



Saint John Lutheran Church
Bellevue, Iowa
*A Congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

*Growing and responding
Every Day as disciples of Jesus*

December 2024

WEEKLY WORSHIP

Saturday - 5:00 pm
Sunday - 10:00 am

~ CONFIRMATION ~

6th - 8th Grade
Wednesday
6:00-8:00 pm

~ EMAIL ADDRESSES~

Office
saintjohn.bellevue@gmail.com
Pastor
sjpastor.pp@gmail.com

~ WEBSITE ~

SAINTJOHNLUTHERAN.NET

LIKE US ON
SAINT JOHN LUTHERAN
CHURCH - BELLEVUE, IOWA

CHURCH PHONE:
563-872-5849



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CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP



DECEMBER 24
4:00 PM
7:00 PM
10:00 PM

**Christmas Day
NO SERVICE**

**See page 5
for Our Holiday Schedule**

To view all the pictures in color within this newsletter, go to our website: saintjohnlutheran.net and click on newsletter.



CHRISTMAS JOYS

Christmas should be a time of joy—time of celebrating. But for some people the joy of Christmas can be overshadowed by the stress of a long list of things to do, the anxiety of an uncertain future, or the grief and loneliness brought about by a death of loved one.

There is a saying, “Jesus is the reason for season.” Perhaps this saying is to remind us that the birth of Jesus is a seed of hope and joy.

As I think back on my Christmas experiences, I would say that my early Christmas experiences weren't all that joyful. Now I could bore you with a list of “poor Paul,” but I won't.

As I reflect on what I believed was my “joyless” Christmas, I realized that I was only thinking about myself and the joy I didn't get. But as I reflect more upon my past Christmases, I recalled those moments of wrapping my presents for others and thinking about the joy they would receive. Perhaps the joy of Christmas is more of spreading the joy rather than gathering the joy.

The birth of Jesus—Emmanuel reminds us that God came to dwell with us—to bring hope and joy into our lives. Emmanuel—God with us. How can we move away from our self-centeredness and dwell with others and share the love of God? How can we bring joy into the lives of those who are feeling despaired. How can we bring comfort and hope into this world?

This Christmas, let us discover the true joy of life—not simply in the presents we receive, but rather in our presence we give and share with others. And, let us be renewed by gathering to worship our Lord Jesus Christ the One who brings the true joy and hope to all.

Wishing you and your family a blessed and joyful Christmas

Pastor Paul



Judy Pataska 12/1
 Carol Hammann..... 12/2
 Jane Patterson..... 12/2
 Ben Sieverding 12/2
 Kristina Feil 12/3
 Dale Pataska 12/3
 Hallie Decker 12/4
 Diane Dempewolf 12/4
 Barry Nudd 12/5
 Shelly Stephany 12/5
 Shirley Cornwell 12/6
 Carlie McPherson 12/7
 Tate Giesemann 12/8
 Julianna Gleason 12/8
 Townes McPherson 12/8
 Heather Merrick 12/11
 Judy Michels 12/11
 Eliza Scheckel 12/11
 Leonard Weis..... 12/11
 Jessica Childs 12/12
 Neal Valant 12/12
 Jackie Dagitz 12/13
 Jason Yeager..... 12/13
 Becky Giesemann..... 12/14
 Holly McPherson..... 12/14
 Darrell Meyer 12/14
 Hannah Putman..... 12/16

Keily Davis 12/18
 Jon Thoms 12/19
 Lorrie Both 12/20
 Norma Vozzola 12/20
 Chance Deppe 12/21
 Jason Gilmore..... 12/22
 Noelle Schlie 12/22
 Makaila Scheckel 12/23
 Fischer Johnson..... 12/24
 Dennis Schlarmann..... 12/24
 Torrie Back 12/25
 Paxton Felderman..... 12/25
 Chris Ries 12/25
 Mathew Schlecht..... 12/25
 Cameron Cooper 12/26
 Addysen Felderman 12/27
 Linda Mangler 12/27
 Stetson Ploeger 12/27
 Archer Pitts 12/28
 Lilliana Claussen 12/29
 Kyle Guenther 12/29
 Hailey Feller 12/30
 Connie Merfeld..... 12/30
 Aleyha Mootz 12/30
 Danielle Putman..... 12/30
 Jan Schroeder..... 12/30

Celebrating Their Wedding Anniversary

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Years</u>
Freddie & Mary Thielen	Dec. 9	24
Ron & Lisa Schroeder.....	Dec. 30	18
Shannon & Heidi Abbott	Dec. 31	20
Michael & Megan Bies	Dec. 31	9



Anniversaries—40 Plus Yrs

Dec. 14	Dennis & Carol Keil	50th
Dec. 17	Gary & Joanne Mensinger	64th
Dec. 17	Gary & Fran Feuerbach.....	60th



PARSONAGE PHONE 872-3637 NO LONGER CONNECTED

With Pastor Paul and Diane moving out of the parsonage and into their home (105 N. 5th Street), the parsonage phone has been disconnected..

If you are needing to connect with Pastor Paul, you can do so by calling the church office 563-872-5849. If he is not at the church, you can leave a message with Ann. If no one is available, leave a voice message by listening to the church menu.

For a pastoral emergency, call Pastor Paul on his cell phone 563-542-1538.

PASTORAL ACTS & RITES OF PASSAGE



Funeral—November 2

**Rosetta "Rosie" Ruby (Malmberg)
Williams**

Baptism—November 3

Kallan Craig Schuster

Parents: Tyler Schuster & Kylee Putman



**Memorials & Gifts Received
In Memory of**

Rosie Williams

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP *Candle Light Service*

**DECEMBER 24
4:00 PM
7:00 PM
10:00 PM**

**CHRISTMAS DAY
DECEMBER 25

NO WORSHIP SERVICE**



DECORATE OUR CHURCH BY DONATING A POINSETTIA

If you would like to share a poinsettia in memory of a loved one or in honor of a person or event, please fill out a card at church. You can also send an email or call the church office with the following information:

1. Number of plants being brought.
2. Name of person being remembered or honored.
3. Please indicate whether it is "in memory of" or "in honor of."
4. The name of the giver.

All plants can be brought to the church anytime. If you would like to take your plant home to enjoy it after Christmas, you may pick it up after December 25.

HELP PUT UP THE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Come and help decorate our church for Christmas on Sunday, December 8 at 11:00 after the worship service. With many hands it shouldn't take long.



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Thanks to Dad Hengeveld (See Luke 2:1-16)

12-20-2001

**SORRY FOLKS, WE'RE BOOKED SOLID ... GOD
HIMSELF COULDN'T GET A ROOM HERE TONIGHT**



ARK NEWS

As we head toward the end of our Fall session, our focus will be on the birth of Jesus. This fall we have had a total of 62 students participating in ARK with an average attendance of 55 each week. We are grateful for the dedication of our leaders. Without them we would not be able to offer this great educational ministry for our elementary children.

Date	Story	Page in the Spark Story Bible
Dec. 6	Angel Visits Mary and Joseph	p. 194-199
Dec. 13	Jesus is Born	p. 212
Dec. 20	Shepherds Celebrate	P. 212
Dec. 27	NO ARK - Christmas Break	
Jan. 3	NO ARK - Christmas Break	

NO ARK CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

This year, we will not be having the ARK Christmas Program. The children will be singing our Christmas songs and hearing the Christmas story before our Christmas break.





CONFIRMATION MINISTRY NEWS

**NO CONFIRMATION
Christmas Break**

Dec. 25, and Jan. 1

Dec. 4	6:00– 800
Dec. 11	6:00– 8:00
Dec. 18	6:00 - 8:00 Christmas Caroling

ACTOLYTE SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

Saturday	Student	Sunday	Students
Dec. 7	Addi Kutsch	Dec. 8	Zoey Bies Landon Merrick
Dec. 14	Carter Ruggeberg	Dec. 15	Bently Ernst Eli Portiz
Dec. 21	Coy Schroeder	Dec. 22	Coy LaCoursiere Aleyha Mootz
Christmas Eve - December 24			
4:00	(Need 3)	Cambree Jess,	
7:00	(Need 2)	Aleyha Mootz, Coy LaCoursiere	
10:00	(Need 2)		
Saturday	Student	Sunday	Students
Dec. 28	Leonard Wies	Dec. 29	Charlee Scheckel Trace Bonifas

2024 THANKSGIVING MEAL



On November 28, we hosted our 19th Community Thanksgiving Dinner. We served a total of 133 meals of which 87 were sent out or picked up. We also had 46 individuals who dined in. This was our fifth highest number of meals served since we began offering our Thanksgiving Day dinner. [2020 during covid = 163, 2018 = 143, 2023 = 140, 2024=135]

The Thanksgiving Dinner is intended to be a free meal for those who will be home alone, or who are unable to prepare a meal. Even though we say it is a free meal, we receive many cash donations from those receiving the meal and from other people. These generous donations help defray our expenses and the proceeds are then given to ELCA World Hunger. This year we will be giving approx. \$400 to World Hunger.



Over the years, we have received many compliments and notes thanking us for this outreaching ministry. We give thanks to God that we are able to meet the needs of others and bring some joy into their lives.



Over 30 volunteers contributed in making this Thanksgiving a success



Thanks to all who helped and who made pies.

2025 ESTIMATE OF GIVING TIME AND TALENT SHEETS

Have you returned your 2025 Estimate of Giving card that was sent to you in November? The Estimate of Giving is helpful for the leadership to prepare our general budget for the coming year. Your Estimate of Giving is not contractual but only an indication of how you are planning to support the ministries of this church.

The Time and Talent sheet provides us with a list of who is willing to serve the various needs of this church. In this past year, we have had to rely on a smaller number of individuals.

So, please complete and return these stewardship tools.



How Will You Assist In Worship?

Since covid, we have had a smaller number of people who indicated their willingness to assist in worship . **We could use more people to serve as ushers, lectors, communion assistants, communion stewards, and candle stewards on our Saturday or Sunday services.**

If you have questions about what is required of these tasks, talk with Pastor Paul.

MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

The Saint John Scholarship Fund was established in January, 1991. The Memorial Committee is now receiving letters of interest for a scholarship. Requirements for consideration are:

1. Enrolled in a 2-year or 4-year college or technical school for the first time.
2. Completed the first semester or term.
3. Submit a letter of interest by December 20 to:

*Saint John Lutheran - 300 S. 3rd St.
Bellevue, IA 52031*

The committee will be awarding this one—time gift to the recipients for the second semester expense.



2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES ARE AVAILABLE

We are providing the 2025 offering envelopes for those giving units who:

1. Have a record of giving in 2024, and
2. Are not using e-Offering, and
3. Have used pre-printed envelopes in 2024, or are new and want pre-printed envelopes.

The envelopes will be in the back of the church by mid-December. If there is not a set of envelopes with your name on it, and you wanted pre-printed envelopes, please contact the church office (872-5849).

We encourage those who do not use 'e-Offering' or do not have pre-printed envelopes to use the "Pew Envelopes" located in the pew. By using these envelopes you will have a record of giving sent to you for the year that can be used for tax purposes.



CHRISTMAS STAR MINISTRY

If you have picked up a star from our Christmas Star tree, we want to say thank you.

Your gift needs to be returned to the church

by December 12. Please **TIE the stars to the package** rather than taping them. This will help the “elves” take the star off and put the child’s name on the package.

We also want to thank all who gave a donation to our ministry to help provide food for a “Christmas meal” that will be available along with the gifts for the youth.



Bellevue Bread Basket

Served 49 families
(131 people)
in November

DEADLINE FOR OUR ANNUAL REPORT

The deadline for this year’s annual report is December 18. Please submit your ministry team’s report to the office by either dropping them off or email them to:

saintjohn.bellevue@gmail.com

The financial books will be closed on December 31. We will be needing all financial records and reports by January 6.



LET US KNOW IF YOU'RE A VETERAN

As we took a moment to recognize our veterans who were in church on November 10 & 11, it dawned on me that there were other veterans who are members and participating partners that were not in church.

What we would like to do is to identify those veterans who are associated with our church so that next year we can publish the names and the branch of service in our newsletter and bulletin.

We are asking for you to notify the church office if you are a veteran. We are also asking for the names of those men and women who are currently serving in our military.



Our Prayer Ministry

The mission of our Prayer Ministry is to pray for those who are in need of God's help - our loved ones, friends, and those whom we don't know. We invite you to include the names of those on our Prayer List in your daily prayers.

Some people want to know why we are praying for an individual. Because of HIPPA privacy rule, our church will not disclose the reason for a person being placed on our prayer list. We simply suggest you uplift them and let God act in the appropriate way.

To place an individual on our prayer list You can call the church office (872-5849), or email the office (saintjohn.bellevue@gmail.com)

Before making the prayer request, please make sure that the individual or their family approves of having their name on our Prayer List.

Names will remain on our Prayer List for three weeks. If the individual continues to need our prayers, then that individual can be placed back on the list with another request. Ideally an individual will not remain on our list for months unless they are in the final stages of their life or in the process of receiving long-term treatment.

Supporting Your Church

You will be able to support the ministries of Saint John through direct giving by using one of the following :

1. **Mobile Giving** - cell phone app
2. **On-line Giving** - on our website
3. **e-Offering** - automatic withdrawal set up with the church administrator



With this mobile app from Vanco Payment, that is used by many churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), you can give directly by using your cell phone.

With **“Mobile Giving”** you can quickly and easily support our church by using your debit/credit card.

Win-Win Bonus: Using a credit card can give you points/cash back every time you give your offering.

“Mobile Giving” app is a convenient and secure way of giving. No more envelopes, checks, or cash needed.

Download  mobile app on Google Play or App Store for free.

Make sure you select Saint John Lutheran Church - 300 S. 3rd St - Bellevue, IA as your church. We encourage you to help offset the processing fee for using your debit/credit card.



Online Giving is now available on our website: saintjohnlutheran.net. Just click “Give” at the top of the page.

As with the mobile app, you will be able to use your debit/credit card, or have your donation withdrawn from your checking or savings. We encourage you to help offset the processing fee for using your debit/credit card.

“e-Offering”

An automatic offering plan
to support the ministries of our church



WHAT IS “E-OFFERING”? It is one way the members of Saint John give their offering to the church. It is the automatic transferring of the amount of your designated offering from your bank to the church’s bank account. For many, the automatic transferring of money is the preferred way to pay off loans, monthly bills, or to give their charitable donations. Many churches encourage their members to give their offering in this manner.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF USING “E-OFFERING”?

1. It is a reliable and safe way to maintain your giving to Saint John.
2. It provides and ensures that your intentions for giving are executed even when you are unable to attend worship while you are ill, on vacation, or have gone south for the winter. It eliminates the guilt feeling of not giving and the need to catch up.
3. It ensures that the work of God continues to be supported on a timely basis so that the church doesn’t have to borrow money to pay the monthly expenses.

There is no cost to the individual to use “e-Offering.” You control the amount and when the transfer happens. Should your economic status change, you can simply change (decrease/increase) or stop the “e-Offering” with just one call to the church.

To sign up, just complete the following and return.

✂

Name: _____

Amount of Offering to be transferred: \$ _____

Frequency of Transfer:

Weekly on Monday Weekly on Friday Semi-monthly
(1st & 15th) Monthly on the 1st Monthly on the 15th

Signature: _____

Date: _____ *Saint John “e-Offering”*

Attach a voided check so that we can ensure the correct routing and account no.

Weekly Worship Attendance & Offerings

Weekend of	Sat.	Sun.	Total	General Fund Offerings
November 3	32	119	151	\$3,347.18
November 10	40	60	100	\$1,997.18
November 17	31	51	82	\$2,636.18
November 24	31	61	92	\$1,545.18
December 1	34	51	85	\$3,581.18

FINANCIAL REPORT

General Fund Balance— 10/29/24	\$8,983.15
<u>Income:</u>	
General Offerings	9,759.72
Cemetery Custodian Reimbursement	500.00
Interest & Miscellaneous	28.47
Lodge Rentals	300.00
<u>Expenses:</u>	
Budgeted Expenses	(17,269.04)
General Fund Balance—11/30/2024	\$2,302.30

Saint John Council Minutes—November 18, 2024

Present - JoEllen Poll, Pastor Paul, Marla Mootz, Ann Skoff, Jo Ernst, Shannon Abbott, Daniel Braet **Absent** - Joannie Kilburg

Called to order by President JoEllen Poll at 6:30 pm. Opening Prayer led by JoEllen.

Agenda - MSC to approve agenda.

Council Minutes - MSC to approve council minutes of October 2024 as printed.

Reports -

a) Financial - MSC to accept the Financial Reports as printed.

Correspondence - Hannah Braet sent a note thanking Saint John for the \$400 scholarship.

Action by Email Vote - MSC to approve payment of \$5,500.00 to Chris's Carpentry Service for work completed on replacement of the garage roof. Money came from the Saint John Trust/Nondesignated Funds; and was approved at a Special Congregational meeting on July 12, 2024

OLD BUSINESS -

a) Land Line in Parsonage - The phone line will be cancelled this month. There will be a notice in the December Beacon.

NEW BUSINESS -

a) Local/Global Outreach Committee - MSC to affirm a \$500 donation to the Bellevue Bread Basket, and a \$150 donation to the Community Thanksgiving Dinner at Saint John.

b) CD's at Bellevue State Bank- MSC to have Jo Ernst renew CD #3394 when it matures on November 30 at the best rate available. MSC to cash in CD #3867 when it matures on December 3, and deposit the funds into the Designated Funds checking account.

Next Meeting - Monday, December 16 at 6:30 pm.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:54 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ann Skoff

