



# St. John's EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD

1165 County Road D, Almond, WI 54909

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PASTOR RICHARD BARTHOLOMEW

# His Mercy Monthly

— DECEMBER 2024 —

## *Our Mission*

*To celebrate the Gospel in Word and Sacrament which challenges us to cultivate ourselves and our community for Christ.*

**Deadline for the January Newsletter is 8:00 pm on Monday, December 23rd.**

### Do you have something for the January edition of the Newsletter?

If so, there is a box located on the bookcase by the church office door. Simply place your announcement in the file folder labeled "Bulletin/Newsletter Announcements" or send an email to the church with NEWSLETTER in the subject box. [stjohnsalmond@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsalmond@gmail.com)

## What's Happening?

- Advent Services on Sunday Mornings at 10:00 am
  - Trim the Tree Service
  - Mid-Week Services on Wednesday Evenings at 7:00 pm
  - Meals Prior to Wednesday Evening Services
  - Christmas Program featuring our Sunday School Students
- See calendar and articles inside this newsletter for more details!

Cheer Boxes are going to be packed on December 15<sup>th</sup> after the church service. We welcome all to bring three dozen cookies to help fill the packages and to be enjoyed after church. Thank you to everyone for helping bring Christmas Cheer to all, as the recipients look forward to the visit and special delivery of treats and fruit.



Remember to save the used postage stamps from the Christmas cards you receive!

A collection box is in the fellowship hall. Thank you!

## In Service to our Lord

**Elders:** James Johnson, David Marr, Jim Cesar and Alan Pagel

**Communion Set Up, Greet and Usher:**

*Please consider volunteering for any of the above positions for services by contacting Betty Daberkow at (715) 335-4176. Thank you!*

## Altar Flowers

If you have flowers to donate or wish to purchase flowers for the altar, please notify Dianne Schultz by phone (715) 366-8077 or drop a note in the church mailbox located in the fellowship hall.



## Heart Warmers

The good news of *Christmas* is not found under the tree, but in the *Hearts* of those who Worship *Jesus.*



# December Birthdays and Anniversaries

12/1 Thomas Evertsen	12/17 Sheila Beggs	12/6 Carrie and Jacob Omernik
12/2 Mark Roeske	12/19 Cauty Huntington	12/14 Joan and Bob Rohde
12/12 Edward Schultz	12/21 Judy Kollock	12/16 Michelle and George Waggoner
12/14 SuAnn Pagel-Rast	12/24 Isabel Urban	12/27 Bonnie and Mike Warzynski



*If your Birthday or Anniversary is not listed or is printed wrong please let us know. Put a note in the folder labeled, "Bulletin/Newsletter Announcements" outside the Church office.*

## Repenting of "Yours" and "Mine"

Retailers have had their Christmas displays up since before Reformation Sunday. The kids have made their list and checked it twice, or three times or more. It won't be long before the tree will start shedding its needles, the stockings emptied, the gifts unwrapped, toys broken, and the too small or out of style clothes returned. Before we know it, the annual celebration of Christmas will be over.



But for the children of God, we know that the gift of Christmas doesn't ever end. Week in and week out, the Lord continues to shower His gifts on us. Every time the Lord gathers us to His house, and we are led to kneel at His table, the gift of forgiveness is repeatedly granted to us. It is nothing we deserve. It comes to us freely!

The fourth stanza of the stewardship hymn, "Forgive Us Lord for Shallow Thankfulness" (LSB 788) highlights both this gift and our response.

*Teach us, O Lord, true thankfulness divine,  
that gives as Christ gave, never counting cost*

To learn thankfulness is necessary. The parents of young children are well-versed in the fact that they must teach their children thankfulness. It does not come naturally. The spiritual genetics inherited from our parents allow us to think that the world revolves around us. When we receive something, there is an inward desire to think that we in some way deserve it.

But there is no way that we deserve anything we get from our Lord. We need that ongoing lesson from God Himself. Thankfulness toward God is worked in us by the Holy Spirit. God's Word works this thanksgiving in us. We need this weekly reminder that Jesus didn't consider "equality with God a thing

to be grasped, but emptied Himself" for us, to the point of death on a cross (Phil. 2:6). He didn't bat an eye. He paid the price! Our life of stewardship is one of daily and weekly thanksgiving inspired by the Lord Himself.

*That knows no barrier of "yours" and "mine,"  
assured that only what's withheld is lost.*

Because Jesus gave us everything and more, there can be no ownership. The child at Christmas is quick to claim that the newly gifted toy is "mine!" But as Psalm 24:1 asserts, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein." There isn't anything in creation that is ours. When we cling to and claim ownership of anything in creation, we are losing out on the continual gifts with which the Lord desires to shower upon us. Closed hands cannot receive anything new. We cling to the old and dead and miss the new thing that the Lord desires to do in and for us.

We are led to repent of the "yours" and "mine" and remove the lie that we have any ownership. In this we have the promise that God will continue to give to us. Not just at Christmas, but every Sunday at the altar in the Lord's house.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry – [lcms.org/stewardship](http://lcms.org/stewardship)

Order your Poinsettia by December 15 to adorn the church Sanctuary. Order forms are available in the back of the church and fellowship hall. You can also call Dianne Schultz or Diane Fabich with your order and plan for your payment. The cost is \$10 each.



Recycled Christmas Cards are available in the fellowship hall display. Free-will donations are accepted.

Join us this  
Christmas Season!



## Advent Services

St. John's Lutheran Church – Almond

- Sunday, December 1 –  
First Sunday in Advent – 10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, December 4 –  
**Trim the Tree Service** – 7:00 p.m.  
*All who attend can help in decorating the trees on the altar during this special service! The evening starts off with a bowl of **HOT SOUP** to warm you up.  
Serving 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.*
- Sunday, December 8 –  
Second Sunday in Advent – 10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, December 11 – 7:00 p.m.  
*Come early for **HOT SANDWICHES!**  
Serving 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.*
- Sunday, December 15 –  
Third Sunday in Advent – 10:00 a.m.  
***CHEER BOXES** will be packed after the service.*
- Wednesday, December 18 – 7:00 p.m.  
*On the menu for this evening – **BAKED POTATO BAR.** Serving 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.*
- Sunday, December 22 –  
Fourth Sunday in Advent – 10:00 a.m.  
**CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**
- Tuesday, December 24 –  
Christmas Eve Service – 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 25 –  
Christmas Day Service – 10:00 a.m.

*Thrivent Action Team Grant Funding is assisting with the expenses as well as a free will offering. Proceeds from the Wednesday evening meals will help to financially support the St. John's Lutheran Women in Mission Sunshine Ministries Evangelism. Read more about this program in the next column.*

Celebrating the most precious Gift with you. Christmas Blessing to All, **REJOICE!** St. John's Ladies Aid



## Ladies Aid Tidbits:

Our prayers and thoughts go out to the families of Betty Zimmerman and Allan Erdman. It was our honor to serve their funeral luncheons in November.

Thank you for the anonymous donation of stamp booklets for the Sunshine Ministries. We are grateful and appreciate the thoughtful gift!

### **Speaking of the Sunshine Ministries...**

As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others. Through our Sunshine Ministries Evangelism, we provide support and encouragement in serving people of all abilities in our congregation and community. We use everyday opportunities to be God's witnesses. We are encouraged and equipped to share the Good News of Jesus' great love through outreach in everyday living. Being a Christian is a blessing, and the joy of Jesus in our lives should be evident to everyone. Our mission service includes: (but not limited to):

- LCMS missionary support and regular overseas mail correspondence;
- Christian support of our congregation's young adults who have graduated from high school – provide regular mail correspondence, final exam packages, general encouragement and spiritual support.
- Welfare of community support by sending greeting cards and regular correspondence. Generally, we mail out over 30 cards per month for birthday, thinking of you/get well, anniversary, and sympathy.
- Recycled Cards program – assorted recycled cards are made by our LWML group and are available for free-will donation. Supplies needed for these cards include printer paper, assorted cardstock paper, double-sided tape, ink pads for stamping, ink stamps, envelopes, postage stamps, mailing boxes and postage, new special occasion cards and blank note cards.

We have put together 108 quilts this year! There will be no quilting in December and will resume in January. Thank you to the dedicated women who continue to serve on this project. Remember to save your gently used sheets for quilt fillers or backing. We need them!

2025 Officers were elected:  
President Lynne Johnson, Vice Pres. Patti Wohlfeil,  
Secretary Diane Fabich, Treasurer Susan Martinson

“Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”  
 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. Acts 4:30-31 (NIV)

*Heavenly Father, we come to you in praise and prayer for courage, grace, faith, and healing within your will for:*

Isabel Urban	Bonnie Wellens	Matt Weiss	Bob Kollock	Sara
Jon Turzinski	Scott Boelter	Judy Daberkow	Brett Lesniak	Helen Hutkowski
Dorothy Tess	Dee Erlandson	Judy Fenske		

We also pray for the leadership of St. John’s, we pray that someone will come forward and take the positions still vacant (a secretary and custodian) for our church, and for the missionaries serving God’s Kingdom thru the LCMS:

Ashley Lehr in Puerto Rico  
 David and Rachel Baker in Central Asia



**Please remember our shut-ins throughout the year with a card, note of cheer, or prayers.**

Verna Yonke Whispering Pines - #108  
 3450 Bridlewood Drive  
 Plover, WI 54467

Dorothy Caves Silver Lake Manor  
 N2641 17<sup>th</sup> Lane  
 Wautoma, WI 54982

Bonnie Wellens Country Terrace  
 8730 Packing Plant Road, #8  
 Minocqua, WI 54548

Scott Boelter 1180 County Road D,  
 Apt. #5  
 Almond, WI 54909

Isabel Urban N5480 Mount Morris Road  
 Wild Rose, WI 54984

**FOR PRAYER REQUESTS:** If you have a request for the prayer chain team please e-mail or call Bonnie Warzynski. She may be reached at 715-966-3995 or mike-bonnie@hotmail.com.



## Putting the "Ha" in Hallelujah!

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel were sitting together during church service. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had enough.

“You’re not supposed to talk out loud in church.”

“Why? Who’s going to stop me?” Joel asked.

Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, “See those two men standing by the door? They’re hushers!”



**Thank you to all who continue to support St. John’s!**

The projected yearly expenses for 2024 is \$93,311.75. This figure has been adjusted for our current pastoral expenses as well as church operational expenses.





## 2024 GIVINGS THERMOMETER PROGRESS

- As of November 24th, our balance is \$84,229.89.
- Our givings need to average \$1,794.46 per week.

# December 2024

Sunday
Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday

<p>1 Sunday School 8:45 am Classes for Children Only</p> <p><b>Divine Communion Worship</b> 10:00 am</p> <p>Fellowship following Service</p>	<p>2</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 Advent Meal 5:30-6:30 pm</p> <p>Confirmation Class 6-6:45 pm</p> <p>Trim the Tree Service 7:00 pm</p>	<p>5 Bible Study 9:00 am</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 Peace Lutheran Campus Center Christmas Open House 3:45 – Caroling 5:00 – Dinner 6:00 – Worship RSVP asap! aweden@uwsp.edu or 715-345-6510</p>
<p>8 Sunday School 8:45 am Classes for Children and Adults</p> <p><b>Divine Worship</b> 10:00 am</p> <p>Cheer Boxes and Fellowship following Service</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 Advent Meal 5:30-6:30 pm</p> <p>Confirmation Class 6-6:45 pm</p> <p>Mid-Week Advent Service 7:00 pm</p>	<p>12 Bible Study 9:00 am</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15 Sunday School 8:45 am Classes for Children and Adults</p> <p><b>Divine Communion Worship</b> 10:00 am</p> <p>Cheer Boxes and Fellowship following Service</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17 No Quilting</p>	<p>18 Advent Meal 5:30-6:30 pm</p> <p>Confirmation Class 6-6:45 pm</p> <p>Mid-Week Advent Service 7:00 pm</p>	<p>19 Bible Study 9:00 am</p> <p>No Ladies Aid</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22 Sunday School 8:45 am Classes for Children and Adults</p> <p><b>Christmas Program</b> 10:00 am</p> <p>Fellowship following Service</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 No Quilting</p> <p>Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm</p>	<p>25 Christmas Day Service 10:00 am</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 Sunday School 8:45 am Classes for Children and Adults</p> <p><b>Divine Communion Worship</b> 10:00 am</p> <p>Fellowship following Service</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>				

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Return Service Requested

# Seasons Greetings

