hall roof loan paid off in June, 2022.

Committees: Discipleship, Learning, Worship & Music.

Utilities: Gas, electricity, water and trash services.



December 1
Eva Mae Cox
Beth Knight
December 4
Ryley Lamb
December 11
Mary Wilson
December 13
Jesse Ñauta
December 19
Harley Lamb
Sondy Johnson
December 27
Pat McGraw
December 30
Bailey Smith

Congregational Contacts

Pastor Heidi Johns Interim Pastor 513-255-6279

Council Members

Brian Kent	*President	937-885-3529/937-572-3025
Everett Morris	*Vice President	937-760-1099
Linda Kent	*Church Treasurer	937-885-3529/937-572-7815
Cathy Zimmer	*Secretary	937-212-9283
Judy Kuemmel	*Financial Secretary	937-321-1198
Garry Andrews		937-848-2090
Ida Geary		937-626-7765

Organizations, Boards and Staff

Karen Doyle	Church Secretary/Messenger Editor	937-866-3780
Tom Hoffman	Board of Trustees Chairman	937-859-8871/937-654-1218
Cheryl Page	Discipleship Committee Chairman	937-602-7952
Brook Ñauta	Learning Committee Chair	513-217-0564/937-367-1473
Ida Geary	WELCA President	937-626-7765
Doug McCabe	Organist	937-866-8669
Brook Ñauta	Children's Choir	513-217-0564/937-367-1473

Christian Education

Barb Hoffman	Pre-k through 1 st Grade	937-859-8871/937-231-6341
Brook Ñauta	2 nd Grade through 6 th Grade	513-217-0564/937-367-1473
Robin Skelding	Confirmation	937-748-5405

Ministry Contacts

Nancy McCabe	Prayer Chain	937-866-8669
Beth Knight	Son-Rise Breakfast @ First Lutheran	330-692-2092



December 14
David & Cheryl Page
December 18
Gary & Debbie Ball



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470 S. Gebhart Church Road

Miamisburg, OH 45342

Phone: 937-866-3780

Office Hours: M-T-T-F 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon

Closed Wednesdays

Web: www.stjohnsmiamisburg.org

Email: secretary@stjohnsmiamisburg.org

HAPPENING'S IN DECEMBER

- December 1 7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Leaders Meeting
- December 3, 10, 17 10:30 a.m. Dayton Tamil Academy
- December 5 6:30 p.m. WELCA Christmas Party
- December 7, 14 6:30 p.m. Adult Book Study
- December 11 1:00 p.m. Area 56
- December 13 6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #35159
- December 14 6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #30200
- December 17 9:00 a.m. Area 56 Assembly
- December 18 6:00 a.m. SonRise Breakfast
- December 24 7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

Sunday's at 7:30 p.m. - AA/Al Anon meets in Fellowship Hall

Monday's & Friday's at noon - AA Group meets in Fellowship Hall

*Please notify the office of any meetings and/or events that need to be included in the calendar.
This will ensure rooms are not double booked.*