

# St. John Journal

**News & info for the family of St. John  
Lutheran Church of Prairie Hill**



*A loving and welcoming family of faith,  
excited about what God has done  
(and continues to do!)*

**Volume 15, Number 12**

**December 2022**



To the saints and faithful brothers and sister in Christ: *May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

“Merry Christmas” was a common greeting used when I was growing up in San Antonio. It was spoken this time of year at family gatherings, school, and especially at church. With joy-filled hearts, we greeted others with the intent of bring the Nativity joy to other’s lives. Truly, we celebrated the birth of Jesus. We celebrated God’s saving grace in action in our world then, and His saving action today.

Have you noticed that our world is changing? We went through a time where we shortened “Merry Christmas” to “Merry X-mas”. Time passed and now people are saying “Happy Holidays”. In fact, speaking the words, “Merry Christmas”, is wrong today. It is considered offensive. It implies God who enters our world because He loves us. As a baby in the manger, our Savior engages our world for our sake. He addresses the constant barriers which shackle us – sin, evil, death, and Satan. He frees us from these dark chains. The world does not want to hear this special loving message that the babe in Bethlehem brings.

Personally, I do not want to suggest or imply God’s message of grace to the people of Washington county. Following in the footsteps of Paul, Peter, James, and John, it is appropriate to be emphatic, open, and direct about the gospel. People in the Christmas Season are caught up in the images of what they believe Christmas should be like – perfect family gatherings, perfect parties, perfect meals, perfect gifts, etc... Do you know people today take back their Christmas gifts and trade it in for something else? It is a common practice in seeking a perfect Christmas. So, it is not a surprise to find depression, suicides, and family violence running wild this time of year.

Perfection and joy are not found in eggnog, wrapped presents, and parties. One finds joys in gospel story of God’s love for us shown to us in the Bethlehem babe in the manger. This historical and divine message is our God comes to us as in innocent babe for the purpose of saving us! It is this message of peace and joy that brings comfort to so many people. So, join me this year in sharing the story of the baby Jesus and God’s holy love with someone who are hurting, depressed, lost, and alone.

God blessing be with you, and Merry Christmas from Sulaica family.

Pastor Norm

## ***Daily Devotions***

Scripture gives us a deeper sense of our Heavenly Father. It offers a myriad of topics which are relevant and applicable to our daily life. Relationship with God, people, children, and spouse are only a few topics we discover through the passages of God's book.

People of God have importantly practiced daily prayer, scriptural reading, and meditation to shape their relationship with God. Here is a pattern Christians have used for over thousands years in their walk of faith.

Find a place such as a garden or a family den which offers quietness. Sit. Meditate. Create a box of nothingness, that is empty your heart, mind, and soul of everything. Freeing yourself of the world opens yourself up to the Lord. Understandably, we do come to this prayer moment with worldly issue from work to family. Should this take place, pray to God to receive these concerns. Then, prepare yourself, placing each of these concerns in God's care. Now, mediate and empty yourself. These silent moments in time will become longer and longer as peace settles upon you.

Now, read scripture. A list of readings is given for us below. Begin by reading these passages in silence. Pause and now read these Godly words aloud. Hear the message. The Bible was originally based down from generation to generation by word of mouth. It was meant to be heard.

## ***December Daily Readings***

1 – Zechariah 4	12 – Malachi 1	22 – Luke 1:26-38
2 – Zechariah 5	13 – Malachi 2	23 – Luke 1:39-56
3 – Zechariah 6	14 – Malachi 3	24 – Matthew 1:18-25
4 – Zechariah 7	15 – Malachi 4	25 – Luke 2:1-21
5 – Zechariah 8	16 – Isaiah 40:1-5	26 – Matthew 2:1-12
6 – Zechariah 9	17 – Isaiah 7:10-25	27 – Luke 2:22-38
7 – Zechariah 10	18 – Jeremiah 31:15-30	28 – Matthew 2:13-15
8 – Zechariah 11	19 – Hosea 11	29 – Matthew 2:16-18
9 – Zechariah 12	20 – Isaiah 9:1-7	30 – Matthew 2:19-23
10 – Zechariah 13	21 – John 1:1-18	31 – Luke 2:41-52
11 – Zechariah 14		

Close your eyes again and open your soul to the words you have read and heard. Who is in the passage? What are they doing? How does this tie into your life and journey of faith? What message is God speaking to you? How does this message apply to you today?

Asking and exploring questions about the scripture helps us become deeply aware of God's activity in our daily life.

Now, Pray the Lord's Prayer and then a personal prayer to the Lord. Once completed, go in peace for the Lord is with you.

## *Readings for December*

December		FIRST READING	RESPONSIVE	SECOND READING	GOSPEL
<b>4</b>	<b>Advent 2</b>	Isaiah 11:1-10	Psalms 72:1-7	Romans 15:4-13	Matthew 3:1-12
<b>11</b>	<b>Advent 3</b>	Isaiah 35:1-10	Psalms 146	James 5:7-11	Matthew 11:2-15
<b>18</b>	<b>Advent 4</b>	Isaiah 7:10-17	Psalms 24	Romans 1:1-7	Matthew 1:18-25
<b>24</b>	<b>Christmas Eve</b>	Isaiah 7:10-14	Psalms 110:1-4	1 John 4:7-16	Matthew 1:18-25
<b>25</b>	<b>Christmas Day</b>	Isaiah 52:7-10	Psalms 2	Hebrews 1:1-6	John 1:1-14

## *Dec      Acolyte      Layreader      Flowers*

<b>4</b>	Jax Antkowiak	Connie Rohde	Russell & Tina Seeker in honor of Kohen's birthday
<b>11</b>	Elaina Morgan	Joseph Ordner	John & Carol Haarmeyer in honor of their 50th Wedding Anniversary
<b>18</b>	Harper Huckert	Jennifer Anderson	Joseph Ordner
<b>24</b>	Randa Tillman (4:30PM) Kannon Koehler (7:00PM)	Sandra Tillman (4:30PM) Sandy Ordner (7:00PM)	
<b>25</b>	Owen Finke	Kallie Krause	Needed

## *Baptismal Anniversaries*

12/01/1957	Janice Fairlie	12/12/2021	Kaylee Anderson
12/01/1979	Darren Huckert	12/12/1976	Shae Westerfeld
12/01/2019	Mia Davis	12/12/1982	Tessa Ring
12/02/1958	Don Holtkamp	12/12/1999	Emily Seeker
12/02/2017	Brandy Moehlmann	12/13/1970	Troy Giese
12/04/1960	Timothy Herrmann	12/14/1952	Linda King
12/04/1960	Linda Schulze	12/14/1941	Mildred Kuecker
12/04/2005	Jaden Mertz	12/15/1963	Sherry Randermann
12/04/1983	Lori Avalos	12/17/1967	Lisa Finke
12/05/1981	Kelly Antkowiak	12/17/1967	Kary Kuecker
12/06/1942	Charles Giese	12/18/1955	Gerald Herrmann
12/06/1959	Carolyn Lange	12/19/1971	Michael Altman
12/06/1959	Doyle Wiegath	12/19/1971	Lance Altman
12/07/2003	Payton Blake	12/19/2010	Hayden Hatfield
12/09/2012	Audrey Dismukes	12/20/1987	Garrison Nordt
12/09/1962	Patti Horton	12/21/1975	Chris Koehler
12/09/1945	Carolyn Kessel	12/22/1957	Sharon Neutzler
12/10/1961	Gayle Himly	12/23/1984	Preston Davis
12/10/2000	Connor Himly	12/26/1965	Steven Meyer
12/11/1938	Ruth Finke	12/26/1949	Frank Smith
12/11/1949	Vernon Wagner	12/27/1955	Lloyd Neutzler
12/12/1954	Charlene Keller		

## *Wedding Anniversaries*

12/02/1980	Michael & Cereann Cheney	12/10/1978	Lee & Kathy Nordt
12/09/1973	Jim & Sandy Kite	12/22/2018	Jerry & Kristy Cochran
12/10/1972	John & Carol Haarmeyer	12/28/1990	Charles & Ellen Spinn

*You are in our thoughts and prayers as each of you celebrate your special day. May God richly bless you!*

### **REACHING YOUR CHURCH OFFICE**

Linda Crabtree    prairiehillsecretary@gmail.com    Church Office Phone: 979-836-8666  
Office hours: Monday-Wednesday 8:00am-4:00pm    Website: www.stjohnnpairiehill.org  
Church Council President Kenneth Seeker (512) 801-8663

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Church Council Meeting Minutes for November 14, 2022**

The Church Council of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church met for its monthly meeting on November 14, 2022, at 6:00 pm. Council President, Kenneth Seeker, called the meeting to order. Pastor Norm Sulica opened with scripture and prayer. All members were present. The October minutes were approved as distributed.

**Unfinished Business**

Steve Skrla gave an update on the insurance claim for the lightning strike.

Council reviewed proposed update to Building Use and Wedding Policies. Comments will be incorporated in another draft for council's review next month.

**New Business**

**October 20, 2022 Text Vote:** Council voted in favor of burial in cemetery for non-member Susan Kuhlmann pending payment of non-member burial fee.

**November 1, 2022 Text Vote:** Council voted in favor of burial in cemetery for non-member, Albert Hafer Jr., and reservation of adjoining plot for his wife, Amanda Hafer, pending payment of \$4,000 fee. *[The family ultimately decided on burial in St. Matthew Lutheran Church William Penn cemetery.]*

**Motion** to accept new members, Juan Guzman, and William "Chuck" Hess and wife, Patricia "Patty" Hess. **MSC.**

**Motion** approve reservation of Parish House on Saturdays, January 21 and March 4, 2023 for Via de Cristo training. **MSC.**

**Motion** to approve reservation of Activity Center on June 10, 2023 by Kelly Antkowiak. **MSC.**

**Committee Reports:**

**Treasurer Report**      **Sharon Neutzler**

Report as submitted.

**Financial Secretary Report**      **Jeannie Kroll**

For month of October, the total Weekly Giving Deposits were \$11,130 plus loose offering of \$605 and Direct Deposits were \$4,232.63 for a total giving of \$15,967.63. *[The sum of \$23,150 monthly is needed to meet the 2023 budget approved at the October semi-annual congregational meeting.]*

**Community Concerns Report**      **India Randermann**

Food Pantry served 74 families (133 people) at two distributions in October. Approximately 67 persons were served at the funeral reception for Susan Kuhlmann. At the Blood Drive, 6 individuals donated whole blood and 4 individuals donated double red cells.

**Worship and Music Report**      **Mary Longhofer**

The usher list for 2023 is being revamped to accommodate one worship service.

**Parish Education Report** **Jennifer Schroeder**

SS hosted a Halloween Celebration of hayride, trick or treating, and dinner on Sunday, October 30, with

over 92 participants. Christmas program practice has started. The following dates are on the SS calendar: Christmas tree set-up will be 10am on November 25 and take down will be 3pm on January 1. SS Christmas in the Country after worship service on December 18 to include hayride, face painting, arts/crafts, and hot dogs for lunch. There will be no children's SS on October 30, December 18, December 25, and January 1. Children's SS classes will resume January 8.

**Youth Report Herbert Klatte Jr.**

Family Fish Fest on October 22 brought in 297 lbs. of fish. The participants had a great time and ended the day with a fish fry.

**Evangelism Report Josh Clay**

Approximately 188 persons (10 shut-ins, 92 plates taken to go, and 86 dined in) were served at the Good Neighbor Sunday on November 13. Donations in the amount of \$1,240 were received to help offset the meal cost of \$2,204.02.

**Property Report Steve Skrla**

A new ice machine has been ordered for the Parish House kitchen.

**Pastor's Report Pr. Norm Sulaica**

Presided at the memorial service for Gloria Randermann Caro and Frank Caro at St. Matthew Lutheran Church on November 4.

Weekly Bible Study on Luther's Small Catechism, continues on Mondays at 10am.

Pies and Prayers Service will be held November 23.

Advent Sermon Series beginning Sunday, November 27, will include the following topics:

Advent 1: The Christmas Joy of Prophecy (Isaiah 7:14)

Advent 2: The Christmas Joy of Bethlehem (Luke 2:12)

Advent 3: The Christmas Joy of Shepherds (Luke 2:8-11)

Advent 4: The Christmas Joy of Angels (Luke 2: 13-14)

Christmas Day: The Christmas Joy of Christ (Isaiah 1:18)

NALC Pastor's Conference from January 31 to February 2, 2023 in San Antonio.

**Motion** to approve all reports as presented. **MSC.**

**Motion** to adjourn. **MSC.** The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,


Janice Fairlie

Council Secretary

**2022 Contributions**

December 25, 2022 is the deadline for contributions to be counted towards your 2022 total.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<b>December Special Envelope</b> <b>MEN IN MISSION SCHOLARSHIP</b>			
<b>4 Advent 2</b> 8:30AM Sunday School 9:15AM Worship Service <b>Poinsettia Order</b> <b>Deadline</b>	<b>5</b> 10:00AM Bible Study 6:00PM Executive Meeting	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>No Confirmation</b> <b>No Choir Practice</b>
<b>11 Advent 3</b> 8:30AM Sunday School 9:15AM Worship Service	<b>12</b> 10:00AM Bible Study 6:00PM Council Meeting	<b>13</b> 6:30AM Food Pantry	<b>14</b> 5:00PM Confirmation Class <b>No Choir Practice</b>
<b>18 Advent 4</b> 8:30AM Sunday School (Last Day for 2022) 9:15AM Worship Service <b>Christmas Caroling in the</b> <b>Country after Worship</b> <b>Service</b>	<b>19</b> 10:00AM Bible Study 	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>No Confirmation</b> <b>No Choir Practice</b>
<b>25 Christmas Day</b> <b>No Sunday School</b> 9:15AM Worship Service <b>Merry Christmas</b>	<b>26</b> 10:00AM Bible Study <div>8</div>	<b>27</b> 6:30AM Food Pantry	<b>28</b> <b>No Confirmation</b> <b>No Choir Practice</b>





WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Office Closed 10:00AM Naomi Circle	2 Office Closed	3
on Class actice	8 Office Closed 2:00PM Ladies Aid	9 Office Closed	10
mation actice	15 Office Closed	16 Office Closed	17
on Class actice	22 Office Closed	23 Office Closed	24 4:30PM Children's Christmas Program with Communion 7:00PM Candlelight Service with Communion
on Class actice	29 Office Closed	30 Office Closed	31
		9	

# SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Happy Holidays from Sunday School,

Christmas program practice is in full swing. This year, the youth of our congregation are putting together one special Christmas program entitled "Beastly Christmas". We would like to invite all to attend on December 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:30PM.

Our upcoming Christmas in the Country will be on December 18<sup>th</sup> after church service. We will have craft activities for our youth to enjoy along with hot cocoa and a hayride to get in the Christmas spirit!

Before I wrap up my time as Sunday School Superintendent, I would like to take a moment and say what a privilege it has been to serve our youth through the past two years. I would like to give a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has helped with Sunday School and our fellowship activities. Cindy Clay will step up from Assistant and begin her new position as Superintendent in January and Kaley Bednar will become our new Assistant Superintendent. I look forward to seeing more great ideas from these two wonderful ladies as we all strive to help show our children the love of Jesus.

As always, stay tuned for upcoming dates and activities. If you are interested in volunteering for a Sunday or two please contact Cindy Clay. Thank you to all of you and Merry Christmas!

## **Dates to Remember:**

December 18<sup>th</sup> - Christmas in the Country, after Church

December 24<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Program at 4:30 PM

In His Name,  
Megan Schramme  
Sunday School Superintendent



## *The following are sharing their time and talents for the month of December:*

**COMMUNION BREAD** Betty Feldman

**ALTAR PREPARATION** Sherry Randermann, Diana Williams

**FAMILY AID** Connie Rohde, Susi Bentke, Betty Feldmann, Dorothy Haevischer,  
Dorothy Meyer, Myrtle Randermann

**MEMORIAL COMMITTEE** Carolyn Kessel, Sandy Ordner

**SANCTUARY PREP** Karen Rosenbaum, Donna Skrla

**CHURCH TELLERS** Larry Pieper, Judy Grote

**SCREEN CREW** Janice Fairlie, Kallie Krause

**USHERS** Kevin Finke Family, Timmy Herrmann, Marvin Wellmann

## **2022 ST JOHN COUNCIL MEMBERS**

President ..... Kenneth Seeker  
Vice-President ..... Herbert Klatte, Jr.  
Treasurer..... Sharon Neutzler  
Secretary ..... Janice Fairlie  
Community Concerns..... India Randermann  
Evangelism ..... Josh Clay  
Financial Secretary ..... Jeannie Kroll  
Parish Ed..... Jennifer Schroeder  
Property ..... Steve Skrla  
Worship & Music ..... Mary Longhofer



2022 Offering Envelopes are available in the Narthex for  
anyone who has been unable to pick theirs up!  
The Flower Chart has been posted in the Annex. We have  
several spots available, so please sign up if you are able.



### Sunday Worship Note:

The new church year began November 27th with the Advent Season. The Advent wreath is displayed and three purple candles, a pink candle, and a white candle crown the Advent Wreath. Each Candle gives us focus on Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, and Christ. The pink candle is our “Joy” candle. Using the theme of “Joy”, our Sunday Advent Sermon Series will concentrate on the following themes”.

Advent 2	December 4	The Christmas Joy of Bethlehem (Luke 2:12)
Advent 3	December 11	The Christmas Joy of Shepherds (Luke 2:8-11)
Advent 4	December 18	The Christmas Joy of Angels (Luke 2:13-14)
Christmas	December 25	The Christmas Joy of Christ (Isaiah 1:18)

Please come and experience the Joy of Christmas with your St. John family.



### Choir Practice

**There will be no choir practice during the month of December.**



Quilters will not meet in December.



**Rachel Circle meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM.  
Naomi Circle meets on the 1st at Thursday of each month at 10:00AM.**

*A very Happy Birthday to all  
members celebrating in December.*



## *Ladies NALC Christmas Luncheon*

*December 14, 2022 at  
The Cannery in Brenham*

*11:00-1:00, \$12.00*

*Tickets will be available soon.*



**CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICE  
BEGINS NOVEMBER 6TH DURING SUNDAY SCHOOL. ALL  
CHILDREN ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE.**

To sign-up, go to:

<https://bit.ly/stjohnph>

**CHILDREN'S  
CHRISTMAS  
PROGRAM**



## **BIBLE STUDY SERIES**

Pastor Norm is leading a weekly  
Bible study beginning at 10:00AM based on  
Luther's Small Catechism.  
We welcome you to join us.

**St John Lutheran Prairie Hill  
Food Pantry  
Upcoming Dates:  
December 13th and 27th  
6:30AM-8:00AM**





### **Contact Information for Pastor Norm**

Pastor Norm can be reached in either of the following ways:

Cell Phone Number (361) 362-9108 Or

Email: [pastornorm2003@yahoo.com](mailto:pastornorm2003@yahoo.com)



*Dates to remember in December:*

**Sunday, December 18th**

**Sunday School Christmas in the Country**

**Saturday, December 24th**

**4:30PM Christmas Youth Program with Communion**

**7:00PM Candlelight Service with Communion**

**Sunday, December 25th**

**9:15AM Christmas Day Service**

Forms for Christmas Poinsettias are located in the entry of the church and are available for \$12.00 each. Please place the form and your gift of money in the basket. Checks for payment should be made payable to St. John Lutheran Church.

In lieu of purchasing a plant, you can donate to the Prairie Hill Food Pantry. Please make checks payable to St. John Lutheran Church - on memo line write Food Pantry.

Collection basket in Narthex or

**Mail to:** Glenda Stegent

4508 Prairie Hill Rd

Brenham, TX 77833

**Deadline to order:** December 4<sup>th</sup>







Glory  
to God

in the  
highest, and  
on earth  
peace, good  
will toward  
men.

Luke 2:14, KJV

**St John Lutheran Church  
of Prairie Hill**

6605 Old Independence Rd.  
Brenham, TX 77833

[www.stjohnprairiehill.org](http://www.stjohnprairiehill.org)

979-836-8666



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The deadline for the  
January newsletter is:

***December 19th***

Submissions received after  
this date will be included if  
time and space allow.

Thank you!



**DECEMBER**

**RETURN SERVICE  
REQUESTED**