



St John's LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Stony Ridge, OH 43463

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The Way of Love 2026

Memory Verse:

"We love because he first
loved us"

1 John 4:19

March-April 2026



HE IS RISEN

DEATH COULD NOT HOLD HIM.



From Pastor Cindy...

LENTEN GREETINGS!

I am THANKING GOD ahead of time for each of you - St. John's Stony Ridge members, regular attenders and guests. I have received GREAT JOY serving as your Co-Interim Pastor so very much. Thank you for the many ways you share your appreciation of the ministry and pastoral care that Pr.

Howard Abts and I enjoy so much as we serve here. It is hard to believe we are in the Holy Season of Lent already...yes, we are in this very special and Holy season together again.



It is that time of year when we pay attention to God...Father...Son...Holy Spirit in very intentional ways. On Ash Wednesday I spoke of "Holy Habits" that we focus on that were shared by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew...Sermon on the Mount...Chapter 6. These "Holy Habits" of Charitable Giving (Alms), Prayer and Fasting are ways for us to have greater concentration *outward toward God and others*.

As followers of Jesus, we all focus on Jesus as he travels toward the cross in many differing ways. Some develop specific "Holy Habits" for 6 weeks. Some turn or re-turn to God through repentance, reflection and renewal. Some share with greater intensity the many gifts, skills and talents they have been blessed with. These are something we thank God for and share with others through grace, comfort, prayers, hospitality, teaching, patience, welcoming, encouraging, helping, feeding and so much more!

In this season of Lent, Holy Week, Easter and beyond we THANK GOD AHEAD OF TIME for giving us the BEST GIFT EVER...Jesus Christ His Son and our Savior and Loving Lord. This quote is a power phrase of faith attributed to the *Blessed Solanus Casey*...an American Catholic Priest born in 1870 . His parents were Irish Immigrants. He was known for his deep spirituality and compassion as he gave great attention to those who were sick. He was recognized as a healer, and he was a gifted spiritual counselor. His legacy also includes being celebrated for his simplicity, humility and dedication to prayer.

(continued on pg. 3)

His quote "THANK GOD AHEAD OF TIME" was his way of sharing that we should trust in God's goodness before seeing the outcome.

As I strive to grow closer to God through Lenten "Holy Habits," I am also inspired to focus on those people known for their admirable faith practices. I appreciate the Blessed Solanus Casey's faith and the legacy he left behind for us to learn from. He also said, "Blessed be God in all His Designs" and "One of humanities greatest weaknesses is setting limits to God's power and goodness." I was blessed to visit the Solanus Casey Center in Detroit, Michigan this past summer. His remains are buried in the Saint Bonaventure Monastery which is part of the Solanus Casey Center. In 2017 he was beatified by Pope Francis, and this made him one step closer to Sainthood. He died from an illness in 1957 and reportedly his last words were, "I give my soul to Jesus Christ."

Especially in this Holy season of the year, it is good to learn of a person so inspiring. He truly loved and served our Lord and His people. The legacy the Blessed Solanus Casey leaves behind is commendable and interesting to hear about.

Here at St. John's, we have lost many precious people in our church and in very own families these past few years. They have priceless legacies to be remembered. As people of faith, we strive to grow closer to our Lord and leave behind a legacy that includes faith and lovingkindness for our loved ones to hold onto. We have hope and comfort and peace knowing that on EASTER SUNDAY we celebrate the RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ and are grateful for His Love, Grace and Promises of Life Eternal.

Friends in Christ-Let's each THANK GOD AHEAD OF TIME for these bountiful blessings so important to embrace as God's Beloved Children.

Have a Happy Easter!

Alleluia!

God's Peace Be with You,

Pr. Cindy Ritter

A Prayer for our Call Committee...



Dear Good and Gracious Father, we ask that you help us to trust the Call Committee as they work through the process of finding a new pastor for St. John's. We pray that our congregation trusts that this committee is being led by the Spirit as they search for the person God is bringing to us and that you bond our church and future pastor together in love. Amen.

From the Council President...

"How will you turn (or return) to God?" was Pastor Cindy's message on Ash Wednesday beginning the Season of Lent. I must confess my immediate thoughts when I heard her question were simplistic and superficial. However, in my defense, the prior Sunday saw the election of Council members at the Annual Meeting, at Monday's Council reorganizational meeting we elected officers, and Tuesday night was a Council meeting, so I immediately thought of "returning" to a church role I have had before. Perhaps other newly elected council members had similar thoughts; some are turning to a new role, and others are returning to something they have done before at this congregation and/or a previous one. Please forgive my initial superficiality.

Obviously, Pastor is calling us to something much deeper, more personal, more spiritual than spending a few hours a month taking care of church business. The discipline of Lent involves personal reflection, confession, prayer, a deeper relationship with God, penance, charity, improving relationships with others, etc. And yet as a result of that discipline, we may recommit ourselves to the earthly work of our congregation. There are and will be opportunities to turn or return to the work of the church. May's Build a Bed project will require helping hands and financial donations. Committees and groups need new ideas and new people. Musicians and volunteers are needed for worship services. Fellowship events will be held. There will be people needed to take over for others moving on to other tasks. The Holy Spirit will call. So, to echo Pastor's question, how will you turn (or return) to God?

In Christ,

John Henry

Church Council President

In Loving Memory of...

Tom Seuits

◆ Rick & Lynda Lees ◆ Tom Smiczek ◆ Carol Eckerman
◆ Jan Rucki ◆ Kathleen M. Kasprzak ◆ Nancy & Jeffrey Wilbur

Philip J. Rudolph

◆ John & Barbara Wilch

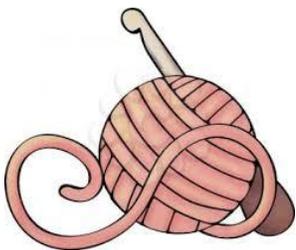
Women of the ELCA

Comforters for Lutheran World Relief will be tied on Tuesday, March 10th and Tuesday, April 14th from 12:00 to 2:30 in the Parish House. Volunteers are needed for this important mission project that provides warmth and shelter for people around the world, including the United States. Absolutely no experience is necessary.

Dates to Remember: Tuesday, March 10th & Tuesday, April 14th-Tie Comforters (Parish House)

Monday, March 16th & Monday, April 20th-Crafting Group

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, March 16th and Monday, April 20th from 1:00 to 3:00 in the Lounge. Bring your latest project and join us for fellowship and conversation. Please see Lynda Lees if you have any questions.





Every child deserves a bed



**SATURDAY,
MAY 9**

**8:30 A.M. SAFETY
MEETING**

**9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.
BED BUILDING**

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR
ALL AGES!!**

**DONATIONS MAY BE
SENT TO ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH,
STONY RIDGE, OH**

ST. JOHN'S STONY RIDGE BUILD-A-BED EVENT

**Come and be a part of this
wonderful
mission opportunity**

- **Breakfast and Lunch will be available to all volunteers**
- **Service hours available for youth**
- **Donations appreciated**
 - *We need to raise \$14,000 to meet our goal of building 70 beds*
 - *Twin comforter/sheet sets also accepted*

To register contact:
St. John's Church Office at 419-837-5115
or send us an email

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LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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net



Dear St. John's Lutheran Church,
 Thank you so much for your generous donation to the Stony Ridge Civic Association. Your support plays a meaningful role in keeping our park clean, safe, and welcoming for the entire community. We are truly grateful for your partnership and kindness. ~ Jamie Pustay, President,
 Stony Ridge Civic Association

A Special Thank You to Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pemberville for their generous donation to our St. John's Build-A-Bed Event coming up on May 9. We appreciate your support!!



COOKIE FELLOWSHIP!!!

In recent years the Fellowship Committee has taken it upon themselves to set up and clean up cookies for after-worship fellowship several times each month. Our committee is now asking for help with this. Committee Council Reps are going to be coordinating twice a month cookie fellowship with their respective committees. Each committee will be responsible for set up and clean-up of cookies and other treats – beverages are not necessary. St. John's families are also invited to take part in this cookie hour sponsorship.



A sign-up sheet is on the Fellowship bulletin board in the Narthex. Please add your committee's or family's name to a date or two! Thanks!

We will still be relying on our congregation members to supply us with these treats. They can be dropped off in the kitchen with a "Cookie Hour" note attached. **Thanks!!**



Please check the sign-up sheet in the Narthex if you are interested in placing flowers this month! The cost is \$22.50 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.



SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Sunday Special...



Food Pantry ~ boxed au gratin and scalloped potatoes
canned creamed corn
individual snacks for Summer bags
cereal

Shared Bounty ~ shampoo and conditioner

The food pantry is currently serving 65 families

Thank you...

...to the ladies of SOAR for your continued support with special collections for the food pantry. You are a blessing to our friends with food insecurities in this community!!

...to Cleveland Cliffs in Walbridge for your Super Bowl food drive for the food pantry.



Dayschool News

February was a wonderful month at the Dayschool! Our classrooms were filled with excitement, discovery, and joyful learning each day.

Throughout the month, our students explored new concepts through hands-on activities, creative art experiences, early

literacy work, and meaningful social-emotional learning. It has been a joy to watch their confidence grow as they build friendships, practice problem-solving skills, and develop independence.

One of the highlights of February was our very first Valentine's Day Dance! The children had an incredible time dancing, celebrating friendship, and sharing kindness with one another.



The room was filled with smiles, laughter, and lots of happy energy. It was such a special way to celebrate love and community that make our Dayschool so meaningful.



As we move into March and April, we are hopeful for warmer weather and more opportunities to enjoy time outdoors together. We are especially excited to partner with the church to combine our Easter Egg Hunt and celebrate Jesus' return together as both a school and church family. It is such a blessing to share these meaningful traditions as one community.

We continue to have open enrollment for our Summer Camps and Fall school year. We look forward to welcoming new families into our program and continuing to grow.

We are so grateful for the continued support of our church family. Your prayers, encouragement, and partnership allow us to create a nurturing environment where children can grow academically, socially, and spiritually.



With gratitude,
Hilltop Dayschool



March & April Birthdays

(Those over 74 years young!)

Mar. 5	Betty Bahnsen	20731 Kaidon Lane, N. Fort Myers, FL 33917
Mar. 8	Sally Claytor	7630 Reitz Rd. Lot 75, Perrysburg 43551
Mar. 9	Dolly Haar	129 Woodcreek Blvd., Walbridge 43465
Mar. 10	Cindy Walston	759 Riverside Dr., Woodville 43469
Mar. 11	Dick Bahnsen	20731 Kaidon Lane, N. Fort Myers, FL 33917
Mar. 18	Mary Jane Reitzel	25260 Ault Rd., Perrysburg 43551
Mar. 27	Maxine Haas	P.O. Box 212, Stony Ridge 43463
Mar. 30	Larry Warns	4122 Libbey Rd., Perrysburg 43551
April 29	Fred Swihart	512 Lilac Court, Pemberville 43450

GENEROUS GIVING

Financial Giving through 2/22/2026

General Fund Income (Year-to-Date)

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
\$41,416	\$36,831	(\$9,585)

Benevolence Fund (Year-to-Date)

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
\$4,500	\$2,027	(\$2,473)

Improvement Fund (Year-to-Date)

<u>Actual</u>
\$2,630

(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

Mar. 6 - 9 AM - Men's Breakfast @ Panera on Rt. 20 in Perrysburg

Wednesdays - Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25 - 7 PM - Evening Lenten Services

Mar. 22 - Deadline for ordering Easter Lilies

Mar. 29 - 10:00 AM - Palm Sunday Worship Service

Apr. 2 - 7 PM - Maundy Thursday Worship Service

Apr. 3 - 9 AM - Men's Breakfast @ Panera on Rt. 20 in Perrysburg

Apr. 3 - 7 PM - Good Friday Worship Service

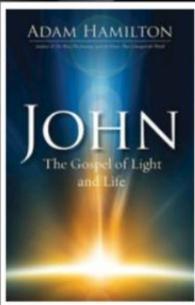
Apr. 5 - Easter Sunday - See times below

Family Easter Egg Hunt between services @ 9:45 AM

Apr. 18 - 2:00 PM - Spring Painting Party @ St. John's Parish Hall

Apr. 20 - 6:00 PM - Wood County Dartball League Banquet @ St. John's Parish Hall

**Bible/Book/DVD Study
in Lent**



Tuesdays
February 10, 17, 24,
March 3, 10, and 17
10:45 AM in the
Lounge
Evening sessions on
ZOOM @ 5 PM



**Please
Join
Us!**

Wednesday, March 11,
11:30 a.m.
@ Casa Rio in Pemberville



**Join us for
Easter Worship**



April 5, 2026

8:30 AM - Contemporary Service
9:45 AM - Easter Egg Hunt
10:15 AM - Traditional Service

Both services will be live-streamed on
our Facebook page.



**It's time to order
your Easter Lilies!**

Order forms can be
found on the desk
in the Narthex.

**Deadline is
March 22**

**\$14.00
per plant**

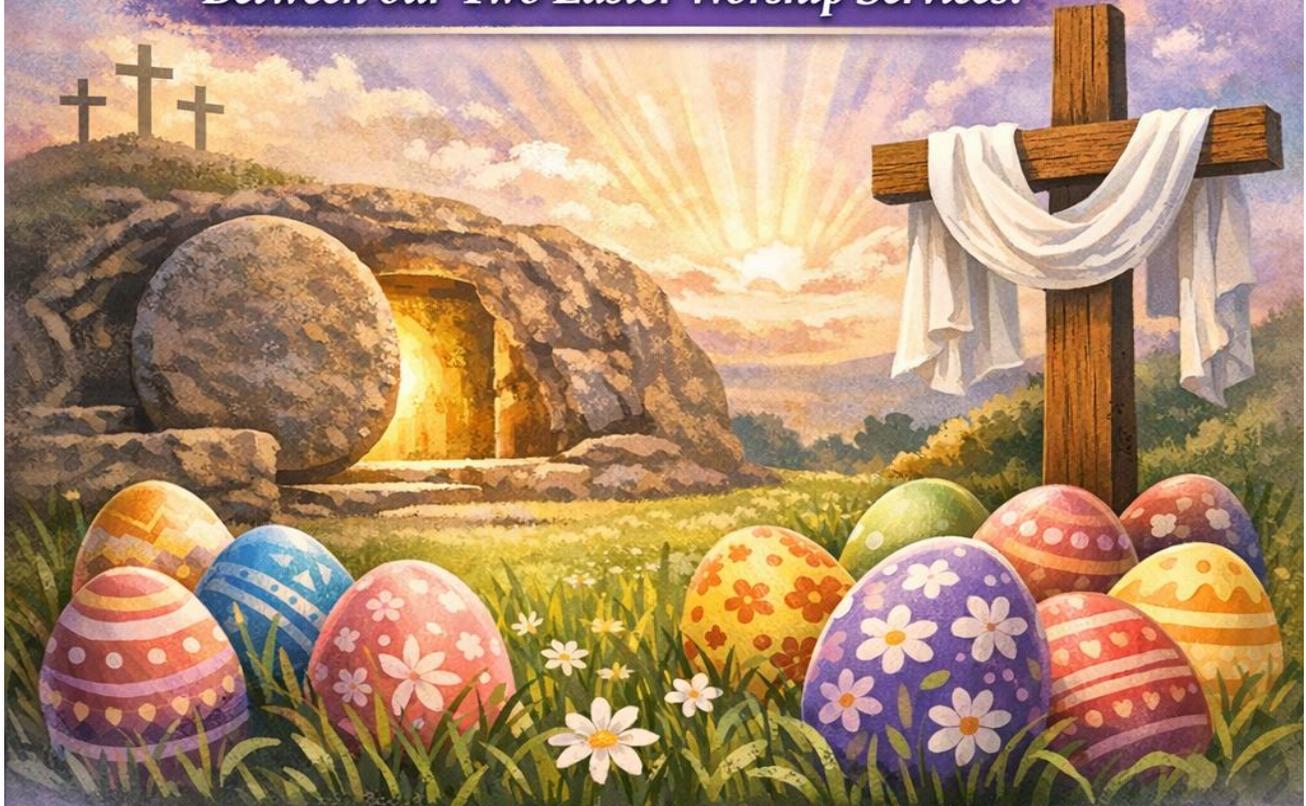
or call the church office 419-837-5115

St. John's Lutheran Church - Stony Ridge

Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 5th at 9:45 AM

Between our Two Easter Worship Services!



Donations of Candy Appreciated!



March 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>9a Christian Ed 10a Worship</p> <p>12p Private Event (PH)</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Practice: (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones</p> <p>7:30p Dartball (Away)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>10:45a Bible Study (L) Noon Prayers via ZOOM</p> <p>7p Committee Mtg Night #1</p> <p>8 p AA (PH)</p>	<p>4</p> <p>7:00p Lenten Service</p>	<p>5</p> <p>8 p AA (PH)</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9a Men's Breakfast @ Panera Rt. 20</p>	<p>7</p> <p>10a-12p Shared Bounty (PH)</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9a Christian Ed 10a Worship</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Practice: (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones</p> <p>7:30p Dartball (Home)</p>	<p>10</p> <p>10:45a Bible Study (L) 12p Tie Comforters (PH) Noon Prayers via ZOOM</p> <p>7p Committee Mtg Night #2</p> <p>8 p AA (PH)</p>	<p>11</p> <p>11:30a Lunch Bunch @ Casa Rio - Pemberville</p> <p>7:00p Lenten Service</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:15a Staff Meeting (L)</p> <p>8p AA (PH)</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>10a Private Event (PH)</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9a Christian Ed 10a Worship</p>	<p>16</p> <p>1p Crafting Group (L)</p> <p>Practice: (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones</p> <p>7:30p Dartball Tournament (BG)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>10:45 Bible Study (L) Noon Prayers via ZOOM</p> <p>12p Tie Comforters (PH)</p> <p>6:30p Exec Com. 7p Church Council (L)</p> <p>8 p AA (PH)</p>	<p>18</p> <p>7:00p Lenten Service</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>7:30a Food Pantry (PH) 11a Private Event (PH)</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9a Christian Ed 10a Worship</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Practice: (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones</p> <p>7:30p Dartball Tournament (BG)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Noon Prayers via ZOOM</p> <p>8 p AA (PH)</p>	<p>25</p> <p>7:00p Lenten Service</p>	<p>26</p> <p>8p AA (PH)</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9a Christian Ed 10a Worship Palm Sunday</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Practice: (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones</p> <p>7:30p Dartball Tournament (BG)</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Noon Prayers via ZOOM</p> <p>8 p AA (PH)</p>				



April 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
				7p Maundy Thursday Service 8p AA (PH)	9a Men's Breakfast @ Panera Rt. 20 7p Good Friday Service	10a-12p Shared Bounty (PH)
5 HAPPY EASTER! 8:30a Contemporary Worship 9:45a Easter Egg Hunt 10:15a Traditional Worship	6 Practice: (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones 7:30p Dartball Tourney in BG	7 Noon Prayers via ZOOM 7p Committee Mtg Night #1 8p AA (PH)	8 11:30a Lunch Bunch – Location TBD	9 8p AA (PH)	10	11
12 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship	13 Practice: (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones	14 12p Tie Comforters (PH) Noon Prayers via ZOOM 7p Committee Mtg Night #2 8p AA (PH)	15	16	17	18 7:30a Food Pantry (PH) 2p Spring Painting Party
19 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship	20 1p Crafting Group (L) Practice: (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones 6p Dartball Banquet in PH	21 Noon Prayers via ZOOM 6:30p Exec. Comm (L) 7:00p Church Council (L) 8p AA (PH)	22	23 10:30a North Central Pastors' Meeting (L) 8p AA (PH)	24	25
26 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship	27 Practice: (S) 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones	28 Noon Prayers via ZOOM 8p AA (PH)	29	30 8p AA (PH)		

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.