

ST. JOHN'S JOURNAL

The monthly newsletter for
St. John Lutheran Church
Loogootee, IN

LIFE TOGETHER

BY PASTOR TIMOTHY FLEACE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

For the past year we have been looking at the Nicene Creed in honor of its 1700th anniversary. As we conclude these reflections, we will consider what the Creed tells us about the meaning of Christmas. But first an interesting story. There is a legend that says St. Nicholas of Smyrna was one of the bishops who attended the council at Nicaea. This is the same St. Nicholas from which the modern-day Santa Claus is derived, although the actual St. Nicholas would not recognize himself in Ol' St. Nick. You can hear the name St. Nicholas in the name Santa Claus if you pronounce it quickly: Saintrnicholas becomes Santaclaus. As I said, the original St. Nicholas was a different character from Santa. The legend says that St. Nicholas came to the Council of Nicaea and confronted Arius, the individual whose teaching led to the need for calling the council to begin with. Arius suggested that Christ was not fully God. Upon meeting Arius, St. Nicholas slapped him! Clearly, he was not your father's Santa Claus. No one knows if the story is true or not, but it is an interesting tale.

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An individual that was at the Council was St. Athanasius one of the most important figures in Church History. It is his understanding of Christ and the teaching of scripture and tradition that largely shaped the Nicene Creed. St. Athanasius teaches us that Jesus Christ is fully God, and of the same essence as the Father. He was the eternal Logos and Son of the Father who was with the Father before the ages began. He was with the Father and the Holy Spirit in creating all things both seen and unseen. Human beings were created in His image.

After the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden death and the power of sin entered the world. St. Paul reflects on this in his letter to the Romans where he states that the entire creation groans under corruption and death yearning to be set free (Romans 8:18-22). The Cosmos that God had created good was in danger of disappearing forever, dissolving into nothingness and chaos. What can bring salvation to the entire world under the power of sin, death, and the devil? Only the One who created the world to begin with.

Christ the Son of God took human flesh in order to draw humanity to Himself and redeem it from destruction. He unites our mortality with His immortality and makes us children of God. This is why Arius was wrong and St. Athanasius was right. No Angel or human being has the power to make all things new. Only the One who called life into existence out of nothing at

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Prayer Concerns

Please be praying for these friends and church family members.

Those with health concerns:

Amanda Sutton (friend of Wanda Smith)
 *Brian Wininger (church member)
 *Bryan Adams (church member)
 Charlie Little family (friend of Drew Davis)
 Chris Haag (brother to T. Haag, cousin to J. Love)
 Dave Harder (friend of Linda Goldman)
 David Welch (brother-in-law of Doug & Rita Denson)
 Helen Bauer (wife of Augie Bauer)
 JJ Jones (friend of the Goldman family)
 Jennifer Nolting (friend of Mason Grubbs)
 Jim Leistner (friend of Goldman family)
 Joan Haag (mother of Tony Haag)
 Joseph Hart (friend of Barbara Prince)
 Ladema Welton (friend of Julinda Adams)
 Lee Sipes (brother of Tammy Wininger)
 Marg Otto (friend of Barbara Prince)
 Pam Bullock (friend of Linda Goldman and others)
 Shelia Fuhrman (wife of Hilbert Fuhrman)
 Steve Deckard (friend of Hilbert Fuhrman)
 *Tyler Love (son of Jim & Leanne Love)

Those in the nursing home and homebound:

*Phyllis Lynch (Gentry Park, Bloomington)
 *Verneeda Roach (her home)

Our College/Graduate Students:

*Alex Adams, Ivy Tech, Bloomington
 *Carson Shaw, University of Evansville
 *Isaac Eagle, University of Southern Indiana
 *Kenley Shaw, University of Southern Indiana
 *Olivia Harker, University of Southern Indiana

Our Military Personnel:

*Kody Neukam-Grand Forks AFB, North Dakota

Other concerns:

The spiritual state of our nation and churches
 The leaders in our nation and world
 Our church and leaders of our church
 Our sister church in Dubois and leaders
 Our own individual spiritual state
 Those experiencing war, unrest, and persecution
 Those who suffer depression & mental illness
 Staff and students at our local schools

** denotes church member*

Please join us for our
**Candlelight Christmas
 Eve Service at 4:30 PM**
as we welcome
**Emmanuel,
 God With Us**

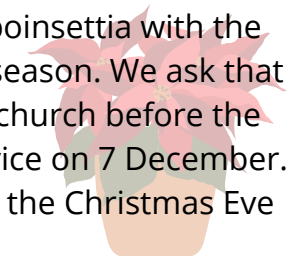


**Our church will be ringing
 the Salvation Army bell at
 IGA on 19 December, from
 3:30 PM until 6:30 PM.**

We are looking for a few more people to help ring. To sign up, please check the sheet on the narthex table or call Barbara Prince. Thank you!



We will have our annual
Hanging of the Greens
 service on Sunday, 7 December
 at the 11:00 AM worship service.
 We will learn the meaning of the
 symbols we use during the
 Advent and Christmas seasons
 and make our church beautiful as
 we await the coming of our Lord
 and Savior Jesus Christ!



You are invited to share a poinsettia with the church during this Advent season. We ask that you have the flower to the church before the Hanging of the Greens service on 7 December. You may take it home after the Christmas Eve Service. Thank you!

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. Luke 2:7

CELEBRATION SINGERS CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

All concerts open to the public. Please join us!

12-6-25 - 7 PM - St. Ferdinand Catholic Church, Ferdinand

12-7-25 - 3 PM - First Baptist Church, Jasper

12-14-25 - 3 PM - Loogootee Methodist Church, Loogootee

12-21-25 - 3 PM - St. Paul United Church of Christ, Holland



Thank you to everyone who filled a box or brought in items to put in the boxes for OCC. This year we were able to bless 19 children with gifts for Christmas. If you were not able to fill a box this year, we will be collecting things throughout the year, so you can still donate by bringing those items to the church during the year. We and the children who receive the gifts are grateful for all you do to help with this incredible ministry!

Nicholas of Myra, Pastor

Commemoration Day December 6

"Of the many saints commemorated by the Christian Church, Nicholas (d. AD 342) is one of the best known. Very little is known historically of him, though there was a church of Saint Nicholas in Constantinople as early as the sixth century. Research has affirmed that there was a bishop by the name of Nicholas in the city of Myra in Lucia (part of modern Turkey) in the fourth century. From that coastal location, legends about Nicholas have traveled throughout time and space. He is associated with charitable giving in many countries around the world and is portrayed as the rescuer of sailors, the protector of children, and the friend of people in distress or need. In commemoration of Sinte Klaas (Dutch for 'Saint Nicholas', in English 'Santa Claus', December 6 is a day for giving and receiving gifts in many parts of Europe."



Ambrose of Milan, Pastor and Hymnwriter

Commemoration Day December 7

"Born in Trier in AD 340, Ambrose was one of the four great Latin Doctors of the Church (with Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory the Great). He was a prolific author of hymns, the most common of which is Veni, Redemptor Gentium ('Savior of the Nations, Come'). His name is also associated with Ambrosian Chant, a style of chanting the ancient liturgy that took hold in the province of Milan. While serving as a civil governor, Ambrose sought to bring peace among Christians in Milan who

were divided into quarreling factions. When a new bishop was to be elected in AD 374, Ambrose addressed the crowd, and someone cried out, 'Ambrose, bishop!' The entire gathering gave their support. This acclaim of Ambrose, a thirty-four-year-old catechumen, led to his Baptism on December 7, after which he was consecrated bishop of Milan. A strong defender of the faith, Ambrose convinced the Roman emperor Gratian in AD 379 to forbid the Arian heresy in the West. At Ambrose's urging, Gratian's successor, Theodosius, also publicly opposed Arianism. Ambrose died on Good Friday, April 4, 397. As a courageous doctor and musician, he upheld the truth of God's Word."



Adam and Eve

Commemoration Day December 19

"Adam was the first man, made in the image of God and given dominion over all the earth (Genesis 1:26). Eve was the first woman, formed from one of Adam's ribs to be his companion and helper (Genesis 2:18-24). God placed them in the Garden of Eden to take care of creation as His representatives. But they forsook God's Word and plunged the world into sin (Genesis 3:1-7). For this disobedience, God drove them from the garden. Eve would suffer pain in childbirth and would chafe at her subjection to Adam; Adam would toil amid thorns and thistles and return to the dust of the ground. Yet God promised that the woman's Seed would crush the serpent's head (Genesis 3:8-24). Sin had entered God's perfect creation

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Lectionary Readings for December

Please find below the daily lectionary readings for this month. Reading the Bible every day will increase your spiritual health in the same way that exercise helps you physically to stay well. We encourage you to make time in your day for the care of your soul.

- 1 Isaiah 7:10-8:8; 1 Peter 3:1-22
- 2 Isaiah 8:9-9:7; 1 Peter 4:1-19
- 3 Isaiah 9:8-10:11; 1 Peter 5:1-14
- 4 Isaiah 10:12-27a, 33-34; 2 Peter 1:1-21
- 5 Isaiah 11:1-12:6; 2 Peter 2:1-22
- 6 Isaiah 14:1-23; 2 Peter 3:1-18
- 7 Isaiah 24:1-13; 1 John 1:1-2:14
- 8 Isaiah 24:14-25:12; 1 John 2:15-29
- 9 Isaiah 26:1-19; 1 John 3:1-24
- 10 Isaiah 26:20-27:13; 1 John 4:1-21
- 11 Isaiah 28:14-29; 1 John 5:1-21
- 12 Isaiah 29:1-14; Jude 1-25
- 13 Isaiah 29:15-30:14; Revelation 1:1-20
- 14 Isaiah 30:15-26; Revelation 2:1-29
- 15 Isaiah 30:27-31:9; Revelation 3:1-22
- 16 Isaiah 32:1-20; Revelation 4:1-11
- 17 Isaiah 33:1-24; Revelation 5:1-14
- 18 Isaiah 34:1-2, 8-35:10; Revelation 6:1-17
- 19 Isaiah 40:1-17; Revelation 7:1-17
- 20 Isaiah 40:18-41:10; Revelation 8:1-13
- 21 Isaiah 42:1-25; Revelation 9:1-12
- 22 Isaiah 43:1-24; Revelation 9:13-10:11
- 23 Isaiah 43:25-44:20; Revelation 11:1-19
- 24 Isaiah 44:21-45:13, 20-25; Revelation 12:1-17
- 25 Isaiah 49:1-18; Matthew 1:1-17
- 26 Isaiah 49:22-26, 50:4-51:8; Matthew 1:18-25
- 27 Isaiah 51:17-52:12; Matthew 2:1-12
- 28 Isaiah 52:13-54:10; Matthew 2:13-23
- 29 Isaiah 55:1-13; Luke 1:1-25
- 30 Isaiah 58:1-59:3, 14-21; Luke 1:26-38
- 31 Isaiah 60:1-22; Luke 1:39-56



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and changed it until God would restore it again through Christ. Eve is the mother of the human race, while Adam is representative of all humanity and the fall, as the apostle Paul writes, 'For as in Adam all die so also in Christ shall all be made alive' (1 Corinthians 15:22)."

Servers for December

7 December Advent 2

Lector/Comm. Asst/Acolyte: **Karen Whorral**

Communion Helper: **Duane Mann**

Greeters: **Glenn Crim, Leanne Love**

Nursery: **Sarah Adams**

Color: **Blue**

14 December Advent 3

Lector: **Leanne Love**

Acolyte: **Leanne Love**

Greeters: **Ross & Sarah Adams**

Nursery: **Tammy Wininger**

Color: **Blue**

21 December Advent 4

Lector/Communion Asst: **Tammy Wininger**

Acolyte: **Tammy Wininger**

Greeters: **Deron & Angie Steiner**

Nursery: **Jennifer Holt**

Color: **Blue**

24 December Christmas Eve

Comm. Asst/Acolyte: **Tammy Wininger**

Greeters: **Deron & Angie Steiner**

Nursery: No Nursery tonight

Color: **White**

29 December Christmas 1

Worship Asst: **Tammy Wininger**

Lector: **Ross Adams**

Acolyte: **Ross Adams**

Greeters: **Mary Ann Divine, Wanda Smith**

Nursery: **Hannah/Drew Davis**

Color: **White**

Financial Assistant: **Tammy Wininger**

Church Cleaning: **Tammy Wininger**

The Church Mouse

Wow! November was busy...what with All Saints Day, Chili Day, Operation Christmas Child and our joint service and Thanksgiving meal, Advent beginning. There was a lot to eat...um...I mean do! I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did.

Except for the cold and snow, this is my favorite time of the year. All the food, I mean special services and all that. We've got Hanging of the Greens, the Toy Store, Ringing the Bell at IGA, the Celebration Singers Concerts, church council meetings, not to mention the Christmas Eve service. There is a lot to do. I hope everyone has a wonderful Christmas just like I plan to!

**Worship Services
will begin at 9 AM
starting in January
2026 and
continuing until the
end of April.**

(Life Together, continued from page 2)

the beginning of the Cosmos can bring about the resurrection and the new creation.

This is the One born in Bethlehem on Christmas morning, Jesus Christ the Son of God, Light from Light, true God from true God, the only Begotten Son, of one essence with the Father, our Redeemer and King.

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Fleace

a little lutheran levity!

Why was the Christmas tree so bad at knitting?

Because it kept dropping its needles!

Why did the turkey join the band?

Because it had the drumsticks!

What do you call a snowman with a six pack?

An abdominal snowman!

Emmanuel Lutheran Hill Church

On Sunday, 7 December at 3:30 in the afternoon, you are invited to participate in the singing of old-fashioned Christmas hymns at Hill Church. The church will be decorated for Christmas and there will be light refreshments to follow. Make sure to dress warmly! Restroom facilities will be available.

Thank You

I want to thank Pastor Tim for the message he gave for my husband, Mike, at his funeral and for his visits to the house before his passing. I also want to thank my church family for the cards, visits to the viewing, gifts and food.

God bless you all!

Debbie Qualkenbush

(The note above should have been in the newsletter two months ago, but the editor did not see it in the newsletter box. So sorry, Debbie!)

Silent Night

1818

It was Christmas Eve in the Austrian Alps. At the newly constructed Church of St. Nicholas in Oberndorf, a Tyrol village near Salzburg, Father Joseph Mohr prepared for the midnight service. He was distraught because the church organ was broken, ruining prospects for that evening's carefully planned music. But Father Joseph was about to learn that our problems are God's opportunities, that the Lord causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him. It came into Father Joseph's mind to write a new song, one that could be sung organless. Hastily, he wrote the words, "Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright..." Taking the text to his organist, Franz Gruber, he explained the situation and asked Franz to compose a simple tune.

That night, December 24, 1818, "Silent Night" was sung for the first time as a duet accompanied by a guitar at the aptly named Church of St. Nicholas in Oberndorf.

Shortly afterward, as Karl Mauracher came to repair the organ, he heard about the near-disaster on Christmas Eve. Acquiring a copy of the text and tune, he spread it throughout the Alpine region of Austria, referring to it as "Tiroler Volkslied."

The song came to the attention of the Strasser Family, makers of fine chamois-skin gloves. To drum up business at various fairs and festivals, the four Strasser children would sing in front of their parent's booth. Like the Von Trapp children a century later, they became popular folk singers throughout the Alps.

When the children - Caroline, Joseph, Andreas, and Amalie - began singing "Tiroler Volkslied" at their performances, audiences were charmed. It seemed perfect for the snow-clad region, and perfect for the Christian heart. "Silent Night" even came to the attention of the king and queen, and the Strasser children were asked to give a royal performance, assuring the carol's fame.

"Silent Night" was first published for congregational singing in 1838 in the German hymnbook, *Katholisches Gesang - und Gebetbuch für den öffentlichen und häuslichen Gottesdienst zunächst zum Gebrauche der katholischen Gereinden im Königreiche Sachsen*. It was used in America by German-speaking congregations, then appeared in its current English form in a book of Sunday school songs in 1863.

Were it not for a broken organ, there would never have been a "Silent Night."

From *Then Sings My Soul* by Robert, J. Morgan
150 of the World's Greatest Hymn Stories,
Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2003

Budget Report for October 2025

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| General Fund: | Balance on 10/1/25 | \$37,321.49 |
| Total Receipts | \$ 8,918.88..... | \$46,240.37 |
| Disbursements | | |
| Salaries | \$3,268.24 | |
| Worship | \$647.60 | |
| Office | \$0.00 | |
| Utilities | \$1,389.21 | |
| Rep/Main | \$237.99 | |
| Misc. | \$4,055.83 | |
| Total Disbursements..... | | \$ 9,598.87 |
| | Balance on 10/31/25 | \$36,641.50 |

Special Funds:

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Building Fund | \$39,178.45 |
| Good Samaritan Fund | \$994.04 |
| Synod Mission Support | \$400.00 |
| Memorial Fund | \$9,286.99 |
| Grace LC Legacy Gift | \$1,591.77 |

Stewardship Report October 2025

| Date | Attendance | Offering |
|--------------------|------------|------------|
| Sunday, October 05 | 26 | \$1,298.00 |
| Sunday, October 12 | 25 | \$1,290.00 |
| Sunday, October 19 | 13 | \$200.00 |
| Sunday, October 26 | 32 | \$1065.00 |

Needed weekly to meet the budget \$1190.63



This month we have one special birthday to celebrate (members 80 years old and up). We hope you will help us "shower" Karen with love by sending her a birthday card for her special day on the date listed with her name:

Karen Whorrall
(December 12, 1943)
13669 Rama Dye Road
Shoals, IN 47581

Contact the church office if you know someone who is not listed above. Sometimes we may have the month and day, but not the birth year. We don't want to miss anyone. Thank you!!

**Arise, shine; for your light
 has come, and the glory
 of the LORD has risen
 upon you. Isaiah 60:1**

Christmas Toy Store - 13 December 2025

It is time for the Toy Store again, bringing the love of Christmas to all the children of Martin County. **Our wrapping time is 10 AM until Noon.** Please sign up on the paper in the narthex. The day of the toy distribution, you are welcome to come to the Methodist Church anytime from 8 AM until 3 PM to help. There always seems to be something that needs to be done! Lunch is provided for those who work mid-day and there are snacks all the time.

Please bring new and unwrapped toys to donate to the narthex of our church by Noon Friday, 12 December. Toys are expected to be in the range of \$25 each. Electronic toys and sporting goods for teenage boys always seem to be in short supply. You may give a \$25 gift card to Karen Whorrall as well. Thank you to all who can help with this important ministry of our churches in this county!



December 2025



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 Church Council Meeting, 6 PM Commemoration Day for John of Damascus, Theologian and Hymnwriter | 5 | 6 Commemoration Day for Nicholas of Myra, Pastor |
| 7 The Divine Service 11 AM Advent 2 Hanging of the Greens Commemoration Day for Ambrose of Milan, Pastor and Hymnwriter | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 Set-up for the Toy Store if you can help 5 PM | 13 Christmas Toy Store 10 AM-12:00 PM Loogootee MC Commemoration Day for Lucia, Martyr |
| 14 The Divine Service 11 AM Advent 3 | 15 | 16 St. John's Journal Items are due today. Thanks! | 17 Commemoration Day for Daniel, the Prophet and the Three Young Men | 18 Joint Church Council Meeting, 6 PM | 19 Bell Ringing @ IGA for the Salvation Army 3:30-6:30 PM Commemoration Day for Adam and Eve | 20 Commemoration Day for Katharina von Bora Luther |
| 21 The Divine Service 11 AM Advent 4 Feast Day for St. Thomas, Apostle | 22 | 23 | 24  Candlelight Christmas Eve Service 4:30 PM | 25 Christmas Day  The Nativity of our Lord | 26 Feast Day for St. Stephen, Martyr | 27 Feast Day for St. John, Apostle and Evangelist |
| 28 The Divine Service 11 AM Christmas 1 Feast Day for the Holy Innocents, Martyrs | 29 Commemoration Day for David | 30 | 31 Feast Day for the Eve of Circumcision and the Name of Jesus | | | Worship services will begin at 9 AM starting in January 2026. |

9 Chase Salmon
Julinda Adams
10 Jesse Summers
12 Karen Whorral
14 Kara Green
15 Maseen Hayden

17 Drew Davis
18 Jackie Jones
21 Sharon Kerns
22 Justin & Sara Winger (A)
29 Drew & Hannah Davis (A)

Celebrations

Church Council

Chairperson - Deron Steiner

Secretary - Angie Steiner

Treasurer - Duane Mann

Financial Trustee - Karen Mann

Property Trustee - Drew Davis

Worship Deacon - Tammy Wininger

Youth Deacon - Barbara Prince

Contact Information

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Barbara Prince

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