

The Visitor

January 2024

St. John's Lutheran Church ELCA · 2190 Jackson Hwy Chehalis, WA 98532
www.stjohnlutheranchehalis.net · 360.748.4741 · office@stjohnschehalis.net

A New Year, A New Creation:

Letting God Put the “New” in Our Renewal

The beginning of a new year brings with it the opportunity for renewal. We reset our priorities and goals trying to approach the new year with a new heart and mindset that leans toward health, happiness, and growth.

I closed the past year, 2023, with thanksgiving. I was truly thankful to hand it back to God and to be finished with it. It was a challenging year on every level, but I am truly thankful to God for everything He taught me throughout the course of the year. He asked me to work on some difficult and painful areas that I had been holding at a distance. Learning life lessons is not easy, but thank God we have a loving, patient, and merciful Teacher!

I was asked recently by a caring soul whether I am feeling burned out at all. I can honestly answer no. I did feel terribly depleted after my nephew's death, to be sure. I was not able to muster Christmas greetings this year. But God picked me back up from my low point once again. I can't tell you how many times in my life I have been redeemed and resurrected from darkness.

This is what our Risen Lord does. On a daily basis, if we let Him. I pray that someday I will be open and alert to receive that redemption on a daily basis—maybe this year! Opening my heart begins with opening His Word—taking in his promises and the actions of love incarnate—Jesus. Making time for Scripture study and seeking out words of encouragement renews the soul.

One of the gifts I received at Christmas is a Fred Rogers daily quote calendar. Mr. Rogers was a great encourager to my young TV-watching self. One of the quotes this week articulates one of my deeply held beliefs: “Deep within each of us is a spark of the divine just waiting to be used to light a dark place. The only thing is, we have the free choice of using it or not.”

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St. Johns Lutheran Church Statement of Mission

Rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ we exist to

- **PROCLAIM** God's unconditional love we exist to
- **GROW** in discipleship as we follow in Jesus' steps and
- **SERVE** others as instruments of God's Holy Spirit

I have faith that God's Holy Spirit will guide our path at St. Johns. Despite the trials of 2023, I have high hopes for our growth and renewal in 2024. God has been faithful to us, and is our greatest help in times of greatest need. Let us open our hearts wide to let him create us anew in the new year. He has plans for us to prosper. And your church council has plans for St. Johns to prosper, as well. This is our prayer for our church family:

"We ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will, with all the wisdom and understanding that his Spirit gives. Then you will be able to live as the Lord wants and do what pleases him. Your lives will produce all kinds of good deeds, and you will grow in your knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength which comes from his glorious power, so that you may be able to endure everything with patience. And with joy give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to have your share of what God has reserved for his people in the kingdom of light. He rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us safe into the kingdom of his dear Son, by whom we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven." Colossians 1: 9b-14

Ceci Hauer, council president

Annual Meeting Sunday January 28 after worship

Our annual congregational meeting will take place on Sunday January 28 following worship.

We will discuss our goals and ministry in 2024, and voting members will elect new council members, vote on the 2024 proposed budget, and vote on proposed updates/amendments to our constitution and bylaws to bring them up to date.

Please prayerfully consider whether you might serve on council. (Teens, this means you too!) There are three positions open. Let me or another council member know and we will add you to the ballot.

God calls each one of us to new growth and joyful discipleship!

Ceci
360-508-7039



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**Office Hours:
9 a.m to 2:30 p.m Monday
thru Thursday**

**Editor:
Michelle Turner**

**Worship
Schedule:**

- **9:30 a.m.
Worship**

Cultivating an Attitude of Gratitude

The season of thanksgiving is upon us. It extends beyond observation of the holiday with family and friends. Our gratitude for the blessings of friends and family leads us naturally into Advent, and the gratitude we feel toward our Savior. But this time of year can also be a season of loneliness. The people at greatest risk of loneliness are teens and the elderly.

To combat feelings of loneliness and isolation, the US Surgeon General has developed a plan that's called the **5 for 5 Challenge**. The goal is to use the positive mental and spiritual benefits of gratitude to strengthen our connections to others. Here are the steps:

1. Pick **5 actions and 5 days in a row** to connect with people in your life.
2. **Connect each day for 5 days** (choose 1 simple action to express gratitude, offer support, or ask for help).
3. **Reflect and share.** How did connecting make you feel? Let your loved ones know about your experience and invite them to join in.



Hover your cell phone's camera over the QR code and tap the link to access a deck of suggestion cards for simple actions you can take. Or type <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/connection/cards/index.html> into your computer browser search bar to access the cards. It is called the **Made To Connect Cards Deck**, and it reminds me that God made us to connect, love, serve, and be loved. If you decide to give it a try and would like to share any part of your experience, feel free to share with your church family via email: st-johnschehalis@googlegroups.com Or you might decide to reconnect or connect in a new way with someone in St. John's church family.

And connecting with Scripture and the Good News is the greatest gift we can give ourselves or others. Even taking as little as five to ten minutes each day to connect with God's grace, mercy, and wisdom by reading the Word can help us cultivate gratitude and give a much needed change in perspective.

Ceci Hauer



Women's News:

Women's Monthly Bible Study

Session three of our "Holy Places" Bible study will be held on Sat. Jan. 20th at 10:00 am as we look at "Pilgrimage". Pilgrimage is not only about the destination, but also about the "holy place" of the journey itself. We will discuss the journeys we take to a holy place or for a holy purpose, and the promise that God meets us along the way. Ladies are invited to bring a brunch item to share.

Council Bits and Pieces

There are several initiatives underway at St. John's during Advent to help prepare the way for the Lord:

Care Team

A lay Care Team is being organized to deliver several levels of care to the congregation. Some members of the team will make regular visits to deliver communion to members requesting communion or a social visit. Some will reach out with a phone call to members who would like that. Others may offer special prayer or cards for those desiring special prayer. Contact council member Sara Blair if you would like to be a member of the team in some capacity, or if you would enjoy a call or visit. Urgent or crisis situations will be handled by Paul Brassey

Faith Formation and Small Group Resource Room

Our church library is chock full of resources! To accommodate growing resources we will "annex" the former youth pastor's office to house multiple book sets for small group study, store faith formation curricula (for all ages), and archive VBS materials (currently shelved here and there in the craft room closet). The Resource Room will be accessible to church members, just as the library is. The cardboard boxes of historic financial files currently located in the former youth pastor's office will find a new home in locking file cabinets in the main church office. Watch for book reviews of some of the available titles in future issues of the Visitor.

Year-end Reports

If you are a ministry or group leader at St. John's, please begin compiling a year-end report, due to Michelle in early January. We will use the reports to compile our 2023 Annual Report and proposed budget for the congregational meeting in the latter half of January. Thank you for all you do to contribute to the life and ministry of St. John's.

From your Financial Secretary.

The 2024 Offering Envelopes are ready and available. They will be distributed on Sundays until the end of December. If I miss you at church or you are unable to attend in person, the Offering Envelopes will be mailed.

Giving Statements for 2023 will be available in January. The statements will be mailed. If you have recently moved, please make sure we have your current address.

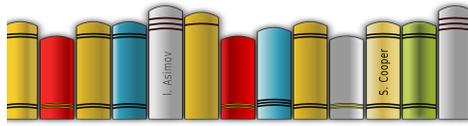
Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you for your continued giving to St. John's!

Scott Amrine

(360)748-7678

Library/BookGuild



The St. John's Book Guild will meet January 23rd at 7:00 in the conference room. We will be reviewing "All Things New" by Lynn Austin. All women and friends are invited to attend. If you should have questions, you can call Joan Jahnsen.

"In the aftermath of the Civil War, Josephine Weatherly and her mother, Eugenia, struggle to pick up the pieces of their lives when they return to their Virginia plantation. But the bitter realities of life after the war cannot be denied: their home and land are but shells of their previous grandeur; death has claimed her father and brother; and her remaining brother, Daniel, has returned home bitter and broken. The privileged childhood Josephine enjoyed now seems like a long-ago dream. And the God who failed to answer any of her prayers dur-

ing the war is lost to her as well.

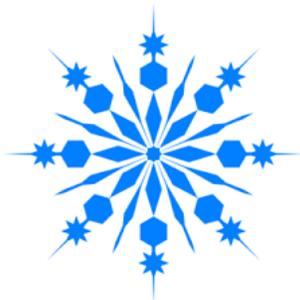
Josephine soon realizes that life is now a matter of daily survival--and recognizes that Lizzie, as one of the few remaining servants, is the one she must rely on to teach her all she needs to know. Josephine's mother, too, vows to rebuild White Oak... but a bitter hatred fuels her.

With skill and emotion, Lynn Austin brings to life the difficult years of the Reconstruction era by interweaving the stories of three women--daughter, mother, and freed slave--in a riveting tale. "

Courtesy of Good Reads

Check out the library! Christmas books were available over the Christmas weeks! See what surprises you might find today. Don't forget that new books are added along during the year.

Come join the fun at our monthly Book Guild meeting! It is sometimes surprising how many different view points and opinions you might hear.



Church Growth:

\$98.00 was raised on the St. John's Calendars that was donated to the Altar Guild. Thank you to all who purchased them. The remaining Calendars are available for free mailing envelopes are also available if you would like to mail them to someone. The cost to mail is \$2.22.



Who: Children up thru grade 5
What: Songs, Story, Games & Snack
When: **Wednesdays 4:15-5:00pm**
**beginning Sept. 13th*
Where: Conference Room
Leader: Joan Jahnsen & helpers
Questions? call 360-388-5337



Dear God, I lift up my family and friends to you. Surround them with your love, protection, and guidance. Help them to experience your peace, joy and healing in their lives.

December Young at Heart 12-21-23

There was lots of laughter as 10 people played picture Christmas bingo with peppermint markers, answered Christmas trivia, and proposed silly new lyrics for Let It Snow with a Mad Lib game. We also shared Christmas traditions and memories with selection of Christmas conversation starters. Julie Hildahl and Patty Olsen served bread bowls with assorted dips and crackers. Surprise attendees were Sue Austin (finally out and about again after health concerns) and Marni Nixon (a friend of Jackie Creed and Brigitte Pagel) who lives in Mossyrock and worships in Morton. She happened to be in Chehalis anyway so joined us. Prayers were offered for Jeremy Lynch and his mother Nancy as Jeremy underwent heart valve surgery that day. The next meeting will be 1:30 Wednesday January 17, 2024. The program is yet to be determined.



Thank you to the Christmas Carolers...

For all of you who were out Christmas Caroling a couple of nights before Christmas. It was such fun to have you come visit and I so enjoyed singing with you. On behalf of myself, Shirley, and any one else who might have had that pleasure, THANK YOU! You were (and are) truly a Christmas Blessing.

Thanks, grace



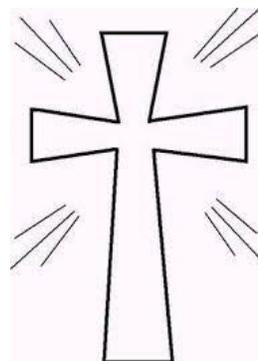
Supply Pastor Schedule:

January 7 Bob Russell

January 14 Pastor Linda Smith

January 21 Pastor Linda Smith

January 28 Paul Crowner



Mobile Meals Update

The team of Donna Moir, Sue Edwards, Jim & Joan Jahnsen, Lisa Conzatti, Susan Russell & Shari Blackwell continue to cook and execute a full meal and a sack lunch the 4th Saturday of each month at the Lewis County Gospel Mission. We typically provide a main entrée, side dish, salad, dessert and juice/milk. The sack lunches include a PBJ sandwich, fruit cup, beverage, granola bar, chips, cookies & bottle of water. We have been serving an average of 65 guests per Saturday. We welcomed the addition of Ceci, Ezra & Jane Birchard to assist in December. We also provided beanies, scarves, gloves, sox and blankets to our guests in December. Funds for this project come from Social Ministries and RISE. We are always looking for volunteers, you don't need to commit to each month, just volunteer one Saturday when you are available and join in the fulfilling experience.

Submitted by Shari Blackwell

I wanted to thank everyone for the Christmas gifts you generously gave to me and my family. We had fun opening the cards and gifts on Christmas morning. The kids and I have been enjoying the treats and took a trip to the Oregon Coast with some of the money. I am so thankful to be a part of St. John's and am looking forward to this new year. I think its an exciting time for all of us. Thank you for being so kind to me and my kids. Erik is really enjoying being part of things here at St. John's Kate is happy to see her brother being busy ! Hopefully she will join in some too.

Michelle

I've
So much to be
THANKFUL
For

Kitchen Coordinator needed

We are seeking a kitchen coordinator to help keeping track of kitchen related issues, since Lorna has retired from that responsibility. We thank her for her years of keeping things organized and in line! We are working on a baseline inventory of the coffee hour supplies, and then creating a checklist for supplies. Once that has been done, we would like to see if someone would volunteer to check the supplies against the inventory list, on a routine basis, and notify Michelle when items are needed to be ordered. This is an independent project, and can be done at your preferred date/time. Please consider volunteering your talents in this area, it would be greatly appreciated.



Coffee hour Help needed!

Sign up sheets in the Narthex.

We need people to provide treats, juice and to make coffee.



Financial Review:

Monthly income December

Offering \$ 16,617.00

Other income \$ 1611.46

Total \$ 18,228.46

Monthly income budget \$ 18,666.67

Monthly expenses December \$ 18,812.37

Noisy Sunday \$ 2055.61

2023 Year End Totals

YTD income: \$224,178.80

YTD expenses: \$231,587.36

Net Income: -\$7408.56

We Thank You for your Generous Gift

**Giving to Support St. John's**

As a church we encourage those who are part of the St. John's family to be giving to the work of our congregation. We believe you should not feel burdened by the issue of giving but in fact, find it a joy! We are pleased to provide e-giving options as an alternative to giving cash and checks in the offering plate (your cash and checks are always welcome!).

Mobile Phone: Scan the QR code provided here to access our mobile giving site and follow the prompts.

Our Website – on your computer, go to www.stjohnschehalis.net and click on the “donate” button

Online Banking – Arrange to give through bill-pay at your own bank's website. You will be asked for the following information:

St. John's Lutheran Church
2190 Jackson Hwy, Chehalis, WA 98532
360-748-4741



Questions? Contact the Office

Gentle Reminder

If you are aged 70 1/2+ and have investments that now require you to make monthly withdrawals, you can have any amount of that monthly money sent as offering to St, Johns TAX FREE. The contribution must come directly from your Financial institution, not directly from you. Contact you financial planner to set it up, and let whomever does your taxes know so you get the tax relief. Its easy to do, and will save you some tax dollars.

Council thanks you



January

Birthdays

- 3 Joe Buda
- 7 Diane Rudorfer
- 9 Jane Margaret Birchard
Patty Wilson
- 14 Francesca Grace Minshull Moir
- 16 Daniel Napier
- 19 Bethany Odden
- 21 Ezra Birchard
Cheryl Vance
- 27 Peter Jahnsen
- 30 Steve Grill
- 31 Tom Larsen



Baptism Anniversaries

- 3 Jane Margaret Birchard
- 4 Carl Tobey
- 9 Bette White
- 23 Cheryl Vance
- 30 Sara Blair



January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 9:30 a.m. Worship Epiphany Gift Exchange	8 7 a.m. Group Exercise class 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool 10 am Altar Guild meeting 6:00 p.m. Worship and Music meeting	9 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool 6:30 pm Council meeting	10 8 a.m Group exercise class	11 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool 1:15 p.m. Fiber arts	12 7 a.m. Group Exercise class	13
14 9:30 a.m. Worship Care Team	15 7 a.m. Group Exercise class 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool	16 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool	17 8 a.m Group exercise class	18 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool 1:15 p.m. Fiber arts	19 7 a.m. Group Exercise class 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool	20 10 am Women Bible study
21 9:30 a.m. Worship Noisy Sunday Affermation of Baptism	22 7 a.m. Group Exercise class 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool	23 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool 7 pm Book Guild	24 8 a.m Group exercise class 2:30 pm Young at Heart 4:15 Kids of the Kingdom 7:00 pm	25 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool 1:15 p.m. Fiber arts	26 7 a.m. Group Exercise class 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool	27 Mobile Meals @LC Gospel Mission
28 9:30 a.m. Worship Annual Meeting after worship service.	29 7 a.m. Group Exercise class 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool	30 9 a.m. to 12 pm One Little Tree Preschool	31 8 a.m Group exercise class 4:15 Kids of the Kingdom			

Upcoming Events

- January 7 Epiphany gift exchange after worship service
Youth and Family 10:30 am
- January 8 Altar Guild meeting 10:00am
Worship and Music 6:00 pm
- January 9 Council meeting 6:30 pm
- January 14 Care Team Organizing Meeting 10:30am
- January 17 Young at Heart 1:30 pm
- January 20 Women's Bible Study Brunch 10:00am
- January 21 Noisy Sunday Affirmation of Baptism during worship service
- January 23 Book Guild 7:00 pm
- January 27 Mobile Meals @ LC Gospel Mission 9:00 am
- January 28 Congregational meeting after worship service

St. John's QR Codes They are simple to use just open up your Camera on your smart phone, tap your finger on the QR code and it will take you right to the Facebook page, Website and Worship link.

Facebook page



Website



Worship link



St. John's Calendar Our church calendar has moved! You will find the new Calendar in the hallway leading to the Conference room. If you are interested in when the community center is rented that calendar is in the copy room. We also have an online Calendar on our website. If there is something you would like to add feel free to do so, let Michelle know so it can be added online if you would like.