



St John's

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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JANUARY 2026





JANUARY, 2026

The VOICE Newsletter

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From Pastor Cindy...



In Him was life,

and that life was the light of all people

The light shines in the darkness,

and the darkness did not overtake it. it.

(John 1:4-5)



Epiphany greetings to each of you. As I write these words, I am in the midst of lights...from my lovely Christmas tree and the many homes in my neighborhood that are decorated with beautiful outdoor lights to celebrate this season of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love .

In the Gospel of John...light and darkness are just one of the main themes of this gospel. Epiphany is sometimes called "the season of light." It is often celebrated around the world. On January 6th we celebrate with the three kings, the three magi, the three wise men who were led by a brilliant shining star to visit the infant Jesus. He is our true light...our Savior and Lord.

As I think of light and darkness I am reminded of our very own lives and grateful that we, who are children of God, are able to turn to our true light, Jesus Christ our Lord. He helps us and guides us- all nations and all people through the many ups and downs, joys and challenges that we go through as human beings. As God revealed the Christ Child to those seeking Him long ago...may God enable us to experience an "Epiphany," a revealing that will strengthen our faith and relationship with our Loving Lord.

Ways to strengthen our faith are just ahead, all are welcome:

1. In January we will have a Bible/ book study focusing on grief. For 3 weeks on Tuesday January 13th, 20th , and 27th at 10:45am we will meet in the lounge together to discuss several books on grief, learn more about Stephen Ministry and how the Stephen ministers at St. John's can be a light shining in the darkness to those in need.
2. During the season of Lent...beginning in February, the Tuesday morning 10:45am Bible/ Book study will encounter the Gospel of John by reading and discussing Adam Hamilton's book "John...The Gospel of Light and Life." Please join us for these 6 DVD-led sessions. *(continued on pg. 3)*

***Another light among us is our newly formed call committee. They have been installed and are already meeting. May we be ever so grateful for their willingness to serve on this extremely important team. They will bring a new light to our congregation by doing the necessary work to prepare to call a new pastor. Let's continually keep them in prayer:

God of Light,

We are grateful for this church. Guide our call committee with your wisdom. We give thanks for them and their willingness to serve our congregation as they pursue with perseverance the efforts needed to call a new pastor. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

(Psalm 119:5)

Striving with each of you to be beacons of light for Christ,

Pr. Cindy Ritter



From the Council President...

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The start of the new year brings forth new beginnings all around us. We continue to give thanks and praise to God for all that we have been blessed with, and to pray for the Lord's guidance throughout this new year. Among the new beginnings for St. John's in 2026 will be the work of the Call Committee, which was installed on Dec. 14th. This committee has already begun the very important work of the initial steps of the call process, which will continue earnestly as we progress through the year. Please continue to keep the committee and all of St. John's in your prayers as we navigate through the new year together, always focused on Christ and our mission to carry out Christ's calling in service to one another in our communities.

It has been a great honor to serve as the congregational president for the last two years, and I thank everyone for their trust and support during this time. Most of all, we give all of our thanks and praise to the Lord for the unfailing love and strength that we are given. The needs and challenges of the congregation and our mission continue to be great, but we can face and overcome all that we are presented with, as we work together with open hearts and open minds to be the Light of Christ each and every day to one another.

In Christ,

Kyle Henry
Church Council President

Mark Your Calendar

Annual Congregational Meeting Sunday, January 25 @ 11:30 AM



Please Join Us!

Wednesday, January 7,
11:30 a.m.
@ Luckey Junction



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.



Attention St. John's Committees

We need help with Cookie Hour for **February**. A sheet is hanging on the bulletin board. Please sign up for a Sunday to sponsor this fellowship!

New Bible/Book Study focusing on grief

Tuesdays, Jan. 13, 20 & 27 at 10:45 a.m. in the Lounge

We will discuss several books on grief and learn more about Stephen Ministry

SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Sunday Special...



Food Pantry ~ sweetened cereal, boxed au gratin or scalloped potatoes

Shared Bounty ~ dish soap and laundry detergent

We are currently serving 65 families

Thank you for your overwhelming generosity to 4 families from our Eastwood community! There were many, many tags on the tree, online and a gift list for the dessert auction family and you gave so generously. The money from the dessert auction was used to purchase gifts for one family, toilet paper, paper towels, etc. for 4 families, the gift cards that were still not taken off of the tree and online and was used to purchase coats for 6 kids!

Thank you to the family that gave a very generous donation of a Meijer gift card to the food pantry to purchase holiday hams. Your love for this community is heartwarming.

Thank you to the ladies of SOAR for your special collection these last few months for the food pantry. Your love shines through to those in this community!!

Once again because it is an OVERWHELMING job that is done with such organizational skills a BIG thank you to Christy Schramm for her leadership on the adoption of families for Christmas!! Her elves (Connor & Cameron) for their time given AND the Brackney family for their shopping, wrapping and being the BEST Santa helpers ever!!!



In Loving Memory of...

Ron Holzman

Rick & Lynda Lees

Marilyn Lees

Rick & Lynda Lees

Robert Lees

Rick & Lynda Lees

Attention All Congregation Members!!

Our Constitution states:

“Voting members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation.”

Please make sure that you fill out a Connection Card at least once per year so that we have a record that you have communed. This ensures that you remain an active voting member.

GENEROUS GIVING

Financial Giving through 12/28/2025

General Fund Income (Year-to-Date)

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
\$247,650	\$233,348	(\$14,302)

Benevolence Fund (Year-to-Date)

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
\$27,000	\$16,278	(\$10,722)

Improvement Fund (Year-to-Date)

<u>Actual</u>
\$12,402

(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.



Women of the ELCA

Comforters for Lutheran World Relief will be tied on Tuesday, January 13th from 12:00 to 2:30 in the Parish House. Please consider joining us for this important mission project. No experience necessary.

Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, January 13th-Tie Comforters (Parish House)

Monday, January 19th-Crafting Group (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, January 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.





January Birthdays

(Those over 74 years young!)

Earl Hagg	1/8	6505 Five Point Road, Perrysburg, 43551
Joe Nycz	1/16	426 W. College Ave. Pemberville, 43450
Tom Sevits	1/20	25703 McCutcheonville Road, Perrysburg, 43551
Joan Swartz	1/30	10765 S. Lakes Drive, Perrysburg, 43551
Carrie Mitchell	1/31	1612 N. Smith Drive, Genoa, 43430

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.

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!!



Prayer for our Call Committee

Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on us! We thank you that throughout the generations you have raised up men and women to serve your church in all times and in all places. As we go about the task of calling a new pastor to serve with us, we pray for our newly formed Call Committee. Bless them with a spirit of mutual trust and for the ability to speak fully and listen faithfully to each other. We pray for the spirit of wisdom to be in their midst as they carry out their responsibilities. We give thanks for all who have given of themselves in this congregation as servants of your Word. Fill us all with love, grace and confidence that can only come from you.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.



UPCOMING EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

JAN 1	Happy New Year! Church Office Closed
JAN 2	Men's Breakfast @ Panera on Rt. 20, Perrysburg - 9 AM
JAN 5	Dayschool Resumes
JAN 6	Committee Reports and Financials due for Annual Report
JAN 25	Annual Congregational Meeting – after worship



January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				 Church Office Closed 8p AA (PH)	2 9a Men's Breakfast @ Panera Rt. 20	3 10a-12p Shared Bounty (PH)
4 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship	5 Dayschool Resumes Practice in Sanctuary 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones 7:30 Dartball (Away) 8p AA (PH)	6 Reports & Financials due for Annual Report Noon Prayers via ZOOM 7p Committee Mtg Night #1		7 9:15a Staff Mtg (L) 6:30p Take down decorations 8p AA (PH)	9	10
11 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship	12 Practice in Sanctuary 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones 7:30 Dartball (Home) 8p AA (PH)	13 12p Tie Comforters (PH) Noon Prayers via ZOOM 7p Committee Mtg Night #2 8p AA (PH)		14 15 5:30p Dayschool Staff(L) 6:45p Dayschool Board (L)	16	17 7:30a Food Pantry (PH)
18 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship	19 1p Crafting Group (L) Practice in Sanctuary 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones 7:30 Dartball (Away) 8p AA (PH)	20 Noon Prayers via ZOOM 6:30p Exec Comm (L) 7p Church Council (L) 8p AA (PH)		21 22 8p AA (PH)	23	24
25 9a Christian Ed 10a Worship 11:30a Annual Congregational Meeting	26 Practice in Sanctuary 6:30p JJJAAM 7:30p Stones 7:30 Dartball (Home) 8p AA (PH)	27 Noon Prayers via ZOOM 8p AA (PH)		28 29 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.