



THE VINE

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church & School Newsletter
DECEMBER 2023

"Leading people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, His followers, and His world."

Faith Comes From Hearing *Worship Technology Overhaul*

"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ." (Romans 10:17)

When Paul wrote those words to the Romans, he was emphasizing the need for the Word of Christ. For the Word of Christ, whether seen or heard, works faith in the hearts of people, the faith in Christ by which we are saved.

Just a few verses earlier, Paul spoke of the need for the Word in peoples' lives: *"How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?" (Romans 10:14)* We can continue Paul's questions for our context today: *"And how can they hear the Word if the sound system is not working? Or if the feedback and popping of the speakers distracts them? And how can they see the Word if the projectors are not working properly? How can they hear and see the Word remotely if the stream is unreliable, and the sound of poor quality?"*

The Need

The technology that we use in worship is in serious need of an overhaul. We have experienced poor sound quality, frequent feedback issues, and crackling and popping. Those who have viewed the stream for worship have heard the poor sound quality, as well as the inconsistency of the stream itself.

Much of the equipment that we use each Sunday in worship and Wednesday in chapel is old (for technology) and outdated. For instance, of the eight speakers installed for the sanctuary, only two are still working properly. The electronic keyboard and drums are 25 years old. These and other components have not aged well in the rapidly changing and improving technology environment.

Since COVID, streaming has become very important, not only for those unable to worship in person, but also for those who are looking for a church home and want to view the service before attending. We took big steps during COVID that enabled us to begin streaming. Now it's time to upgrade the equipment so that our stream is reliable and of good quality.

In addition, one of the main reasons we worship so infrequently in the Faith Chapel is the difficulty of setting up and operating the technology, as well as the inability to stream.

The Goal

The goal is distraction-free worship, both for those in the sanctuary and those viewing the stream, whether it comes from the sanctuary or the Faith Chapel.

- Clear, high quality sound for both the spoken word and music; sound which is uniform throughout the sanctuary and on the stream
- Screens that are sharp and clear to read
- Equipment that works consistently and with less stress and work for the volunteer worship techs

All of this to serve the primary goal which is the Word of Christ going forth for His glory and our edification.

The Solution

We have contracted a worship technology consultant, ChurchFront (churchfront.com), to analyze our equipment, assess our needs, and make recommendations. Their recommendations have been presented to the Board of Directors. The Board arranged for an open forum on November 12 to present the plan in detail. The open forum can be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/vEDajtR9xpg>

To summarize the recommendations:

- A new sound system and related equipment for in-person and streaming
- A new speaker system, custom-designed for our sanctuary
- New LED screens to replace the current projection system
- Upgrades to the Faith Chapel system to link it to the sanctuary, and allow streaming
- New computers for projection and streaming to improve the quality and reliability

In addition, our relationship with ChurchFront makes available to us their extensive library of training videos so that current and future worship techs can be adequately trained and serve with confidence.

The Cost

The cost to make these goals reality is approximately \$135,000. Allowing an additional amount for contingency, the Board has set a goal of \$150,000 to fund this important project.

We encourage you to prayerfully consider supporting this project with your donations. Please indicate that it is for “Faith Comes From Hearing” or “Worship Tech Overhaul.”

The Sanctuary and Faith Chapel together are the heart of our campus and our church and school ministry. This is where we come together to worship, to be fed by the Lord, and to lift to Him our prayer and praise. May God bless this effort to ensure that His Word is heard, His name glorified, and His people edified.

Advent Sunday Worship Series 2023

Prepare the Way

Our Advent Series this year flows from Isaiah 40:3 and the call to “Prepare the Way of the Lord.” During Advent, we commemorate the Lord’s coming at the first Christmas, we celebrate His coming among us in Word and Sacrament today, and we anticipate His return in glory. But how do we “Prepare the Way”? Each week of Advent, we will look at a different aspect of our preparation for the coming of the Lord.

December 3

Advent 1: Watch

Jesus calls His disciples to watch for His return. What does it mean to live lives of hopeful watching?

December 10

Advent 2: Repent

John prepared for the coming of the Messiah by calling people to repent. What does it mean to repent as we prepare for the Lord?

December 17

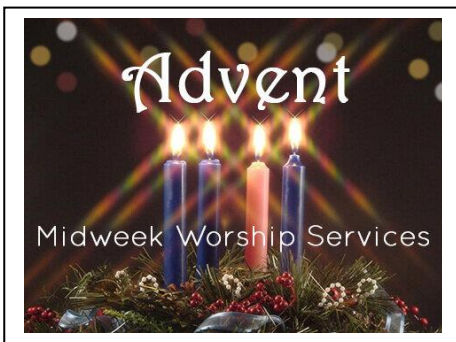
Advent 3: Deny

John directed people away from himself and pointed them to Jesus. Likewise, Jesus calls His followers to deny themselves and follow. What does this mean in our lives?

December 24

Advent 4: Trust

Mary trusted in the angel’s promise, submitting herself to the Lord’s will. We speak words of similar submission every time we pray the Lord’s Prayer. What does this mean?



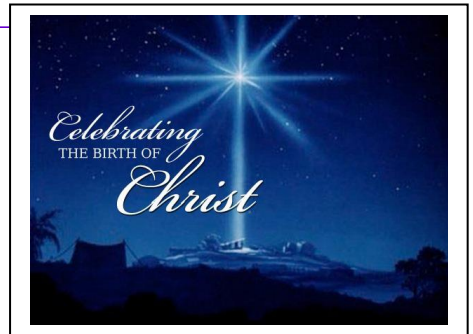
During the season of Advent, we will also offer worship services on Wednesday evenings at 7:00. Each of the three services is unique with a different focus and style. Each service will also be preceded by a soup supper in the Parish Hall starting at 6:00 PM.

- **December 6 - The ABCs of Christmas:** Christmas begins not with our gift-giving, but rather with the gifts that we have received from our Savior. What are those gifts? We’ll count them down from A to Z! (Please note the form in the narthex and linked in the E-Vine to offer your answers!)

- **December 13 - The Hymns of Christmas, Season 2** – We will countdown your favorite Christmas hymns to sing, along with a brief devotion on each one about the hymn’s background and message. Watch for the survey in the Narthex and online to indicate your favorites!
 - Please note that we will NOT be repeating any of the carols that we focused on last year (O Little Town of Bethlehem, O Holy Night, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Angels We Have Heard on High, Joy to the World, Silent Night)
 -
- **December 20 –Lessons and Carols:** Led by the Sanctuary Choir. A service of Word and song, tracing the prophecies of the Messiah through the announcement of His birth.

Christmas Worship

Please note that Sunday morning, December 24, we will be observing the Fourth Sunday of Advent. Our Christmas Eve celebrations begin with the Children and Family service in the afternoon. We will have three services in celebration of the birth of the Savior



- **Christmas Eve, 4:00 PM** – Children and Family Service, including a birthday cake for Jesus!
 - **Christmas Eve, 7:00 PM** –Communion and Candlelight. This service will include both the worship band and the organ, along with the Sanctuary Choir. This service will also be streamed.
 - **Christmas Day, 9:30 AM** –Communion.
-

St. John’s Lutheran School Christmas Programs

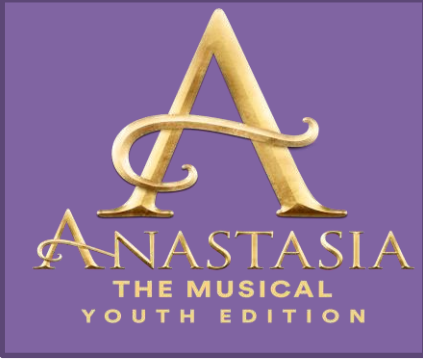
The School Christmas Programs will be on Sunday afternoon, December 10. There will be two programs, each with different classes and music groups. The Choraliers and the Handbells will take part in both programs.

- 1:00 – 1:45 Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Grades
- 2:00 – 2:45 4th & 5th Grades

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December Prayer & Praise Sunday, December 17th at 5:00 PM



Thanks to everyone who supported our talented student cast & crew of Anastasia! Whether you came to see a performance, you encouraged a student, you gave financially, or you held us in prayer, we appreciate you! We are so proud of our amazing students as they shared their God-given talents with our audiences!

To God be the glory!

SO, WHAT'S NEW AT THE FARM?

Submitted by Ted Zimmerman

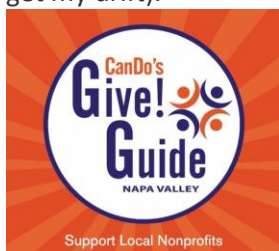


our operation from the community. We have always enjoyed the support of St. John's members, but please mention this campaign to your friends. *CanDo GiveGuide* makes it easy for them to support us.

Go to the campaign website CanDoGiveGuide.org and look for our site under the "community" category. The nonprofits are listed in alphabetical order. Donations can be made on line (\$10 minimum). You will receive an acknowledgement of your donation, both from CanDo, as well as

from the Mission Farm. At the end of the campaign, you will receive from the church a letter so you can claim your donation for tax purposes. You can also mail in a check to CanDo (carefully follow the instructions). This has an advantage for us in that the full donation will benefit the Mission Farm, since the administration fee for a credit card donation doesn't need to be applied. Of course, you can also send a donation to us directly by using a Designated Gift envelope from the offering envelopes you received from St. John's at the beginning of the year. However, in this case you would make the check out to St. John's Lutheran Church and earmark it for the Mission Farm. The advantage to us by giving through the GiveGuide campaign is that your gift shows up on the GiveGuide campaign dashboard, and will be a further incentive for others to give (everyone likes to back an obvious winner!).

Do include us in your giving plan for this holiday season. And do help us to get the word out about our participation in the CanDoGiveGuide.org. Loose lips will help float our boat (if your get my drift).



POINSETTIA AND TREE GIFTS

The **Worship Preparation Team** welcomes donations to cover the cost of the Christmas trees and poinsettias that will beautify the sanctuary during the Advent and Christmas seasons. Envelopes for your gift will be on the table in the narthex. Thank you so much!



November was a very busy month on campus. Parent-teacher conferences were held, final musical preparations were held for the November 15-19 performances of *Anastasia*, and Aaron our Comfort Dog made a visit to us at Chapel and presented the LCC K-9 Ministry Coloring Book to each student. Aaron is featured on page two.

We also had the blessing of congratulating Mrs. Joan Perez on being named the California-Hawaii District Early Childhood Educator of the Year! We had the blessing of sharing a one minute video with the student body during Chapel on November 15 honoring Mrs. Perez that was shown at the Lutheran Educator Conference in San Diego.

As we prepare to close out the calendar year 2023, we are reminded of the blessings that God has

given us this year and look toward the Bethlehem star high in the sky and loudly proclaim that Jesus was born for all of us.

Christmas is definitely on campus with all of our singing and practicing for Christmas events . The elementary school Christmas programs are on Sunday, December 10, 2023. K-3 will have their performance at 1:00 p.m. in the Church Sanctuary, followed at 2:00 p.m. with the grades 4-5 performance. Our Choraliers and Handbells will be sharing their gifts of music at both performances. Our Preschool will be hosting their Christmas performance during our Chapel service on Wednesday, December 13 at 8:45 a.m. We invite you to come and celebrate the birth of Jesus with the students at St. John's.

7th and 8th Grade Basketball is coming to a close. We wish our teams the best as they enter playoff and championship games. Thank you to our students, coaches, and families for their dedication to our Athletic program. Looking forward, we are excited that the HIT Basketball tournament will be held January 11- 14, 2024.

We pray that you and your family find time this Advent season to reflect on Christ's presence in your lives and remember that Jesus is the true reason for this season. Merry Christmas!

Blessings,
Dr. Christy Wood, Principal

St. John's Lutheran School Open House

For Preschool through Eighth Grade

Thursday, January 25, 2024

5:00-6:00 p.m. Prospective Families Only Please

6:00-7:00 p.m. Current and Prospective Families Welcome

Stop by for as little or as long as you'd like.

There is no formal presentation. Kids are welcome!

Visit the classrooms and teachers and
learn more about the specific grade-level programs at St. John's.

Come see what's happening at St. John's Lutheran School
and experience what makes it a special place for learning!

Prospective families, please R.S.V.P. to:

Kristin Goller, SJL Admissions: 707-226-7970, Ext. 125; kgoller@stjohnsnapa.org.

We hope you can join us!



OFFERING UPDATE

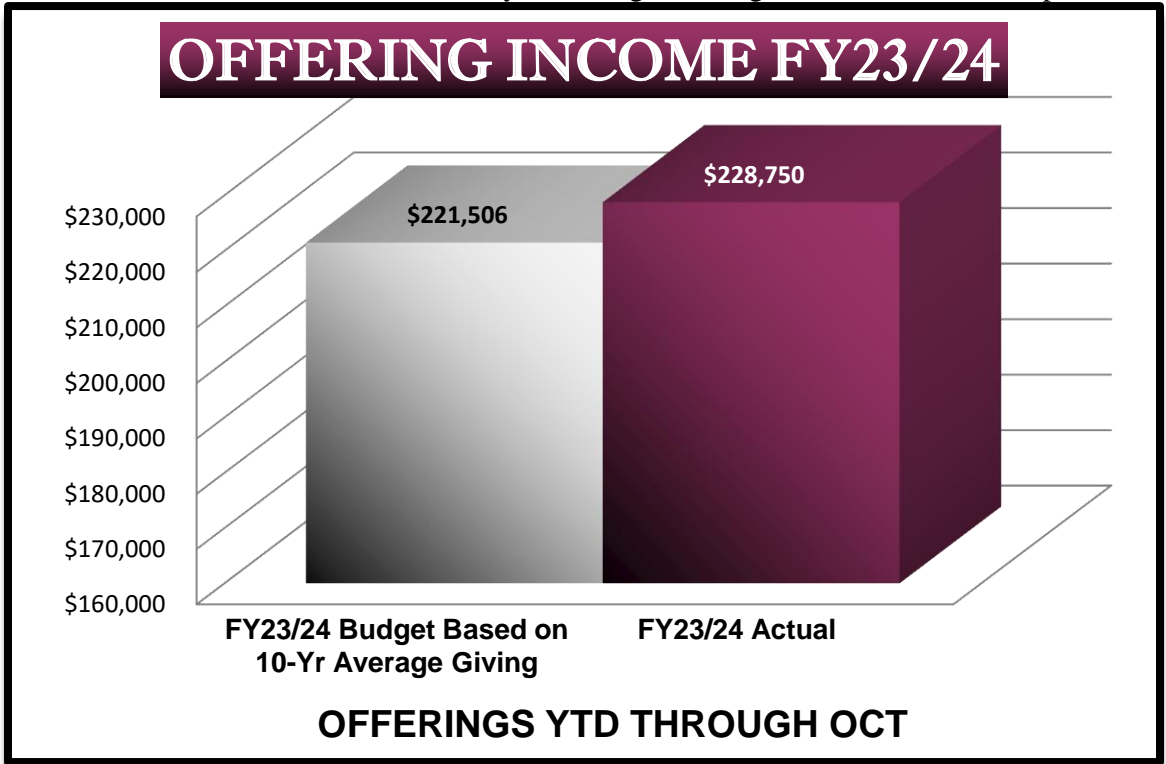
Actual Offering Income for Oct:

\$59,526.

Total Offerings for FY23/24 (as of 31 Oct 23):

\$228,750 which is **3.27%** or **\$7,244**
above our budgeted offering income.

Total expenses are in line with our budget and we paid all bills received. *The budget amount shown below is based on the ten-year average offering received for that time period.



Meditation:

“But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.” (2 Corinthians 4:7)(ESV)

Who Are We, Anyway?

At this time of year, our minds are drawn to thoughts of our Savior, as they should be. The ages-old story is always fresh and exciting to us as Christians as we rejoice in our Father’s great love for us shown in His sending His own Son for us. That Son came in the form of a Baby Who was nurtured inside His mother’s body, a *“treasure in a jar of clay.”*

The angels announced His birth; the shepherds left their sheep and came to worship Him; the Wise Men traveled many miles to adore Him and bring Him their gifts. *“But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart”* (Luke 2:19). She still had *“this treasure in a jar of clay.”*

We, too, have this *“treasure . . . this all-surpassing power . . . from God and not from us.”* We have the Word dwelling in us! His great power enables and equips us to be stewards who can fulfill any task our Savior lays before us. He gives us courage to witness of His birth and life and death and resurrection. He gives us gifts to serve His people and to reach out to those still outside His kingdom. He gives us financial resources to support the mission and ministry of our churches.

During this time of Advent and Christmas, let us *“treasure . . . these things and ponder them in [our hearts].”* And let us ask God to use us according to His plan to spread the news of that treasure.

Discussion Thoughts:

1. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9-10. How do these verses relate to our theme verse, 2 Corinthians 4:7?
2. What does Matthew 13:44 say about the value of the *“treasure”*?
3. What are you doing with the *“treasure in [your] jar of clay”*?

Prayer:

Oh gracious and loving Father, thank You for the love You have shown in giving me Your Son, my greatest treasure. Give me the desire and the courage to avail myself of the great power that You have given me through Jesus. In His name I pray. Amen.

Adapted from *“12 Months of Congregational Stewardship”* by Ronald J. and Phyllis J. Chewning, Stewardship Advisors, Inc.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from *The Holy Bible, New International Version*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984.

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LCC K-9 COMFORT DOG MINISTRY UPDATE

To God be the Glory!

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace".

Isaiah 9:6



Please join me as we celebrate together!

**Sunday, December 10, 2023
after the 9:30 AM service
Rahab, Micah, Reuben, &
Genesis will all be there!**

November was another busy month. Here is what I would like to share with you...

Road Trip to the Lutheran Educators Conference in San Diego –

Lutheran Church Charities K9 Comfort Dog Ministry was the focus of this year's LEC offering. Our new CEO, Rev. Chris Singer, was a keynote speaker, Bible Study leader, and breakout session leader. Five LCC dogs came together to show our appreciation for the offering and to "educate the educators" about the amazing K9 Comfort Dog Ministry.



Rahab, Reuben, Lois, Aaron, and Salome

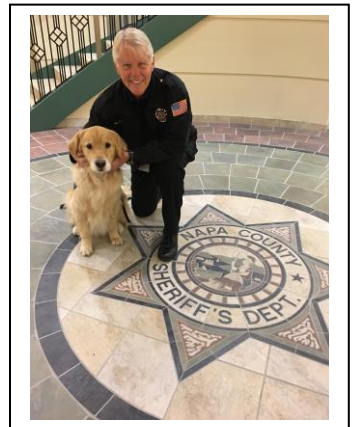
Hospice Visit with Chaplain Lee Shaw and Family –

I was privileged to be invited to visit with my friend Chaplain Shaw and his family, bringing them comfort during this difficult time. We thank God for all the lives Lee has touched and for the honor of serving with him in the Napa community. Well done, good and faithful servant!

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas as we prepare for and celebrate the birth of our Savior!



Quilt made of all the agencies that Chaplain Lee served.



DISABILITY MINISTRY



As we prepare for this year's celebration of the Savior's birth, treasured memories of other Christmas celebrations will no doubt drift through our minds. With that comes the remembrance of loved ones who are already with the Lord. My dear mother, in her last years challenged with disabilities, yearned to be able to attend church where she could join with other Christians to celebrate Christmas...and Easter. Joining in with all the saints in hearing the precious Word! Hearing glorious music and singing the hymns and carols with others! Feeling the presence of the Lord in the midst of His people!

We have dear members of our congregation who have transportation challenges or disabilities that make it difficult for them to be present regularly for worship. They, too, hold precious memories of Christmas celebrations of years past when they were able to participate in person. Is there a way that you could provide a way for them to be present in a worship event this Christmas? If this is not possible, is there a way that you might take a mini-Christmas worship experience to them (maybe a couple of friends might work with you on this idea)?

We all have neighbors and a community around us. Are you aware of any of these people, especially those with disabilities, who need the hope of Jesus in this season? How can you and your family help to bring the light of Christ into that person's life this Advent and Christmas season? Perhaps someone has lost a spouse or other loved one this past year, and now realize that the whole Christmas season will feel so painfully different. How can you be the gentle gift of God's love for them? Take them a little plate of cookies...with a note of encouragement?

As the angels and shepherds were eager to share the good news, let us also be eager to have hearts filled with love and compassion for all the people around us. Pray for God to use you also as one of His messengers of the good news. If your heart is open to serve, God will supply the opportunity! Share God's greatest gift of love in Christ Jesus.

Calling all High Schoolers!

On December 17th we will be having a super awesome Christmas Party! The party will take place immediately after Prayer & Praise. Come out for Worship at Prayer & Praise at 5pm and stay for the party afterwards! Food, games, and a White Elephant gift exchange. Can't wait to see you there!



Prayer & Praise will be held in the Sanctuary & the party will take place in Room 10.

Stephen Ministry: Joy

“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy...”

Philippians 1:3-4



Such loving, joyful words from Paul in his letter to the Philippians! These words are also heartfelt by our Stephen Ministers as they pray for their care receivers and for each other. Stephen Ministers rejoice in being able to serve others. A common feeling among them is they want to do more, serve more, bring more joy and comfort to hurting people, as they share Christ's care and love so people can experience hope and healing.

When might we need God's love and joy? Of course, we need God's blessings every second of our lives. But at times, God's love is especially precious to us, such as when:

- we lose a loved one
- life becomes so confusing that we do not know where to turn
- we are dealing with an illness, or caring for a loved one who is ill
- life becomes meaningless, and depression sets in
- going through a divorce or separation
- experiencing a spiritual crisis
- life changes, such as birth, adoption, miscarriage, or infertility

At times like these, it is especially important to have someone who cares, and fortunately our congregation has Stephen Ministers who offer Christian caring for those in need.

Our Stephen Ministers know about receiving care as well as providing it. Many of them have received care themselves at some point in their lives – something that has motivated them to give care now. They know how difficult it is to ask for help, but they also know the great personal and spiritual growth and healing that follow. They know how to respond in a loving, caring, and nonjudgmental manner. They are equipped, ready, and waiting to provide the comfort and care God very much desires you to have.

If you find yourself now or in the future facing difficulties in life, do not suffer alone. Take the courageous step of seeking help. Open your heart to receiving God's love and grace through another person. Our Stephen Ministry offers the opportunity for a very confidential relationship with someone who will listen to you and provide you with the care and encouragement you need, helping Christ to bring rest to your weary, burdened heart.

St. John's is blessed to have 7 **joy-filled** Stephen Ministers who are available to care for those in need. If you, or someone you know, could benefit from talking with a Stephen Minister, contact Penni Cremen 707-483-9321 or Pastor Mike at the church office 707-255-0119.

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Daily Bible Readings for December

	Psalm	Old Testament	New Testament
1	Psalm 138:1-5	Hosea 13, 14	Revelation 4:9-5:10
2	Psalm 138:6-8	Joel 1:1-2:14	Revelation 5:11-6:8
3	Psalm 80:1-7,17-19	Isaiah 64:1-9	1 Corinthians 1:3-9, Mark 13:24-37
4	Psalm 139:1-6	Joel 2:15-3:21	Revelation 6:9-7:17
5	Psalm 139:7-12	Amos 1, 2, 3	Revelation 8
6	Psalm 139:13-16	Amos 4, 5	Revelation 9:1-11
7	Psalm 139:17-24	Amos 6, 7	Revelation 9:12-21
8	Psalm 140:1-5	Amos 8, 9	Revelation 10
9	Psalm 140:6-13	Obadiah 1; Jonah 1, 2	Revelation 11:1-14
10	Psalm 85:1-2,8-13	Isaiah 40:1-11	2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8
11	Psalm 141:1-4	Jonah 3, 4	Revelation 11:15-12:6
12	Psalm 141:5-10	Micah 1:1-3:7	Revelation 12:7-18
13	Psalm 142	Micah 3:8-5:15	Revelation 12:19-13:10
14	Psalm 143:1-6	Micah 6, 7	Revelation 13:11-14:5
15	Psalm 143:7-12	Nahum 1, 2	Revelation 14:6-16
16	Psalm 144:1-4	Nahum 3; Habakkuk 1	Revelation 14:17-15:8
17	Psalm 126	Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8,19-28
18	Psalm 144:5-8	Habakkuk 2, 3	Revelation 16:1-11
19	Psalm 144:9-15	Zephaniah 1,2	Revelation 16:12-21
20	Psalm 145:1-7	Zephaniah 3,: Haggai 1	Revelation 17:1-8
21	Psalm 145:8-16	Haggai 2	Revelation 17:9-18
22	Psalm 145:17-21	Zechariah 1,2	Revelation 18:1-10
23	Psalm 146	Zechariah 3-5	Revelation 18:11-24
24		2 Samuel 7:1-11,16	Luke 1:26-38,47-55; Romans 16:25-27
25	Psalm 147:1-6	Zechariah 6, 7	Revelation 19:1-8
26	Psalm 147:7-14	Zechariah 8, 9	Revelation 19:9-21
27	Psalm 147:15-20	Zechariah 10, 11	Revelation 20:1-10
28	Psalm 148:1-6	Zechariah 12,13	Revelation 20:11-21:8
29	Psalm 148:7-14	Zechariah 14-Malachi 1	Revelation 21:9-27
30	Psalm 149,150	Malachi 2-4	Revelation 22
31	Psalm 148	Isaiah 61:10-62:3	Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40





DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



2	Jennifer Alexander, Will Walter
3	Linda Cornils, Elaine Adams
4	Ivy Alexander, Aiden Frisinger
5	Aaron Comfort Dog
6	Andres Herrera
7	Kristi Carey, Lois Husted
8	Samantha Yoder
9	Natalie Yoder
10	Pastor Michael Schmid, Elaine Zimmerman, Flynn Irwin
11	Roger Mahlandt, Jack Carey, Arvin Chaudhary
12	Thomas Cushing, Joan Gard
13	Markus Obata
15	Georgia Bartelt
16	Jane Terra, Jaxson Hicks
17	Gracie Mello, Archie Schluter, Rita Bresee
18	Angela D'Angelo, Ron Johnson
21	Sarah Praeger
22	Elena Bresee, Melissa Peterson
23	David Lloyd, Noel Schmutz
24	Pam Barker
25	Will Obata, Matthew Bresee
26	Anavon Kennedy
27	Rebekah Kramer, Terry Braddock, Kelton Bresee
28	Clint Holdsworth, Dean Bledsoe, Robert Miller
29	Sarah Bartelt



Join us on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Tuesdays at 10:00 AM in the sanctuary. We are studying the book of Ephesians. If you have any questions, please contact Judi Rock. 707.738.6707.





Best Practices for Ministry Conference

BPM 2024 will take place on February 22-24 at Christ Church Lutheran in Phoenix, Arizona. Best Practice for Ministry is a free conference for pastors, church workers and lay people.

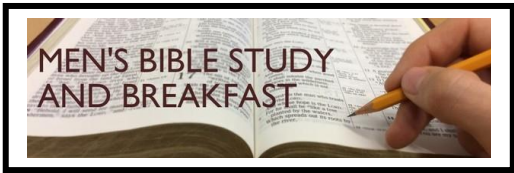
The purpose is to learn and share ideas and practices to help us grow in living God’s Mission. For more information, please go to: <https://cclphoenix.org/bpm/>

As we have done in the past, St. John’s will be covering lodging for all participants from St. John’s, but not transportation. The conference itself is free. If you are interested, in addition to registering at the link above, please notify the church office.



The Give+ Mobile App from VANCO shut down 1 Oct 21 and is longer be available for download as a mobile app. The new app is called **VANCO Mobile**. Giving through Vanco Mobile is easy! Just download the new app and create a new user profile in VANCO Mobile.

MEN, JOIN US EVERY SATURDAY MORNING FOR FELLOWSHIP AT 7:30 AM AND BIBLE STUDY AT 8:00 - 9:00 AM



CALL RON JOHNSON FOR INFORMATION.

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

DATE COUPLE YEARS

1	Ed & Ramona Kaufmann	39
2	Eric & Gail Vandeburgt	23
3	Kelsey & Jose Rodriguez	7
5	Wayne & Barbara Miller	59
5	David & Renee Lloyd	42
13	Curtis & Theresa Schoenfeld	48
17	Debbie & Steve Stanhope	46
17	Andy & Paula Schweiger	29
21	Clay & Bonnie Thompson	61





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Visit our school website at: www.stjohnsnapa.org

Facilities Calendar Link: <https://teamup.com/ks059311afd6a21c57>



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Church

Phone: (707) 255-0119

Email: churchoffice@stjohnsnapa.org

Rev. Michael A. Schmid, Lead Pastor (ext. 122)

Mr. Tim Kramer, Business Administrator (ext. 121)

Mrs. Christy Kramer, Church Office Manager (ext. 120)

Mr. Kevin Mathison, Dir. of Youth Ministry (ext. 106) or 255-7451

School

Phone: (707) 226-7970

Email: kbroyles@stjohnsnapa.org

Dr. Christy Wood, Principal (ext. 103)

Mrs. Kristal Broyles, School Office Manager (ext. 101)

Mrs. Joy Dahl, Director of Preschool (ext. 107)