



**St. John's**  
Lutheran Church  
& School

## December 2020 Eagle Newsletter



### *The Miracle of Christmas*

#### **Matthew 1:20-21**

<sup>20</sup> "...that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

## From the Pastor: Christmas at a Distance

Christmas 2020 will be unlike any Christmas of recent memory, unlike any most of us have ever experienced. While we are all getting weary of communications about the changes in life Covid has forced on us, I feel that it's necessary to address it again with respect to our Christmas celebrations. The last major holiday of the Church Year was completely interrupted by a complete shut-down; it is my hope that we will avoid cancelling Christmas at St. John's. It will, however, look a little different than normal.

First, I'll reiterate some basic precautions. If you're sick, feel sick, or think you might be sick, please stay at home. If you come into contact with someone who is positive for Covid, please stay home for 14 days. If you travel out of state or to a larger family gathering for the holidays, please stay home for 14 days. In most cases, this will mean missing church for one week.

Second, I'm requesting a few additional practices when you do attend public services. We'll continue to wash hands and sanitize, especially in preparing and serving communion. We'll also continue to observe our distancing practices. Because of the increased number of cases and less fresh air during the winter months, I am asking that everyone wear their face coverings while in the building - even when seated.

We are planning to maintain in-person worship services throughout the season. Our building capacity under the new advisory remains at 50. We have not yet reached capacity since reopening. I will not be setting up a reservation system for our services, but I ask that you keep this under consideration when making your Christmas plans.

We will live-stream our 11AM service every Sunday on our Youtube page. In addition, we will also live-stream our special holiday services. Wednesday, December 2, 9, & 16 at 6PM will be Advent Evening Prayer. Christmas Eve services will be Thursday, December 24 at 4:30 & 11PM. Christmas Day is Friday, December 25 at 9:30AM We will have a New Year's Eve service on Thursday, December 31 at 6PM.

To watch live or archived services, subscribe to our channel at [www.youtube.com/stjohnschicagolcms](http://www.youtube.com/stjohnschicagolcms) and click on the bell to receive notifications of upcoming live streams and new videos.

In addition our services, we hope to provide one or two other opportunities for virtual fellowship to celebrate Christmas at a distance. Watch your email or Facebook for more information.

In Christ,

under the cross,  
Pastor Ehrhard

### Holiday Schedule:

December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6PM: Advent Evening Prayer

December 9<sup>th</sup> at 6PM: Advent Evening Prayer

December 16<sup>th</sup> at 6PM: Advent Evening Prayer

December 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:30PM and 11PM: Christmas Eve Services

December 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:30AM: Christmas Day Service

December 31<sup>st</sup> at 6PM: New Year's Eve Service

January 6<sup>th</sup> at 6PM: Epiphany Service

All holiday services steamed and available post-stream on our YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/stjohnschicagolCMS](http://www.youtube.com/stjohnschicagolCMS)



*From the  
Pastor's  
Desk*

**Ladies Book Club:** In December The Ladies Book Club will be reading Mrs. Kennedy and Me by Clint Hill. It is a memoir of Jackie Kennedy written by a member of her secret service detail. Mr. Hill looks back at his career and his working relationship with Jackie. We meet via Zoom on the last Tuesday of the month at 7PM. Please contact Betty Carey if you would like to be included.



**From the Principal:** St. John's Lutheran School has had a successful three months of in-person learning. But as the community spread of Covid -19 has continued to increase, St. John's will be moving to remote/distance learning during the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons. A statement to St. John's parents follows.

"St. John's Board of Christian Education and I understand that people might travel during the holiday season and obviously when people do travel, particularly to States that are defined as COVID hot spots, there is the potential that they would get sick and bring it back in. We also recognize that it is going to be very difficult to spend Thanksgiving and Christmas without seeing loved ones. You continue to be encouraged to follow the federal, State and local recommendations regarding holiday celebrations! We understand that remote learning is not the optimal way of instruction. We also understand that stress it places upon our St. John's students and their families. But we also believe that by following the above course of action St. John's Lutheran School will be better positioned to complete the school year with in-person instruction beginning of January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020."

St. John's is able to make this instructional shift due to our outstanding teachers and the technology and curriculum upgrades provided by the Chicagoland Lutheran Education Foundation.

May God bless you during this unusual holiday season. May He keep you safe and healthy. Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of St. John's Lutheran Church and School.

Principal Green

**Boy Scout News:** On October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020, alumni Kieran Pavlat ('17) earned the highest and most prestigious rank from Scouts BSA - Eagle Scout. He is the first Boy Scout from St. John's Boy Scout Troop 997 to do so.

Congratulations!





## It's Cookie "Walk" Time Again!

This year may be different, but the cookies are still delicious! We are offering a different format this year, to keep everyone safe. Instead of the traditional "walk", we have a pre-boxed assortment of Christmas cookies for purchase. You have the choice of a *nut-free box*, a *regular* (nut and non-nut cookies mixed) or order both! They are \$10.00 a box, 100% of the proceeds go to the Agape Fund, which provides school financial tuition assistance for families in need.

To comply with Covid-19 protocol, all cookies will be baked, boxed and sealed in a commercial bakery, following sanitation guidelines. We will have **drive-up cookie box pickups at school in the parking lot on December 18<sup>th</sup>**, the last (1/2) day before the Christmas break or **Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup> from 9:45am to 10:45am**.

Please return your order form with payment to the office no later than Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup> to reserve your cookie box(es). Checks to be made out to St. John's.



# Cookie Walk Order Form

Please return order form and payment by Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> to the school office

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cookie Box Choice:

Number of Boxes (\$10.00 each):

Nut-Free	
Nuts	
Both (separate) Boxes	

Total number of boxes: \_\_\_\_\_

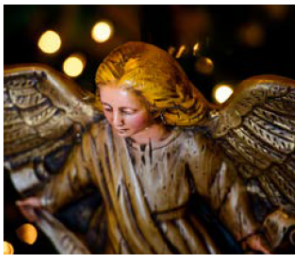
My total amount is: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I will pick up on Friday

I will pick up on Sunday

*Thank you for supporting St. John's Agape Tuition Assistance Program! Cookie boxes make perfect holiday gifts for family, neighbors and everyone on your list!*





THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

# Pray For Us Calendar

## ADVENT: THE SECOND COMING — DECEMBER 1-15

Advent means coming. We anticipate the promised return of Christ as the judge of the world. We look with hope to the day of the resurrection of all flesh, when those who believe in Christ will rise to everlasting life.

*The Church waits for the Second Coming in repentance, hope and faith. For the following, we pray "Lord, have mercy."*

1. For hearts that imitate the generosity and graciousness of Jesus. Pray that God's people would be eager to show forth the love of God through their good works for their neighbor.
2. That the Lord would preserve His Word and Sacraments in our midst, so that we may be kept strong in the one, true faith until Christ's return.
3. That the people of God would be faithful in their attendance of the Divine Service, where God

strengthens our faith toward Him and our steadfast love for one another.

4. That all people would fear God and find hope in His gracious forgiveness through Christ.
5. For all who do not believe in Jesus, that they might hear the Gospel and believe.
6. For all Christians, that we might repent of our sins and prepare for Christ's return.
7. For steadfast faith as the world writhes and groans in anticipation of the day of judgment.

8. For the ministers of the Word, that they would be faithful to their calling.

9. For the Church's missionaries, that through them the Word would go forth into the world with power.

10. For our government, that we might live peaceable and quiet lives.

11. For parents, that they would see their role in raising children as a holy calling from God in these last days.

12. For patience, as we wait for Christ's coming, that we might believe God is not slow in keeping promises, but patient.

13. For those who mourn the loss of loved ones, that the promise of the resurrection may be their hope.

14. For those who are dying, that they may entrust their whole lives unto God who keeps them.

15. For the coming of Christ. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.



PHOTOS: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/ERIK M. LINSFORD

## DECEMBER Pray For Us Calendar

## ADVENT: THE INCARNATION — DECEMBER 16-31

During Advent we rejoice that God sent His Son to be the redeemer of the world. We gather with all Christians to celebrate this gracious gift from our heavenly Father. We trust in Christ alone as our Savior.

*The Church gathers to thank God and ask for faith to trust in His gift of a Savior. For the following, we pray "Lord, have mercy."*

16. For faithful reading of Old Testament, that all who read may see Jesus as the promised Savior.
17. For opportunities to proclaim the Gospel in this season. When the world is open to hearing the story of Christmas, may we be unashamed in our witness.
18. That all Christians might see the needs of their neighbor and love with the love of Christ.
19. For those who only attend worship at Christmas, that the Spirit would work faith through the hearing of the Word.
20. That we may believe the truth of the two natures of Christ.

21. For St. Thomas, apostle. That with him we might believe and confess that Jesus is Lord and God.

22. For faithful readings of the New Testament. That all the words of the apostles and evangelists may result in faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

23. For pastors who serve as Christ's under-shepherds in our midst. That they might proclaim the truth of the Good News of Christmas.

24. Rejoice that Jesus is Immanuel. God is with us to save us.

25. Rejoice in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We have seen His glory — glory as the only-begotten of God.

26. Thank God for St. Stephen, the first Christian



Martyr. That we might also serve God with our lives — thoughts, words and deeds.

27. That God would grant us faith to believe that He comes to us in the Means of Grace.

28. For all those who face depression and desperation at this time of year. That God's gift of love in Christ would gladden their hearts.

29. For all those who travel. That God would grant them safety.

30. That all would know and believe in the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus for the world's salvation.

31. That the Lord would abundantly bless the efforts of the LCMS and its partners in the coming years. That the Gospel is the primary focus of all that is done and proclaimed.

Congregations and individuals are invited to copy these pages for newsletters or other distribution. Download at [lcms.org/prayforus](https://lcms.org/prayforus) or call 888-843-5267 to request a copy.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
MISSOURI SYNOD

PHOTO: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/ERIK M. LINSFORD





# December Birthdays

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Alexander Sobiek, Katie Van Tilburg
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - Kent Faust
- 5<sup>th</sup> - Tim Dunn
- 8<sup>th</sup> - Judith Knueppel, Lisa O'Hara, Lori Pahlke, Amanda Yamate
- 10<sup>th</sup> - Cheryl Fasshauer, Don Lauer, Debbie O'Connor
- 11<sup>th</sup> - George Bowman, Larry Fasshauer
- 12<sup>th</sup> - Anita Roderich
- 14<sup>th</sup> - Claudia Castro
- 17<sup>th</sup> - William Brackett, Susan Green
- 19<sup>th</sup> - Robert Deahl, Herbert Fiedler, Kristina Fiedler
- 20<sup>th</sup> - Gloria Clarke
- 23<sup>rd</sup> - Caleb Bohus
- 24<sup>th</sup> - Henry Knueppel, Margie Walk-Faust
- 26<sup>th</sup> - Patricia Eggert
- 27<sup>th</sup> - Alexander Diaz, Emily Diaz
- 29<sup>th</sup> - Michael Penland
- 30<sup>th</sup> - Larry Fasshauer
- 31<sup>st</sup> - Bradley Eggert

## Stewardship Under the Cross, God's Word on How We Use His Gifts

by HR Curtis

### Overcoming the Fear of Tithing

Your heart will always go where you put God's money.

Jesus said that where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. As the hymn verse has it: We give Thee but Thine own. God is the ultimate giver of our incomes: all these gifts come from him. To acknowledge this gift and our dependence on the Lord, God calls us to give a portion of our income back to Him for the maintenance of His Church. Indeed, the Scriptures are very clear: God calls His people to give at least a tithe of their income (10% of whatever "comes in") back to Him at their place of worship.

This calls for faith. Do we trust God's Word? Do we trust that what He says is for our benefit, not our harm? **If you have never tithed before, it can be a scary proposition.** *Give 10% of my income away!?! You've got to be kidding.* But God doesn't ever kid us in His Word. Instead, He tells us how to live holy and blessed lives full of peace and contentment. Consider these Scriptures:

*Jesus said, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Matthew 6:19-21).*

*"Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings. <sup>9</sup> You are under a curse-- the whole nation of you-- because you are robbing me. <sup>10</sup> Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it " (Malachi 3:8-10) .*

*On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as each one of you may prosper (1 Corinthians 16:2) .*

*But just as you excel in everything-- in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us --see that you also excel in this grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7) .*

*The point is this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work (2 Cor. 9:6-8) .*

**We do not make God poor when we fail to give money to Him properly, but we *do* make ourselves poor if we do not give according to the standards He sets for us in His Word, the Bible.** God does not need our money, but we need to give the way the Bible tells us to in order to overcome the negative influence money and the things of this world can have on us.

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God will never tell us to do something that will be to our harm – He loves us too much for that. Jesus gave His life on the cross for me. He loves me and knows what is best for me – so I can know that what He says about stewardship is meant for my benefit. He wants my heart to be with Him – and my heart will always follow where I put God's money. **Tithing is not easy; it is godly. It will change your life.** Stepping out in faith always does. You may have to change your lifestyle to accommodate following God's Word in this matter. But tithing will change your life in other ways too: it will give you a peace and contentment that can only come from actually putting yourself in the hands of the Lord.

So read through those Scriptures again. Pray through the questions on the next page. And step out in faith this year with giving that is in accord with God's Word. And just see if you are not blessed in it.

