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**November 30** - First Sunday in Advent

**December 3** - 1:30 & 7:00 p.m. – Advent Service, Fellowship

**December 7** - Second Sunday in Advent

**December 10** - 1:30 & 7:00 p.m. – Advent Service, Fellowship

**December 14** - Third Sunday in Advent

**December 17** - 1:30 & 7:00 p.m. – Advent Service, Fellowship

**December 24** - 6:30 p.m. - Christmas Eve Children's Program  
11:00 p.m. - Candlelight Service

**December 25** - 9:00 a.m. – Christmas Day Divine Service

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**Church Office Closed**

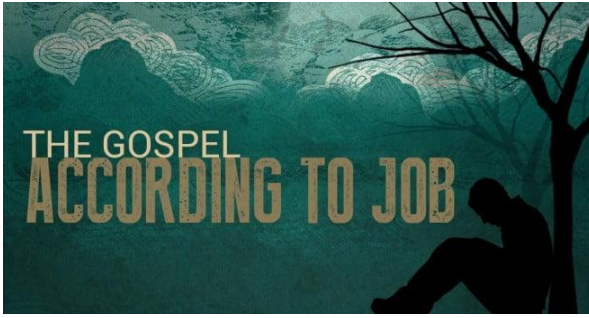
The church office will be closed on Wednesday, December 24,  
Thursday, December 25, Friday, December 26,  
Thursday, January 1

**Preschool Christmas Break**

Preschool Christmas Break will be from  
Monday, December 22 through Friday, January 2.  
Class will resume on Monday, January 5 at 9:00 a.m.

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## Pastor Pool's Sunday Bible Study



### **The Gospel According to Job**

In December, our Sunday class will embark on a new study of the book of Job. The Christian life is a

struggle. But the struggle is worthwhile. This book is full of surprising answers to some of our most difficult questions about suffering, evil, and redemption.

We meet Sunday mornings at 9:00 am. Everyone is welcome. Bring your Bible. *See you there!*

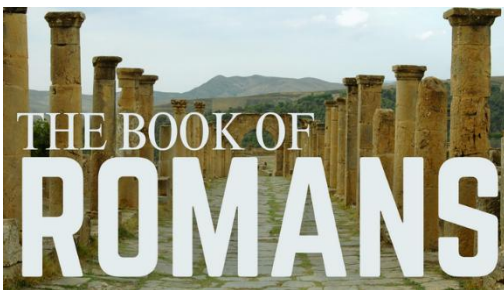
December 7: Looking at the Lectionary

December 14: Themes and Theodicy

December 21: Put to the Test: Job 1:1-12

December 28: When Satan Attacks: Job 1:13-22

## Tuesday Bible Study with Pastor



### **The Book of Romans**

Our Tuesday Bible Study is just getting started with Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Now is a great time to join us! There is no cost.

Bring your Bible and your questions. We normally meet on the first and third Tuesdays. We have two class options at 9:30am or 7:00pm.

December 2: Rome and Righteousness: Romans 1:8-17

December 16: His Invisible Attributes: Romans 1:18-25



## Nicholas of Myra

This year we are Celebrating the Saints. One of the more prominent commemorations in December is St. Nicholas of Myra. He became a bishop in the year 317. Myra is situated in Turkey on the Mediterranean Sea across from Greece.

The Church in Myra has early connections to the Apostle Paul. He traveled there on his way to trial in Rome. You can find a few details in Acts 27:5–6:

*“And when we had sailed across the open sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia. There the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy and put us on board.”*

Bishop Nicholas suffered persecution for his faith under the Roman Emperor Diocletian. He was imprisoned until Constantine came into power and converted to Christianity. Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea in AD 325 and was staunch defender of the Divinity of Christ against the heretic Arius.

Nicholas’ generosity and compassion earned him a place in history. The tradition of gift-giving is connected to him. He is famous for delivering small bags of coins to those in need. In England, he is known as Father Christmas. In America he is known as Santa Claus. Some details were created to enhance his story, but his generosity and ministry are historical.

Nicholas’s feast day (the day he died) is December 6th. Many families observe St. Nicholas Day as a day of gift-giving. Real or chocolate coins are left by children’s shoes. The significance of Nicholas for us today is that his response to the Gospel was to care for others. His kindness and care are modeled every time we give a gift. You can find more about his generosity and faith in our devotional book, *Celebrating the Saints* (pgs. 220-221).

Blessed St. Nicholas Day,  
Pastor

## Advent Wednesday Sermon Series

We often talk about the Christian life as a journey of growth and progress. But we also find cyclical metaphors in the Scriptures. We have disciplines we repeat again and again. In this Advent season, we will focus on practices and perspectives that give our faith depth and draw us closer to Jesus, our Advent King.

December 3: Advent Rest

December 10: Advent Receive

December 17: Advent Return

December 24: Advent Repeat

## Christmas Poinsettias

Camil will be taking orders for poinsettia plants after early and late services on Nov. 30 & Dec. 7. The cost is \$14 per plant



## Decorating the Sanctuary

We will be decorating the Sanctuary for Christmas on Friday, December 5 beginning at 10:00 a.m. We will meet upstairs. Please join us. Men are especially encouraged to come and help haul out the decorations. Hope to see you then.

## Church Christmas Tree

Sunday, December 7, after late service, we will be putting up the Church Christmas tree. The tree is very large and it requires several people to get it hauled upstairs and assembled. Pastor will be gone that Sunday, so we could use some extra help to put the tree up and decorated. Please join in on the fun.





## Advent Fellowship

Services will be held on Dec. 3, 10 & 17 at 1:30 and 7:00 p.m. Families are asked to serve after the afternoon or evening service on their assigned Wednesday. The families serving are asked to bring a plate of sandwiches, two dozen cookies, or a pan of

bars. Families are also asked to work before service, to set up trays, and after the fellowship time to clean up.

The serving schedule for Advent is as follows:

Dec. 3	Services	Barb Lueders to Brent Pladna
Dec. 10	Services	Pastor Pool to Robert Stamp
Dec. 17	Services	Russell Steen to Dan Akins

## Mary Martha

The Mary Martha Members Christmas Potluck will be Tuesday, December 9 at 12:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The meat and beverages will be provided. Members are asked to bring a dish to share and a table decoration. A mission donation will be received, and canned goods and paper products may be brought for the Victory Center. Wrapped prizes will be brought for Dirty bingo and Cards. Pastor will lead the program and Deanna will lead the singing of Christmas Carols.



## Children's Christmas Program

The Children's Christmas Program will be on Wed., Dec. 24 at 6:30 p.m. Rehearsals will be during the Sunday school hour from 9 – 10 a.m. on Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, & 21. If your child is not performing in the Children's program, we will still have a regular Sunday school class that they may attend on those Sundays.



## From Kurt Flathers

*Angels from the realms of glory, Wing your flight over all the earth. Ye who sang creation's story, Now proclaim Messiah's birth! Come and worship, Come and worship, Worship Christ, the new born King!*

Throwing a Christmas hymn verse out right away, but what about Advent? I would like to focus on the refrain for this Christmas hymn. It has a basic theme for Advent and Christmas, and even the whole year round: *Come and worship! Worship Christ, the \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ King.* I left two words out this time because we come and worship weekly the King. Every time we gather for worship, we are celebrating Christ the King, whether in Advent, birth, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension, or in His second coming. We worship the Christ, our Savior, Redeemer and King.

This is the perfect time of year to increase your time in worship at St. John. We will have our usual Sunday morning services at 7:45 and 10:15, but also extra services on Wednesday at 1:30 and 7, plus Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. You can also increase your time in Bible study at home or at church. This is a way to worship by being in God's Word and learning more of Him and Christ. Jesus in the Word made flesh who dwelt among us.

Come and worship. Learn about the first coming of Christ as a babe in a manger, but also of His second coming as Judge and King. Marvel at those who prophesied and knew of the coming of the Messiah. Sing praises to God for this great gift. Let the hustle and bustle of this season in the world, not take away from listening to the words of Isaiah, Micah, Matthew, Luke, and John who this child was to be that was born of Mary. Sing the hymns of Advent that tell so much.

*Come and worship! Come and Worship!  
Worship Christ the new born King!*





## **Christmas Cards For Those At Home**

The following is a list of St. John members who are in nursing homes or homebound. Please think of them as you send out your Christmas Cards this year.

Alverno: 849 – 13<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. Clinton, IA 52732

Mary Asmus, Mary Boyer, Sharon Gillette, Tom Judd, Marilyn Stuedemann

Addington Place: 1701 – 13<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. Clinton, IA 52732

Sylvia Lorenzen, Janet Peters, Marlene Greve

### At Home

Gary & Vicki Harmsen  
2425 Stockwell Ln.

Clinton, IA 52732

Lois Lamz  
500 E. McNair Rd. #10

Winnebago, IL 61088

Lois Meyermann  
1266 Hess Lane

Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

Darlene Omann  
549 Meadowview

Clinton, IA 52732

Ruth Johnson  
1920 W. Willow Knolls Dr. #328

Peoria, IL 61614

Darlene Schroeder  
1141 – 13<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. #3B

Clinton, IA 52732

Gene Siefken  
864 Carriage Hill Dr.

Dubuque, IA 52003

## December in Preschool

The month of December is all about celebrating Jesus' birth.

We do this through the Bible stories we read, songs we sing, activities we plan and the conversations we have with our



children as they play. We will include our families in our

celebration with a Christmas Program and Family Christmas Party on Thursday, December 18 at 6:00 p.m. As we play

indoors this month we will include: stories about gingerbread people and a day to make gingerbread men, a wooden train set, a class tree to decorate, undecorate and decorate again,

cinnamon and gingerbread play dough with cookie cutters, rolling pins and a variety of materials to explore, ramps and

balls in the block center and many art materials for them to use as they create gifts for their families. Outdoors we will continue to dress for the weather as appropriate (we have already

begun learning how to put on snow pants and gloves). The

children love playing in the mud kitchen, even when we cut off their water supply. The grate chalk, snip leaves, mix in nuts,

pinecones, the occasional chunk of found ice, and of course use sand for all of their creations. They continue to swing and dig

in the sand pile daily and have begun climbing the hill and sliding down on their bottoms. You will often find one or more

in the little hut reading a book from our little library. We have had a glorious fall and are so thankful. We wish you all a very

Merry Christmas and thank you so much for your prayers and support. *Cindy Sperry and Gina Andresen*



## Raise Right

The next Raise Right order is due on **Dec. 7**. Please put your order form and payment in the blue box in the fellowship hall



## Higher Things

There are two possible dates for the Higher Things youth conference next summer: June 23-26 or June 30-July 3. The conference is in St. Louis.

Please let pastor know if your confirmed young person is interested in attending and which dates work best. Registration is due in January. See the display in the fellowship hall!

## Impersonation Warning

Someone has been fraudulently impersonating Pastor, sending texts and messages asking for gift cards or cash. Pastor will never ask you to buy gift cards for another member. Pastor will only contact you from the church number (562-242-5588), his own cell phone (563-593-2502), or his church email address ([dpool@stjohn-clinton-ia.org](mailto:dpool@stjohn-clinton-ia.org)). Put those numbers in your contacts. Any other message is a scam. Please report them.



## Sunday School Mission Project

The current Mission Project for our Sunday school offerings is the **Clinton Humane Society**. All Sunday school offerings, now through the end of February, will go toward helping to provide needed supplies for the animals who currently reside at the shelter. Please remind your child to collect change, do chores, or bring in money from their piggy bank, each week so that they may bring an offering for Sunday school. Thank you for encouraging our youth to be grateful givers.



# Membership Directory

## Church Membership Directory

There is a rough draft copy of the Membership Directory in the fellowship

hall. Please take a look at it and make any changes to your information, or that of your grown children, directly on the rough draft. New Membership Directories will be available after the first of the year.

## New Offering Envelopes

New Offering envelopes will be on the table in the fellowship hall beginning on Sunday, December 14. If you did not receive envelopes and would like to, there is a sign-up sheet on the table. Please do not begin using the new envelopes until January 4, 2026.



## Christmas Gift for Pastor

Pastor is aware that the Board of Elders members collect money for him at Christmas time. So, we are making it public that you can give a cash gift, for Pastor & Sallie, to any elder and we will present it to him at

the end of the Christmas Day Divine Service. Join with us in celebrating the gift of the Christ child by giving a gift to our faithful shepherd who is busy all the time. Wish him a blessed Advent season and Merry Christmas as you attend worship and hear the Word of our God and receive His god gifts. Thank you!



## **Blood Drive Friday, January 2, 2026**

The next American Red Cross Blood Drive hosted by St. John will be held on Friday, January 2, 2026 from 12:30 – 4:30 p.m. in the St. John fellowship hall.

Please go to [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) today and schedule your appointment to donate. You may also call Camil in the church office and she will help you sign up.

Blood donations are at an all-time low and tend to drop even more during the holiday season. We need your help, now, more than ever.

Everyone who comes to donate will receive a free, long-sleeved t-shirt from the American Red Cross.

Please help to spread the word about our Blood Drive. Thanks!



# December Birthdays & Anniversaries

CONGRATULATIONS!



## ***Happy Birthday to:***

Sandy Carstensen, who will be 84 on  
December 22.

Wayne Suehl who will be 88 on  
December 23.

James Kophamer, who will be 97 on  
December 31.



## ***Happy Anniversary to:***

(No anniversaries to list this month.)

*We list birthdays 80 and above and anniversaries for year one and every five years thereafter unless we receive a request not to do so.*

## **Holy Communion at Home**

If you are at home and would like a visit from Pastor, please call the office to set up an appointment. He is glad to come and bring you God's Word and the Sacrament. Pastor also does a monthly service at the Alverno on the second Sunday of each month at 1:30. Visitors are generally welcome.



## THOSE WHO SERVE IN DECEMBER

### Early

Elders: Jim Schnitzmeyer  
Kurt Flathers

Ushers: Daniel Schemers  
Darrin Schemers  
Bill Schemers

### Late

Elders: Tom Hardersen  
James McHugh

Ushers: Bryce Petersen  
Randy Housenga  
Ryan Dell, Kevin Dell

### Advent Elders

3 1:30  
3 7:00 Dave R.  
10 1:30 Rick E.  
10 7:00 Kurt F. Tom H.  
17 1:30 Rick E.  
17 7:00 Tom H.  
24 6:30 Kurt Flathers  
24 11:00  
25 9:00 Kurt Flathers

### Recording

7 Darlene Paysen  
14 Darlene Paysen  
21 Darlene Paysen  
28 Darlene Paysen

### Acolyte Schedule

7 Early Elder  
7 Late Benjamin L.  
14 Early Elder  
14 Late Elder  
21 Early Elder  
21 Late Aryanna H.  
24 Children's Elder  
24 Candlelight Elder  
25 Christmas Elder  
28 Early Elder  
28 Late Lainey S.

### Crucifer Schedule

24 6:30 Daniel Schemers  
25 9:00 Donivan Sirna

## **NEWSLETTER**

### **DEADLINE: DEC. 20**

If you would like to put any information in the newsletter, contact Camil Dell, and get her the information by December 20.

