

# St. John's Lutheran Church

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## *January 2026 Newsletter*

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# Serving in Worship during January

## **Acolytes:**

4: Gia Fiser  
11: Addy Hendricks  
18: Charlotte Johnston  
25: Harry Rose

## **Lesson Readers:**

4: open  
11: open  
21: open  
25: open

## **Greeters:**

4: Deacons, Sue Dewire  
11: Deacons, open  
18: Deacons, open  
25: Deacons, open





## January Birthdays

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 4 – Jacqueline Carlson | 19 – Laura Rings    |
| 4 – Cole Dewire        | 19 – Chris Whitis   |
| 4 – Kaden Sapp         | 21 – Evan Whitis    |
| 5 – Alexander Clark    | 22 – Mike Elser     |
| 5 – Val Steinke        | 23 – Logan Allen    |
| 9 – Glenda Rockey      | 23 – Chuck Elser    |
| 10 – Breanna Henry     | 24 – Tate Hill      |
| 12 – Connie Gilbert    | 25 – Laurie Steinke |
| 14 – Jenna Bumb        | 25 – Robin Willson  |
| 15 – Chase Henry       | 27 – Karen Taylor   |
| 16 – Graier Shoup      | 28 – Hannah Gutting |
| 16 – Nevaeh Woods      | 28 – Kobe Thomas    |
|                        | 31 – Anna Baker     |

## January Anniversaries

- 4 – Ed & Kristen Ewers
- 22 – Dave & Sharon Deetz

# *From the Pastor's Desk*

## **“What are Your Plans for Y2026?” (January)**

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

As the New Year opens up before us, for many people there can be excitement and anticipation for new beginnings. We can be thankful for the hope filled future that presents us new opportunities to see another new day and to dream about what the year may bring.

This New Year, Mary and I begin our second year at St John's Lutheran Church in Montpelier, Ohio, USA. As we all reflect back on the up and downs of our lives in the past year, we have the opportunity to look at our successes, challenges, accomplishments, and trials while taking stock of the lessons we learned along the way and the growth that has occurred. The transition to living in the USA has not been without its personal and spiritual struggles. But I know that God has a plan and that He has brought us here.

This coming New Year we also celebrate the past – 250 years of history - that have shaped the thirteen colonies into the United States. It will be a celebration that will be heard around the world. It is without a doubt that I can say that God has a plan for you.

For many, thinking about the New Year creates anxiety and even fear over the myriads of unknowns and uncontrollable situations that may arise. The reality is that we will have troubles in life. “In the world you will have tribulations” (John 16:33) warns Jesus. God knows our human heart and the way we will respond to not having control over every facet of our lives. For none of us know what the future holds. “Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?” (Luke 12:25).

It's because of this and God's love for us that He has provided us with the necessary guide-posts along the way to keep us focused and on right-road. One of these is the Word of God.

We live in a world that is continually jockeying for our attention, our hearts, and our allegiance. When we bend our ears to the world, the flesh, and the devil we can easily end up in a destination where we didn't want to be. Temptation does that! But I believe that God wants us to know something that will dramatically change how Y2026 will play out and how we can out live this year and the years to come in the security of our God's care.

God has a plan for you. Okay, we all make our plans. We all dream and have a vision for our future. But God's plans are always better than our plans because in God's foreknowledge of creation He knows what is best for us. He did create us after all! "I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope" (Jeremiah 29:11). As we look ahead to Y2026, it is God's Word and Truth that is our anchor through the storms of life that will come our way. God has good plans for us. "We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God - those whom He has called according to His plan" (Romans 8:28).

As we enter Y2026, do we know this? God is able to use everything in your life for your good and for His glory! In a world that is filled with more unknowns than knowns, we need to hear the truth that we have been created by an almighty and loving God who is for us and not against us. Yes, God has a plan for you and for me. Let's endeavor to make Y2026 a great and awesome celebration of everything God has done, is doing, and will do.

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are" (1 John 3:1).

*Thank you to all the volunteers and students  
who helped put on a great children's Christmas  
program to praise the birth of our Savior!!*

**Volunteer Adults**

Sharon Deetz  
Gerry Dewire  
Lonnie Gillen  
Ann Kidston  
Melinda Shilling  
Chris Whitis  
Robin Willson

**Students**

Nora Bracneau  
Sophie Brancheau  
Beckett Coleman  
Bostyn Coleman  
Khree Coleman  
Paxtyn Coleman  
Briggs Fiser  
Easton Funk  
Lewis Funk  
Bennett Hill  
Tate Hill  
Ziva Kidston  
Maverick Rau  
Sutton Rau  
Malorie Rose  
Graier Shoup  
Lennan Shoup  
Parker Smith  
Kendyl Thomas  
Tatum Thomas

**Installation of 2026 Church Council Officers**  
On Sunday, January 11 during the 10 a.m. service, we will have the installation of our new council members.

### **Congregational Meeting**

Council has chosen Sunday, January 25 after the 10 a.m. service for our Congregational Meeting. All Reports will need to be turned in to secretary Jeanne by Sunday, January 18 so they can be copied and assembled together for the meeting on January 25.

### **Your Elders Are Here for You**

Please, bring any of your concerns to your elders of our church. They are Andy Carlson, Matthew Luke, Marilyn Parrish, Jeanne Willson (till end of December) and new elder in 2026, Vonda Henry.

**The 2026 Church Offering envelope boxes are available at the north door.**

### ***The Glenview Apartments has vacancies***

*We are a 62+ years old community offering clean, well-maintained homes located in Montpelier. If you know of someone wanting more information, application please have them contact Wanda Henry 419.553.9144. For questions regarding the apartments, also, consider joining us on the board, St John's has three members on the Glenview Board, Matthew Luke, Brenda Athy and Wanda Henry, feel free to speak to any of these members.*

## **Volunteers Needed**

Church Council and the Elders are looking for volunteers to fill 3 different committees according to St. John's Constitution. Basic responsibilities are:

The **Worship Committee** shall have special responsibility, under the direction of the Pastor, for matters pertaining to the content of worship and the worship service. Currently only Jeanne Willson is on the committee.

The **Music Committee** shall be in charge of evaluating music and recommending purchase of needed music and supplies. A representative of the committee shall be a member of the Worship Committee. The committee shall work toward promoting music as a viable ministry and an enhancement to the regular and all special worship service. Currently, only Jeanne Willson is on the committee.

The **Mutual Ministry Committee** shall consist of the Pastor and 4 members of the congregation. The purpose of this committee is to discuss how the Pastor and this church's services are sustaining the congregation; and in turn how this congregation is sustaining the needs of the Pastor.



**WOTC Board Meeting  
December 14, 2025  
Board Meeting**

Present: Brenda Athy, Janice Thompson, Lexy Robson, Julie Carlson, Bev Psurny & Stacy DeMara

Devotions were done by Brenda.

**Treasurer's Balances:**                      Checking \$7,445.81                      Funeral Fund \$2,333.58  
\$318 was made on the quilt raffle

**President** – Brenda is going to go through thr Women's Booklet for 2026.

**Vice President** – Janice & Bev gave Julie receipts for buckeye & root beer float supplies.

**Secretary of Mission** – Lexy is going to talk to Mary Bates & see if she could come up & speak at church about our youth going down to the NALC warehouse.

**Secretary of Community** – No report

### **Old Business**

Discussion was held on how many buckeyes have been made for the past 3 years & how much we have made profit wise.

### **New Business**

The following are the disbursements that are going to be made out of the Women's Fund:

Hope Center - \$300

Montpelier Ministerial - \$300

Sarah's Friends - \$300

Lifewise Academy - \$300 (Montpelier) & \$300 (North Central)

Compassion Clinic - \$300

NALC Disaster Relief - \$1,000

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Next meeting will be January 11, 2026. Bev will do devotions.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stacy DeMara



**St. John's Lutheran Church  
Church Council Meeting  
December 14, 2025**

**Present:** Nate Thompson, Ryan Burt, Tiffany Thomas, Ric Clark, Al Henry, Mike Timbrook, Andy Carlson, Matthew Luke, Marilyn Parrish, Jeanne Willson, Kati Burt, Megan Hill, Robin Willson, Nathan Baker, Dale Gearhart, Matt Sloan, Pastor Marc Lapointe, Brenda Athy, and Brandon Shoup.

1. **Meeting Called to Order:** President Nate Thompson called the meeting to order.
2. **Approve the Agenda:** Motion to approve the agenda made by Dale and seconded by Matt. Motion approved.
3. **Opening Prayer:** Given by Pastor Marc.
4. **Devotions:** Given by Pastor Marc.
5. **Approve Minutes of Last Meeting:** The November 9, 2025 Church Council meeting minutes previously emailed, were read by council members. Motion to approve the November 9, 2025 Church

Council meeting minutes made by Dale and seconded by Al.  
Motions approved.

6. **Treasurer's Report:** Given by Tiffany. Copies of the November Financial Report are available on the bulletin board near the office and on the table in a yellow/orange folder by the front door entrance.)

**Treasurer's Notes – November**

- The second half of Benevolence has been paid out for the remainder of the year.
- We are down \$55,000 in offerings total as of the end of November that was budgeted for the year 2025, however, expenses are down which will help a little.

7. **Board Reports:**

- **Deacons** – given by Mike. Present was Ric, Al, Mike.
- There were 5 Sundays in November. The attendance for 8 a.m. services had an average of 16 and the 10 a.m. had an average of 64 for a total average of 80. The snow storm on November 30 caused our average numbers to be lower. We did not have an 8 a.m. service at all and only 17 members came to the 10 a.m. service which skewed the numbers.
- The Deacons did shovel steps during November.
- **Elders** – given by Jeanne. Present were Andy, Marilyn, President Nate, Vice President Ryan, and Jeanne.
- Jeanne opened with prayer.
- Met with President Nate and Vice President Ryan.
- Discussed December and a little of January elder assisting communion worship schedules.
- Discussed Worship Committee, Music Committee, and Mutual Ministry Committee responsibilities according to the Constitution.
- Discussed the length of the service and is under consideration.

- **Parish Ed.** – Given by Megan. Present were Kati, Megan, and Robin.
  - Working on the Children's Christmas Program which will be on December 21 at the 10 a.m. service only.
  - We went Christmas caroling on Wednesday, December 10 at Riki Timbrook and Hillis and Glenda Rockey's homes.
  - Ordered the curriculum for January.
- **Trustees** – Given by Dale. Present were Nathan, Dale, and Matt.
  - We will have a possible \$3000 bill for the repair of the boilers.
  - The church's internet and WIFI are running well and is now locked down. Our new device allows us to see any device connected to it, and any website they go to. We believe someone near our church had access to our open guest network and WIFI and it had some inappropriate things show up, but this device has now been blocked. We have also limited the hours that our guest network is available, so between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. our guest network disappears and no one can have access. The network inside to the church is still available for us to use.
  - Discussion for snow emergency issues will be taken up in New Business.
  - Feel that a general offering should be collected during the Christmas Eve service and not just put out baskets at each door as offering giving is down.

**8. Pastor's Report:** Given by Pastor Marc.

- This month had many things happening. We celebrated 1<sup>st</sup> communion on November 9.
- We had a Baptism on November 2 which was actually scheduled for October before, but had to be changed at a request of the family.
- We also had Harvest Fest Sunday and a Congregational meeting and with all these special things happening during November it was hard to control the length of the service.

- I was involved with the planning of the Montpelier Community Thanksgiving service.
- We are in the midst of the Advent services.
- The North West Ohio Mission District group of pastors met here and the Ladies of the WOTC prepared a delicious breakfast and lunch for them.
- We had planned on a youth pizza night with the youth from Trinity Lutheran in Delta, but sadly did not happen. We were not able to get our kids to commit to going there as they were busy with other things, so am looking for a future date and time that might be workable with our youth.
- Have had hospital visits and home visits, meetings, at home communion, 2 movie nights with a discussion afterwards.
- Last we had a Zoom meeting with the Ohio District Camp Board, which is a newly formed board to look at doing something with camps in Ohio in the future. Discussion is now about looking to have a family camp in 2026, but working on what goals are achieved on doing it.

## **9. Other Report:**

WOTC - given by Brenda Athy, WOTC president.

- See WOTC November 9, 2025 Board minutes.

**10. Approve All Reports:** Motion to approve all reports made by Andy and seconded by Ryan. Motion approved.

**11. Half-Time Prayer:** Given by Pastor Marc.

## **12. Old Business:**

- Matt spoke that there are plenty of candles that his Adult Sunday School class can work with to prepare them for Christmas Eve.

## **13. New Business:**

- President Nate asked about when the Installation of church Council Officers could be done and it was decided to have on Sunday, January 11, 2026.

- Discussion about the new tri-fold updated church brochure and where they can be distributed. We will look into printing that in January.
- Ryan asked about Harvest Fest offerings. Tiffany stated there is about \$4200 that has come in so far. There was much discussion about options and ideas. Motion made by Nathan and seconded by Megan to give \$500 for each LifeWise school organization at Montpelier, North Central, Edon, and West Unity from the Harvest Fest offerings. Motion approved.
- Much more discussion was had about the church cancellation policy. President Nate suggested that if it's a level 3 at 10 p.m. Saturday night, church will be cancelled. Pastor Marc and Nathan offered to still come and have an online service available to watch for those who cannot come. All agreed we need a policy so President Nate will write up a policy and present it to council.
- Ryan stated we need to set up a congregational meeting. January 25 was agreed on. Jeanne wants to have all board reports in by January 19.
- A big thank you to Ric and Nate who are going off council this year.

**14. Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Ryan and seconded by Dale. Motion approved.


**15. Lord's Prayer:** The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer. Next meeting is Jan. 11, 2026 at 11:30 a.m.



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"I can support a church softball and volleyball team, but I cannot support a church wrestling team."

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May the New Year fill your home  
with joy, your heart with love, and  
your life with laughter. & may God  
bless you today and every day.

*Happy New Year.*

WishesMsg.com