



St John's

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Stony Ridge, OH 43463

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Pastor Howard Abts

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The Way of Love 2026

Memory Verse:

"We love because he first
loved us"

1 John 4:19

October 2026

Harvest



Blessings



From Pastor Howard...

"The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." -John 3.8

In last month's VOICE John Henry, our congregation's president, reminded us that God is always present to sustain, comfort, and strengthen us when things go sideways. "[T]hings often go differently than we expect or hope. The good news is we do not face trials and the unknown alone." Remember reading it? If you don't, you should go back and look at it again. I'll wait.

Okay, you're back. Good, eh? Especially the prayer he quotes at the end.

The coin of being beaten down by the unexpected has another side, too: we can also meet with joyful surprises. We can be built up by the unexpected.

One of God's favorite ways of giving us good surprises is through each other, through our brothers and sisters in Christ, who have been infected by the Holy Spirit. Jesus explains to Nicodemus that people who are born of the Spirit become unpredictable, just as the wind is unpredictable. Jesus was filled with the Spirit, born of the Spirit, led by the Spirit more than anyone else. It's why Good Religious People hated having him around. He was disruptive. He was a disturber of the peace. He did not do everything decently and in order. It's not surprising at all that they wanted to get rid of him, and tried, and succeeded. (Briefly.)

Those close to him pick up his characteristics, his character. It gets harder and harder to predict what they will say, what they will do. Isn't that good?

I suggest a prayer to go with the one John quoted, NOT TO REPLACE IT, but to be kept beside it:

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot even imagine the ending, by paths as yet unmapped, with startling bursts of joy. Give us faith to go out with high expectations, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

What do you think?

From the Council President...

In recent years Church Council has studied a book throughout the year, focusing each month on a chapter. This year we are studying the book *Giving to God, The Bible's Good News about Living a Generous Life* by Mark Allan Powell. One of the main points of the book is that "stewardship" is not "giving money to the church". Well, ok, giving money to the church is one piece of "stewardship", and a rather important piece, but stewardship is much more than that. We are stewards, not owners, of the abundance God has given us: our time, our talents, our possessions (I feel the desire to add the words "signs of your gracious love" to the end of that for some reason . . .). Stewardship is living under "the rule of God" or "the kingdom of God" or "the Gospel". Stewardship is being grateful for what we have, using it wisely, neither hoarding nor squandering it, managing it wisely and faithfully, and spending it carefully and toward good purpose.

Stewardship is a lot about money, but not just money. The last sentence in the paragraph above works for "money". It also works for "time". It also works for "talent". Fortunately, St. John's can help you become a good steward, or become an even better one! We have opportunities. Oh boy do we have opportunities! If you have been blessed with God's abundance (and by "abundance" I mean do you have even a smidgen more than you absolutely need) it can be put to good and faithful use at St. John's. There are opportunities for giving time (that do not have to be forever commitments), including Food Pantry, Shared Bounty, Rise Against Hunger, committees, AV Booth, Altar Guild, and others. There are opportunities to use your abilities including all those already mentioned, plus Council, help in the office, Lay Reader and Communion Assistant, Sunday School Teacher, and more. There are opportunities to share your monetary wealth through regular offerings, Rise Against Hunger, bequests, and others.

We are saved by the grace of God, called to witness and to serve others. We are also called to be good Stewards.

In Christ,

John Henry
Church Council President



Trunk or Treat

Saturday, Oct. 24

**12:30 p.m. St. John's Hilltop
Dayschool - North Parking
Lot**

**5:30 p.m. Stony Ridge
Community Park**

SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Sunday Special...

- Food Pantry ~**
- jars of turkey gravy
 - boxed turkey or chicken stuffing
 - Jiffy Cornbread Mix
 - cereal (any kind)

- Shared Bounty ~**
- men's and women's deodorant
 - baby wipes



In Loving Memory of...

Mary Bath

◆ Tom & Cindy Ritter ◆ SOAR ◆ Joan Staib

Shane Herman

◆ Thomas & Debra Herman

In Honor of...

Arlene Baker

◆ Jodi Black & Joyce Daurer

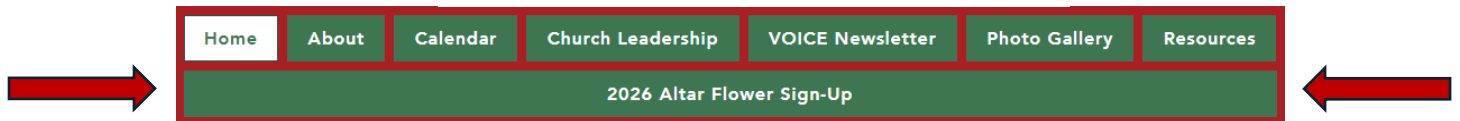
SIGN UP FOR ALTAR FLOWERS!!



Please check the sign-up sheet in the Narthex if you are interested in placing flowers this month! *The cost for flowers is \$25 per vase.*



You can place your *2026 Altar Flower* requests online! Just go to the Home Page of our website and click on the link for 2026 Altar Flower Sign Up. You can also scan this QR code or call the church office at 419-837-5115.



Calling All Students 8th grade - HS Seniors (and their parents)

The 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering will be held in
Minneapolis, MN

June 28 – July 2, 2027

Priority registration begins October 21, 2026

We are exploring the possibility of joining with other area churches to attend as one large NW Ohio group. We need to know who is interested in attending this awesome event. If you want more information or would like to attend, contact the church office or talk to either of our pastors.

Call: 419-837-5115 or email: officeadmin@stjohnsstonyridge.net



ST. JOHN'S HILLTOP



A Month into the School Year!

We have officially made it through our first month of the school year, and we are so excited about how wonderful things are going! The children are settling into their classrooms, getting to know their teachers, and building new relationships with both their teachers and classmates.

It has been wonderful to watch the children become more comfortable with their daily routines, schedules, and classroom expectations. Each day, we are seeing them grow in confidence, independence, and their sense of belonging within our school community.

A Huge Thank You to Our Congregation!

We are especially excited to share that our new playground fencing was officially installed on September 22nd!

We cannot thank our congregation enough for helping to make this possible. Your generosity and support have made a tremendous difference for our children and our program. The new fencing will provide a safer and more secure space for our students to explore, play, and learn.

We are incredibly grateful for the continued support and encouragement we receive from our church family!

Growing in Faith

October will also bring some exciting opportunities for our children to grow in their faith. We are excited to begin Bible time with our teachers and Pastor Cindy throughout the school year.

We are also blessed to have Pastor Howard joining us once a week to read to the children. We are looking forward to these special opportunities for our children to connect with our pastors, hear Bible stories, enjoy books, and continue building a strong foundation of faith within our school community.



🍎 Trunk-or-Treat – October 24th

Join us on Saturday, October 24th, for Trunk-or-Treat in our school parking lot!

We would love members of our congregation to participate by decorating a trunk and handing out candy to the children. A sign-up sheet will be available on the bulletin board at the main entrance of the church if you would like to participate.

If you decorate a trunk, you may arrive between 11:30 and 12:00 p.m. to get set up. Trunk decorating can take place between 11:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m., with children beginning to come through at 12:30 p.m.

We encourage you to be creative and decorate your trunk in whatever fun and appropriate way you would like!

Donations Needed

We are also looking for donations to help make the event special. If you can donate, we are looking for:

- 🍎 Apple cider (Anytime)
- 🍩 Donuts (Day before)
- 🍠 Pumpkins (Anytime)
- 🍬 Candy for the children (Anytime)

Any donation, big or small, is greatly appreciated!





October Birthdays

(Those over 74 years young!)

Carolyn Staib	10/13	5474 Wagoner Road, Walbridge, OH 43465
Sharon Bitter	10/15	27609 Lemoyne Road, Millbury, OH 43447
James Goodman	10/17	514 Americas Way, #7784 Box Elder, SD 57719
Linda Polzin	10/20	26734 Thompson Road, Perrysburg, OH 43551
Pr. Bob Johnson	10/25	P. O. Box 248, 5925 Fremont Pike, Stony Ridge, 43463
Dave Polzin	10/29	26734 Thompson Road, Perrysburg, OH 43551
Doris Welling	10/31	P. O. Box 911, Luckey, OH 43443

Women of the ELCA

Comforters for Lutheran World Relief will be tied on Tuesday, October 13th from 12:00 to 2:30 in the Parish House. We are always looking for new volunteers. Please consider joining us for this important project. No experience necessary!

Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, October 13th-Tie Comforters 12:00-2:30 (Parish House)

Monday, October 19th-Crafting Group 1:00-3:00 (Lounge)

Donations of filler for mission comforters are always welcome, including old blankets, sheets, bedspreads, and tablecloths. These donations may be placed in the LWR box in the coatroom. Thank you in advance for your donations. If you have material you'd like to donate for the tops of comforters, donations would be greatly appreciated.



Crafting Group

The Crafting Group will meet on Monday, October 19th from 1:00 to 3:00 in the lounge. Bring your latest project and join us for fellowship and conversation. We would love to grow our group. See Lynda Lees with any questions.

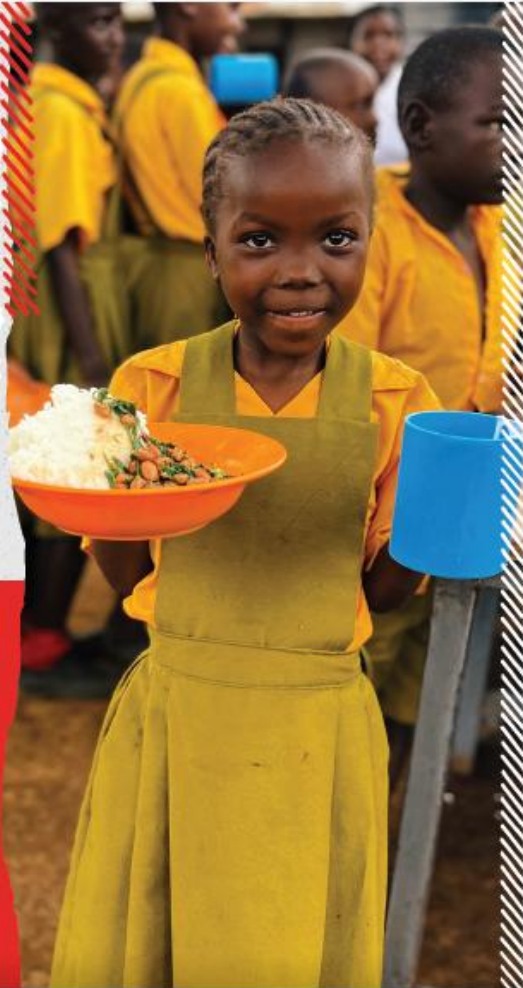
JOIN US!!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17 @ 11 AM

We have an exciting, hands-on volunteer opportunity for you! We will meet in our Parish Hall for 2 hours to package meals for global hunger relief! Check out the flyer below for the details. Come be a part of this awesome mission project. Community Service hours are available for High School students. Call the church office 419-837-5115 if you have any questions.



Rise Against Hunger works in countries worldwide to fight hunger, targeting communities facing high rates of food insecurity.



Join the movement!

Will you join us for an exciting, hands-on volunteer opportunity to package meals for global hunger relief? Check out our Rise Against Hunger Experience meal packaging event details below. We hope to see you there!

October 17, 2026

11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran Church
5520 Fremont Pike
Stony Ridge, OH 43463

We will pack 15,000 meals

Fund raising goal: \$6,500



Use this QR code to register or contact our church office (see below)

Call: 419-837-5115 / Email: officeadmin@stjohnsstonyridge.net

GENEROUS GIVING

Financial Giving through 9/28/2026

General Fund Income *(Year-to-Date)*

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
\$275,604	\$182,389	(\$93,215)

Benevolence Fund *(Year-to-Date)*

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
\$20,250	\$13,493	(\$6,757.50)

Improvement Fund *(Year-to-Date)*

Actual
\$22,072

(Copies of most recently approved financial reports are available in the Narthex and by request.)

Visit us online at

www.stjohnsstonyridge.net

or scan the QR code to set up electronic giving. Click on the "Give Generously" tab to enter your information and offering. Financial gifts can, of course, be sent by mail too. We are grateful for your continued support of our ministry.



UPCOMING EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

Oct 2 @ 9AM – Men's Breakfast at Panera on Rt. 20

Oct 3 @ 10AM – Shared Bounty in PH

Oct 5 @ 7:30 PM – Dartball Season begins at St. John's in the Gathering Room

Oct 8 & 22 @ 1:30 PM – New Stephen Ministry class in the Lounge

Oct 10 @ 2 PM – Fall Painting Party in the Parish Hall

Oct 17 @ 11 AM – Rise Against Hunger Mission Project in Parish Hall

Oct 24 @ 12:30 PM – St. John's Hilltop Dayschool Trunk or Treat in the N. Parking Lot

@ 5:30 PM – Stony Ridge Civic Association Trunk or Treat at the Stony Ridge Park

Oct 29 @ 10:30 AM – North Central Pastor's Meeting in Lounge

Nov 1 @ 3 PM – All Saints Day Quiet Communion in Chapel

Nov 5 & 19 – Stephen Ministry class in the Lounge

Nov 6 @ 9 AM – Men's Breakfast at Panera on Rt. 20

Nov 7 @ 9 AM – Pancake Breakfast in Parish Hall

@ 10 AM – Shared Bounty in Parish Hall

Join us for Bible Study

The Way of Love

Mondays @ 11am or 6pm

OCT 5, 12 & 19

*Sign up in Narthex or
call the church office*



**Please
Join
Us!**

**Wednesday, October 7, 11:30 a.m.
@ Moody's - 2511 Oregon Rd.,
Northwood**



**Fall Painting
Party!!!**

**Saturday,
October 10 @ 2PM**

St. John's Parish Hall

"Where Autumn Rests" \$10 per person -
collected at the door. Bring a snack to
share. Beverages provided. Sign up in
the Narthex TODAY!!

— YOU ARE INVITED —

All Saints Day

Quiet Communion

WORSHIP SERVICE

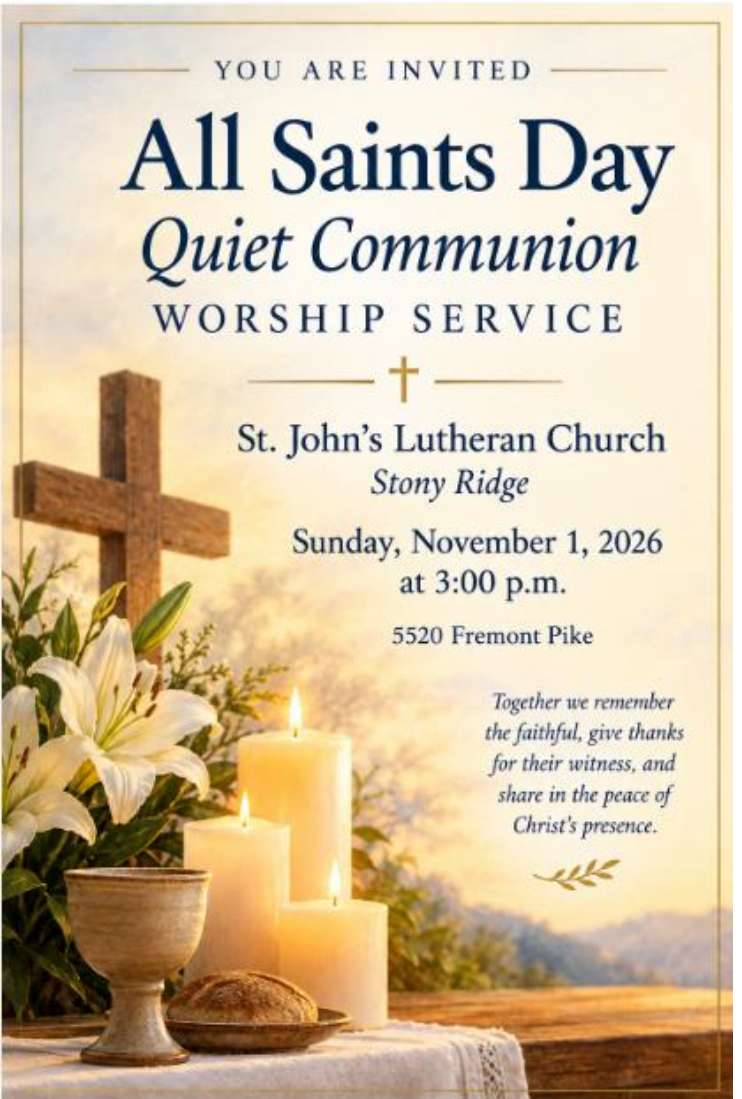
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St. John's Lutheran Church
Stony Ridge

**Sunday, November 1, 2026
at 3:00 p.m.**

5520 Fremont Pike

*Together we remember
the faithful, give thanks
for their witness, and
share in the peace of
Christ's presence.*



**Saturday,
Nov. 7 9-11 AM**
**St. John's Lutheran
Church
Parish Hall**

**5520 Fremont Pike
Stony Ridge, OH**



**PANCAKES
& PEACE**

**FREE COMMUNITY
BREAKFAST**

**Shared Bounty Shopping
10 AM - NOON**





October 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 8p AA (PH)	2 9a Men's Breakfast @ Panera on Rt. 20	3 10a Shared Bounty (PH) 2p Private Event set up (PH)
4 9a Christian Education 10a Worship 12p Private Event (PH)	5 11a & 6p Bible Study (L) Practice in (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones 7:30p Dartball H	6 NOON Prayer via ZOOM or in person - Chapel 7p Comm Mtg 1	7 7p Festival Choir	8 9:15a Staff Meeting 1:30p New Stephen Ministry Class (L) 8p AA (PH)	9	10 2p Fall Painting Party (PH)
11 9a Christian Education 10a Worship	12 11a & 6p Bible Study (L) Practice in (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones 7:30p Dartball A	13 NOON Prayer via ZOOM or in person - Chapel Noon - Tie Comforters (PH) 7p Comm Mtg 2	14 7p Festival Choir	15	16	17 7:30a Food Pantry 10a Set up (PH) 11a Rise Against Hunger (PH)
18 9a Christian Education 10a Worship Noon - Private Event (PH)	19 11a & 6p Bible Study (L) 1p Crafting Group (L) Practice in (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones 7:30p Dartball H	20 NOON Prayer via ZOOM or in person - Chapel 6:30p Exec Comm (L) 7p Church Council (L)	21 6p Dayschool Board (L) 7p Festival Choir	22 1:30p New Stephen Ministry Class (L) 8p AA (PH)	23	24 12:30p Dayschool Trunk or Treat in St. John's N. Parking Lot 5:30p Trunk or Treat at Stony Ridge Park
25 9a Christian Education 10a Worship Reformation Sunday	26 Practice in (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones 7:30p Dartball A	27 NOON Prayer via ZOOM or in person - Chapel	28 7p Festival Choir	29 10:30a North Central Pastors' Mtg. (L) 8p AA (PH)	30	31

Committee Meetings: Please schedule all meetings with the office administrator so the proper room is reserved to accommodate all groups. Call 419-837-5115 or email officeadministrator@stjohnsstonyridge.net.