



St. John's Lutheran

MESSENGER

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

December 2023

WELCOME PASTOR JOHN!!

Personal Notes: I was born and raised in the state of Ohio, graduating from Miami Valley school in 1992, where my dad was a high school science teacher until his retirement in 2014. My parents still reside in the Dayton area, and I look forward to spending time with them. We've been 600 miles away for too long; it's time to come home. I have a brother and sister, whose families also reside in the area.

Coming with me from Wisconsin is my wife, Erin and my son Jonathan. Erin works with character strength development through sports and will be working with the VIA Institute in Cincinnati. Jonathan will be attending school in Wisconsin with his mother and will spend holidays and summer here in Ohio, where he adores spending time with his 5 cousins. As a family, we enjoy hiking in the woods, sitting by the river, tent camping, playing board games and reading books. We also enjoy team sports of soccer and curling.

Professional Identity: I love learning and have enjoyed educational experiences, both as a life-long student, and as faculty for multiple church learning organizations. I received my undergraduate degrees in computer science and religion from Cornell College in Iowa. I then completed my Master of Divinity from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus. My background as a Pastor has been quite diverse. I started my ministry in Southeast Ohio in 1995.

I served many different churches, most in an interim ministry capacity. In 2005, I relocated to Wisconsin where I served the synod by being a dedicated intentional interim minister, going where sent for thirteen years. For the past six years I've served a settled call at Bethlehem Lutheran in Kronenwetter, WI. I enjoy leading Bible studies for youth and adults. I have a strong background in camping ministry, where I began as a counselor at age 15. I have a strong desire to get to know each of you. I look forward to a long, productive ministry at St. John, and am eager to deepen relationships with each of you!

In Christ's service,
Pastor John

PRESIDENT'S CHAPEL

Dear Siblings in Christ,

1 December 2023

Happy New Year! But wait, its only December you say! Ah, don't forget, Advent represents the beginning of yet another New Church Year.

I originally thought I would talk about the whole "new year beginnings" theme, but with Pastor John's arrival, I thought that theme might be reserved for him, so I've settled on the topic of "stewardship." I know, (groan)...., you're thinking I'm going to "discuss giving again". But that's *not* what I want to discuss at all, for I already trust the Congregation's collective decision making on financial stewardship. I decided to share a perspective I've adopted to understand and highlight the difference between *ownership* and *stewardship*. Especially, right now, as we needlessly stress over what gifts we "must receive" or "must buy" for ourselves or someone else. Let's start with the former.

To be perfectly honest, I don't need *any* gifts. I've already received the greatest gift I could possibly want, and one I definitely did not deserve. I'm speaking of God's eternal grace and forgiveness. I'm set. I do not really *need* anything else. No sweater, toy, fishing rod, car, house, or jewel could possibly top God's gift of grace. Perhaps family and friends still wish to send us gifts anyway. Surely they are appreciated, and I'm not advocating against exchanging gifts. But after decades of life, I literally don't *absolutely need* anything else.

"But Brian", you ask, "what about your bike, your train set, your telescope, your car, your....everything?" And this is the realization that comes with time and experience. *I don't really own any of these....*I may have received some of these as gifts, and purchased others. In the end I am simply **a steward of property**. I fully know and realize that someday I will no longer be able to utilize any of these items, and at that time, I will be faced with finding a new *steward*. With all the stress on our environment, the best thing we can do with items we no longer need/want is to proactively seek a new steward. Forget about selling things, find someone that really needs that item in your attic, garage, or basement and *give it away*. Especially now, especially today, at a time many families are desperately shy of resources. Someone else could really need that item you no longer want. So instead of stressing about buying presents, maybe search for that special thing that used to give you joy that you can give to a new steward and let it bring them the joy (or utility) it once gave you. By the way, this includes unneeded groceries, for those who hunger. ("**For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat – Matthew 25:35**").

(Continued on next page)

So, being a *good steward* means taking care of the things that have been given **loaned** to you as long as you need them, then handing them off, however far in the future, when your needs are fulfilled. The only gift you need to keep and celebrate is God's Grace. The only gift you will take with you in the end is his Grace. So, prepare your hearts for the Christ Child.

it's Advent.....Happy New Year.

Brian M Kent, Ph.D.
President, St John's

Dear St. John's Family,

What a joy it has been to serve as your Interim Pastor these past few months. Your faithfulness, care and witness to the Gospel has been an inspiration. I also want to thank you for the lovely meal on my last Sunday as well as the beautiful flowers and generous gift card. They all brightened my day. I will continue to pray for you all and Pastor John as you continue to grow and serve as disciples of Jesus. God's blessings and thank you again for your partnership. Pastor Heidi



*Please join us Sunday, December 24th at 7:30 p.m. for the
Christmas Eve Service with guest harpist,
Veronika Stanichar
(zoom information will be sent out before this service, watch your email)*

CHRISTMAS PAGENT

December 17th, the congregation will be joining the children in "A Rehearsal-Free Christmas Pageant" during the service. Please come to enjoy the program, the children will be assisting with the service.

WELCA CHRISTMAS PARTY

All women are invited to Cheryl Page's home at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, December 4th 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.

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Orders for your Christmas Poinsettias must be turned into the church by Sunday, December 17th. 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.



CHRISTMAS FOREST

The Christmas Forest has tags for one family with five children, from the Miamisburg School District. There also are tags for Jeremiah's Letter and Helping Hands. Items must be at church by Sunday, December 17th. Monetary donations will be used to purchase gifts. Please contact Cheryl Page (937-602-7952) for more information.

HELPING HANDS

Miamisburg Helping Hands Food Pantry appreciates your donation of \$1605.93 that was raised in two community events and gave to assist the families who come to our pantry. Your generosity allows us to offer 5 days of groceries to Miamisburg School district families needing food assistant.

TRUNK OR TREAT

Saturday, October 28th was St. Johns and Parkview United Methods joint Trunk or Treat. Due to bad weather it was moved inside.

Thank you to everyone who participated.



ALL SAINT'S SUNDAY

On Sunday, November 5th we celebrated the saints that had passed during the year.



CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS



*The office will be closed
December 26th thru
January 1st.*

*Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year!*

Join Zoom Meeting on Sundays

<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/85711628176?pwd=V0dOK21vekJqNTIwM3hOT2UyNzkyQT09>

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 September 2023

Income for September 2023:	\$8,732.98
Expenses for September 2023:	
Outreach	\$334.00
Staff	\$5,464.63
Facility Upkeep/Administration	\$5,048.42
Property Insurance	\$438.83
Utilities	\$692.37
Committees	\$23.00
	\$12,001.25
September Budget Balance (income - expenses):	(\$3,268.27)
YTD Income:	\$76,723.24
YTD Expenses:	\$72,306.56

Description of categories:

Outreach: Benevolence, special benevolence.

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

Conference: Council retreat.

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

Property Insurance: paid monthly

Committees: Discipleship, Learning, Worship & Music.

Utilities: Gas, electricity, water and trash services.



December 1
Eva Mae Cox
Beth Knigh
December 4
Ryley Lamb
December 11
Mary Wilson
December 13
Jesse Ñauta
December 19
Harley Lamb
December 27
Pat McGraw

Congregational Contacts

Pastor John Czarnota Pastor 920-642-3363

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		
Cindy Kemper		937-367-2341

***Executive Committee**

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

Beth Knight	Pre-k through 1 st Grade	937-330-692-2092
Barb Hoffman		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



St. John's Lutheran

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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

Web: www.stjohnsmiamisburg.org

Email: secretary@stjohnsmiamisburg.org

HAPPENING'S IN DECEMBER

- December 2 9:00 a.m. Decorating Church for Christmas
 10:00 a.m. Dayton Tamil Academy
- December 3 1:00 p.m. Area 56
- December 4 6:30 p.m. WELCA Monthly Meeting
- December 9 10:00 a.m. Dayton Tamil Academy
- December 12 6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #35159
 6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #3330-2023
- December 16 9:00 a.m. Area 56 Assembly
 10:00 a.m. Dayton Tamil Academy
- December 17 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.*