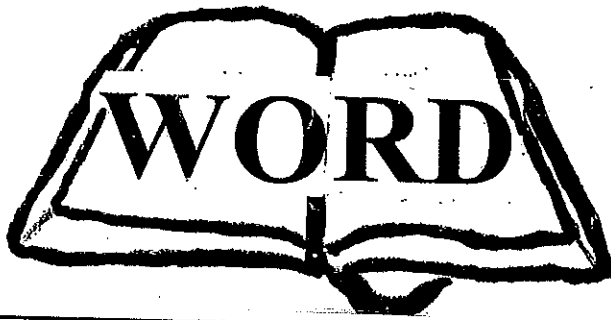


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The "Good News" and "Happenings" of  
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Stovertown

[www.stovertownelca.com](http://www.stovertownelca.com)

VOL.17, No. 1

Pastor-Al Laese-740-541-2823

January 24, 2025

**A BLESSED AND SAFE NEW YEAR  
TO THE CONGREGATION FROM  
PASTOR AL AND ANDREA.....**

**THANKS AND BEST WISHES**

As always, many members of the congregation have remembered the Laese family in special and unique ways during this Christmas season. Thank you, your thoughtfulness is appreciated!

Christmas came upon us so rapidly, and now is past seemingly with so little time to enjoy it! The parties, family gatherings and worship services are now just a memory, HOPEFULLY A PLEASANT ONE! We are now called to be about the business of celebrating the gift of God's Love Day by Day, to live THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS! Some of the living we do together as a congregation, some as families, and much of it as individuals sharing our faith! A large challenge to be faced in this living of the faith will be the CHANGES (THERE'S THAT DREDEADED WORD) that are continuously taking place in our world, even in our little corner here.

Modern technology brings information and change to us much faster now than in the past (which most of us can remember), making the demands for thoughtful action of critical importance. We cannot escape the reality that we will go on living and growing in faith, our challenge is to find the best way to take advantage of the opportunities that the future will give us!  
**A NEW YEAR WITH NEW  
OPPORTUNITIES IS HERE!**

Pastor Al

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**VALENTINES DAY** is February 14<sup>th</sup>.  
Make someone feel special!

**Love must be SINCERE, Hate what is  
evil: cling to what is GOOD.**

Romans 12:9

**Where God's love is,  
there is no fear, because  
God's perfect love drives out fear. It is  
punishment that makes  
a person fear, so love  
is not made perfect in  
the person who fears.**

1 John 4:18

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**WHAT MORE CAN YOU ASK?**

Helen Steiner Rice

God's love endures forever---  
what a wonderful thing to know  
When the tides of life run against you  
and your spirit is downcast and low.  
God's kindness is ever around you,  
always ready to freely impart  
Strength to your faltering spirit,  
cheer to your lonely heart  
God's presence is ever beside you,  
as near as the reach of your hand.  
You have but to tell Him your troubles-  
there is nothing He won't understand...  
And knowing God's love is unending,  
and His mercy unending and great,  
You have but to trust in His promise---  
"God comes not too soon or too late"...  
So wait with a heart that is patient  
for the goodness of God to prevail,  
For never do prayers go unanswered,  
and His mercy and love never fail.

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O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good;  
for his mercy endureth for ever.

1 Chronicles 16:34

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**WELCA NEWS.....**

WELCA will hold their "Love Meeting" on Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup> immediately after worship. The congregation is invited for lunch and games. Hosts is Mission/Growth Committee.

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**PRODUCE GIVE-A-WAY.....**

Will be held on Tuesday, February 18. Volunteers will be needed and appreciated.

Thank you to the congregation for your generous contributions of funds for the purpose of purchasing hams for the December Produce Market. We gave out 115 hams to each household, to use for a holiday meal. Campbell's Foodtown on Maysville Pike assisted us with the project. A Thrivent grant applied for by Vince and Linda Showers awarded us with \$250.00 & Thrivent Choice Dollars were also applied. Thank you.

Karen Showers

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**BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY.....**

- Birthdays: February 6---Jim Swingle
- 7---Leslie Williams
- 13--Sue Swingle
- 14--Curt Novaria

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**NEW COUNCIL OFFICERS AND COMMITTEEE CHAIRS.....**

- Vice President-Bob Pletcher
- Secretary-Frank Dietz
- Treasurer-Jessica Fabiny

- Property-Nate Atkins
- Social Ministry-Gary Williams
- Evangelism-Linda Showers

- PRAYER COMMITTEE-Steve Wolfe,
- Christian Education-Bill Thomas
- Stewardship-Tom Gibson
- Worship & Music-Frank Dietz
- Finance-Joe Pletcher

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**PRAYER COMPANY GIVES BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY.....**

Thanks to everyone's hard work and dedication, we were able to give \$4,500.00 back to the community this year. Here is a list of donations and assistances that was made:

-Money to Christ Table, Homeless Hands of Zanesville and Children's Home specifically for Christmas gifts.

-Money donations to families for funeral expenses, help with treatment for a cancer patient, to an elderly woman who lost her home to a fire, and to three other families for medical expenses.

Instead of donating money to East Side Ministry, we were asked for men's winter clothing, coats, toboggins, socks, gloves, hoodies, and sweat shirts, hand warmers, candles, flashlights, batteries, lighters, and small tarps to be used as homeless shelters. They also needed household cleaning supplies, bleach, soap shampoo/conditioner, tooth paste/tooth brushes, band aids, and hygiene supplies.

Salvation Army asked for gifts for 150 children who missed the deadline for the Angel Tree, so 15 fishing rods and reels, 15 tackle boxes, with supplies, 5 footballs, 5 soccer balls and 5 basket balls.

With the Good Lord's Guidance, the St. John's Stovertown, PRAYER COMPANY has now given back \$33,500.00 to our community since the beginning. THANKS AGAIN!

Steve Wolfe

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**St John's Lutheran Church**  
**Congregational Council Meeting Minutes**  
**January 2, 2025**

**Council Vice President, Bob Pletcher, opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.** Members present: Nate Atkins, Tom Gibson, Pastor Al Laese, Joe Pletcher, Linda Showers, Bill Thomas, Gary Williams, and Steve Wolfe. Bob confirmed a quorum.

**Bob Pletcher offered a prayer** for guidance for the congregation in 2025 and for the victims of the recent terror attack in New Orleans.

**Linda Showers read the minutes from the December meeting from *The Word*.** [Approved: T. Gibson/G. Williams].

**PASTOR'S REPORT – December 2024** – 4 Sunday worship services & Sunday School; Christmas Eve service; 1 Church Council meeting; 3 Cluster meetings; 1 private communion; Synod Retired Pastors' Advent Party; 264 miles. [Approved: G. Williams/L. Showers].

**TREASURER'S REPORT** – reviewed by council [Approved: B. Thomas/T. Gibson].

**COMMITTEE REPORTS-** The following members were selected as committee chairpersons: Vice President, Bob Pletcher; Secretary, Frank Dietz; Treasurer, Jessica Fabiny; Property, Nate Atkins; Social Ministry, Gary Williams; Evangelism, Linda Showers; PRAYER Committee, Steve Wolfe; Christian Education, Bill Thomas; Stewardship, Tom Gibson, Worship and Music, Frank Dietz, and Finance, Joe Pletcher.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**FINANCE** – Bill Thomas reported that Pete Zeig contributed to the Memorial fund in memory of Judy Seyerle Zeig. Bill will send a thank you note for the congregation.

**EDUCATION** – Tom Gibson discussed the challenges for the homeless in Zanesville and Muskingum County.

**PRODUCE** – Produce Chr., Gary Williams, sent the Produce Market Report: Tuesday, 12/17/24 at St. John's Lutheran – Stovertown - 112 households; 16 volunteers – truck arrived late, but volunteers were able to distribute 6, 439 pounds of food- thank you all volunteers!

**PROPERTY** –Nate Atkins reported the wash sink in the rear of the church for altar flower care has been installed. Nate is still trying to reach the contractor for leveling of concrete pathways. The motion was approved at December 2024 meeting. Bill Thomas and Nate Atkins also discussed need to replace mower. Current mower is over 20 years old. Based on recent maintenance, replacement is more cost effective than repairs. Nate and Bill will bring up replacement at congregational meeting (Motion approved: G. Williams, T. Gibson)

**EVANGELISM** – Linda Showers reminded Council of the Volunteer Opportunities Signup to Committee Chrs. for review/editing.

**PRAYER CO.** – Chr. Steve Wolfe reported that caroling and Christmas with Santa were successful. The carolers visited 10 homes. Prayer committee was able to donate \$4,500 to

community. It marks the highest annual amount since its inception. To date, the committee has donated about \$33,500 to the community.

**OLD BUSINESS** – Bob Pletcher provided update on proposed Veteran Memorial. After discussion, council decided not to make a decision yet, although there are concerns about the location, amount of space, who would maintain, etc.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Linda Showers suggested that Council should begin to anticipate the need for a Call Committee as per C9.01 of the church constitution, depending on Pr. Laese's final plans.

**Motion to Adjourn – 8:33 pm [G. Williams/S. Wolfe]**

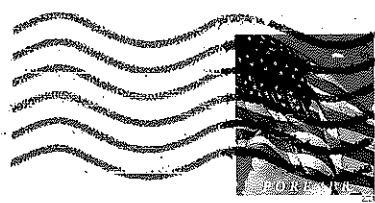
Meeting followed by The Lord's Prayer

J. Pletcher- for Council Secretary, Frank Dietz



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



**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**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".**