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The "Good News" and "Happenings" of
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Stovertown

www.stovertownelca.com

VOL.16, No. 11

Pastor-Al Laese-740-541-2823

November 24, 2024

**ADVENT SEASON begins on the
first Sunday of December, December 1st.**

Advent begins a four week period of preparation for the nativity of Jesus Christ at Christmas. It is about reflecting on how we can prepare our hearts and homes for Christ's birth. It invites us to step away from what can be a frenzied time to consider how we commemorate the birth of Jesus, one of the holiest times in Christian faith.

See the insert for pastor's article.

CHRISTMAS.

Wednesday, December 25th.

The True Meaning of Christmas

-opwest.org

The good news of Christmas is that even when the world or our circumstances change – the message of Christmas is timeless. Because Christmas is about the birth of God's Son, Jesus. It is about how he came to give love, hope, and joy. That message doesn't change from year to year!

**Remember These Five Things This
Christmas ... (Mission Discovery)**

Christmas is a time to celebrate with family, eat delicious food, and give and receive presents. It's also a time to remember the true meaning of Christmas.

Here are five things to remember this Christmas:

- Jesus is the Reason for The Season
(1 Timothy 2:5-6)

- God's love is unconditional
(Ephesians 3:20)
- Presence (not presents) over perfection
(Luke 19:10)
- We are all sinners saved by Grace
(Romans 3:23)
- Christmas is a time to be Grateful for what we have.

(Matthew 6:25-27)

Christmas is a time to celebrate God's love for us. There are so many things to be grateful for, and we can remember all of them by celebrating the way God intended. This Christmas, thank God for his perfect gift of love, and pray for all.

WAS IT REALLY SO?

-Helen Steiner Rice

A Star in the sky, an Angel's voice
Telling the world **-REJOICE! REJOICE!**
But that was centuries and centuries ago,
And we ask today, **WAS IT REALLY SO?**
Was the Christ child born in a manger bed
Without a pillow to rest His head?
Did He walk on earth and live and die
And return to God to dwell on high?

We were not there to hear or see,
But our hopes and dreams of **ETERNITY**
Are centered around that holy story
When God sent us **HIS SON IN GLORY-**
And life on earth has not been the same,
Regardless of what the skeptics claim,
For no event ever left behind
A transformation of this kind. . .

So question and search and doubt, if you will,
But the **STORY OF CHRISTMAS** is living still
And though man may conquer the earth and the

sea
He cannot conquer **ETERNITY**
And with all triumph man is but a clod
UNTIL HE COMES TO REST WITH GOD.

A Christmas Prayer

-Helen Steiner Rice

“O GOD, OUR HELP IN AGES PAST,
OUR HOPE IN YEARS TO BE”—

Look down upon this PRESENT

And see our need of Thee...

For in this age of unrest,

With danger all around,

We need Thy hand to lead us

To higher, safer ground. . .

We need Thy help and counsel

To make us more aware

That our safety and security

Lie solely in Thy care. . .

And so we pray this Christmas

To feel THY PRESENCE near

And for Thy all-wise guidance

Throughout the coming year. . .

First give us understanding

Enough to make us kind,

So we may judge all people

With our heart and not our minds,

Then give us strength and courage

To be honorable and true

And place our trust implicitly

In “UNSEEN THINGS” AND “YOU”.

And help us when we falter

And renew our faith each day

And forgive our human errors

And hear us when we pray,

And keep us gently humble

In the GREATNESS OF THY LOVE

So some day we are fit to dwell

With Thee in PEACE ABOVE..

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE WITH HOLY
COMMUNION** at 7:00PM on Christmas Eve.

PRODUCE GIVE-A-WAY.....

Will be held on Tuesday, December 17th.
Again, this year we, as a congregation, have
decided to provide a ham to each household for
our December market for Christmas. If you would
like to make a financial contribution towards the
purchase of the hams, please designate the amount
on your envelope and mark it for the produce
market. Any amount is appreciated. Last year, our
clients were very thankful for the gift of the hams.
Volunteers are always needed and appreciated.

We continue to serve those in our community in
need, to provide healthy food choices. We are
doing God’s work thru our hands.

**OUR SYMPATHIES FOR THE FAMILIES
OF:**

-Larry Taylor, who passed on October 21.

-Albert Swingle who passed on Oct. 28.

Thoughts and prayers are with them.

**THE CONGREGATION WISHES TO
THANK THE WELCA LADIES.....**

For the soup and sandwich luncheon on
November 10th and the Thankoffering Service on
November 24th.

WELCA NEWS.....

The WELCA will meet on Tuesday, December
10 at noon at the church for a Christmas potluck
and gift exchange. Hostesses will be the WELCA
officers.

**BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES
FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER..**

Birthdays: December 2—Susan Dietz

THE PREPARATIONS HAVE BEGUN!!!

Yes, there is no escaping the build up to the celebration of Christmas! A great deal of that build up will simply be taking advantage of the opportunity for profit, for selling "things" that will make us 'happy' or able to live better!
THE FAMILY OF GOD KNOWS DIFFERENT!

We will decorate, we will have parties, exchange gifts, and observe many family and community traditions; BUT the reality of Gods' Love in our Lord Jesus Christ overshadows **ALL THE REST!**

The world wide family of faith that believes Jesus is Lord is called to approach this season in response to Gods' Love for us. We have experienced it, studied it, and continue to look for ways to share the Good News of the Son of God being born, becoming man to give the gift of forgiveness and salvation to US!

We cannot escape the rush of business that comes with the season, yet the gospel for Christ the King Sunday will shine through:

Matthew 25:35 & 36 "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

There is no keeping score in the family of faith, simply seeing the needs of others and finding ways to care for them. There will be many gifts and greetings exchanged with friends and family close to us which is just practice for sharing the love of Jesus in every way we can! Keeping this perspective through the coming weeks will be a challenge and require each of us claim the gift of the Spirit to be our strength and guide in faithfully caring for one another.

**MAY THE LIGHT OF CHRIST SHINE
IN YOUR HEARTS!**

PASTOR AL

St John's Lutheran Church
Church Council Minutes
November 7, 2024

Council vice president Robert Pletcher called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. Council members present were Nathan Atkins, Frank Dietz, Joe Pletcher, Gary Williams, Steve Wolfe, Tom Gibson, Linda Showers, Pastor Al Laese, and guests.

Steve Wolfe led devotions based on the history of the Bible.

Guest Paul Pride shared the details surrounding the development and building of the Wall Of Honor that has been erected in Ironspot, Ohio. The wall honors the men and women of Ironspot Ohio who have served their country in the armed forces. The wall in Ironspot, Ohio has 113 names on it.

The minutes of the October meeting were presented by secretary Frank Dietz. It was approved on a motion from Nathan Atkins and Gary Williams.

Pastor's report for the month of October 2024. 4 Sunday worship services and Sunday School, church council meeting, Triple Nickle Country Cruise In, produce giveaway, a graveside funeral, cluster meeting, lectures at Trinity Seminary on October 17, many days of medical appointments, and 191 miles submitted. Pastor's report was approved on a motion from Frank Dietz and Tom Gibson.

The treasurer's report was presented and reviewed by council members. It was approved on a motion from Frank Dietz and Linda Showers. Frank Dietz and Tom Gibson motioned for the church treasurer to reimburse Kay Wilson for ink for the upstairs copier. The motion was approved. Nathan Atkins and Linda Showers motioned that the church secretary will be in charge of the upstairs copier supplies. The motion was approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS 8:20 P.M.

PRAYER – The cruise in was an overwhelming success. 177 vehicles registered, 150 door prizes distributed, attendees enjoyed the food and activities, over \$5000 raised! The move to October for the cruise in has been a positive experience.

Property – Nathan Atkins is continuing investigation on 4 church parcels that cannot be located.

Church Directory – Many updates and changes have been submitted. The "Final" will be released soon.

Produce – October 2024 marks the third anniversary of the produce giveaway at Stovertown. The October 15, 2024 giveaway started on time on a chilly morning. 14 volunteers served 96 households assorted produce. Delores Wolfe brought donuts. The leftover produce went to the Senior Center.

OLD BUSINESS 8:34 P.M.

Frank Dietz and Jason Fabiny are going off council at the close of 2024. Both are serving their second term and cannot be re-elected. Nathan Atkins is finishing his first term at the close of 2024. These three council members make up the nominating

committee. New council member elections will be held on November 24, 2024 after worship service.

The Southern Ohio Synod has informed Stovertown St John's that our 2024 Mission Support goal was \$7708. Our recommended 2025 Mission Support Goal is \$8478. Frank Dietz and Tom Gibson motioned for the 2025 Mission Support Goal be set at \$7900. The motion was approved by council on a 6 to 1 vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Linda Showers and Frank Dietz motions that the church council would like to hear more information and welcome discussion about a veteran's memorial display in our area. The motion was approved by council

Frank Dietz and Gary Williams motion to adjourn at 9:05 P.M.

All prayed The Lord's Prayer.

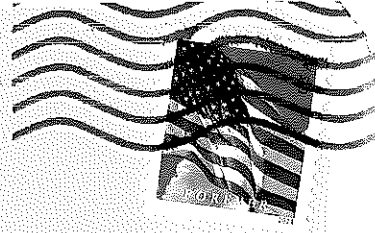
Frank Dietz - council secretary

Nathan Atkins has devotions for the December council meeting.

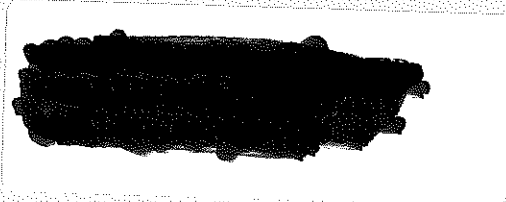
December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Holy Communion Worship-10AM. SCS-9AM WELCA change collection	2	3	4	5 Council 7PM	6	7
8 Worship-10AM SCS-9AM	9 WELCA noon	10	11	12	13	14
15 Worship 10AM SCS-9AM WELCA change collection	16 Produce Give-A-Way 9AM	17	18	19	20	21
22	23 Christmas Eve Ser. 7PM—Holy Communion	24 MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!!	25	26	27	28
29 Worship-10AM SCS-9AM Pancake Breakfast 8:30AM	30	31	Pastor Al 740-541-2823	Church 740-697-0202	Vicky Thomas Secretary 740-674-6814 (C-740-252-1890) cabinintheorchard@yahoo.com	

COLUMBUS OH 430
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RETURN
TO: ST. JOHN'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH,
STOVERTOWN
P.O. BOX 361
PHILO, OH 43771



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

- 3---Bob Barr
- 9---Susan Showers
- 10---Ida Lane
- 16---Carol Cramer
- 29---Stacy Tompkins

PANCAKE BREAKFAST WILL CONTINUE
on the last Sunday of each month until Spring.
They begin at 8:30AM and all are welcome.

- Anniversaries:** December 9---Dave & Donna
Miller
Dave & Sue
Swingle
18---Bryan & Carol
Cramer

**MISSION STATEMENT FOR ST. JOHN'S, LUTHERAN CHURCH,
OF STOVERTOWN**

"We, the members of St. John's Lutheran Church of Stovertown, being children of God, would like to invite all to share in the good news of Jesus Christ. As witnesses of God's love and forgiveness we reach out to you".