



The Herald

December 2024

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Helena, Montana

"Growing in grace, walking by faith, serving in

Come celebrate with us!

CHRIST is Born

**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN
CHURCH**
1000 HELENA AVE
HELENA, MT

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS
PAGEANT**
SUN, DEC 15 - 9:30 AM

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE
SAT, DEC 21 - 6:30 PM

CHRISTMAS EVE
TUE, DEC 24 - 6:30 PM

Worship Services

Sunday 9:30 am In-person

Online via our Facebook page

Services uploaded to YouTube

Touchmark Service: Second Thursday at 2:00

Table of Contents

Women's Book Club-5
In Our Prayers-7
Birthdays-13
Calendar-14

Pastor's Perspective



A change of seasons. It is a time to leave the previous season and time behind. Time to look in a new direction, to anticipate and wait for what the new season will bring. It is a time of transformation, rest, and anticipation.

We...the Church...also change seasons. We leave behind the previous liturgical season of Pentecost and the previous lectionary year—a year where we followed Mark's gospel with a bit of John's gospel sprinkled in throughout the year. We now enter the season of Advent—the beginning of the new church year, and a new liturgical year with a new lectionary where we will encounter Luke's gospel. Throughout Luke's gospel we will hear his theology—a theology that puts an emphasis on present-day salvation, and that Jesus' life provides salvation from current distress. Luke uses a more literary and history approach to place Jesus among humanity to fulfill God's promise of salvation and the new covenant. Advent is the season of waiting: a time that is marked by nervous and anxious anticipation, and a time of longing for the fulfillment of what has been promised. I believe that Advent is also the season of the 4G's. It is the season of giving, generosity, gratitude, and grace. Not in the commercialized or secular sense, but in the sense of recognizing, reflecting on, and in naming all the gifts, generosity, and grace that we receive from God's fulfilled promise. And in an expression of deep gratitude, our faith leads us as disciples of Christ, to do the same.

This advent and Christmas, I invite you to thoughtfully and prayerfully consider the gifts of discipleship God has given, and how those gifts then flow outward and are shared with others as we live faithfully as one body in Christ Jesus. Advent is a wonderful season to renew and emphasize the ways in which we live into our Baptismal gifts. These gifts of discipleship include: The GIFT of Community—to live among God's faithful people; The GIFT of God's Word—hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper; The GIFT of Good News—proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed; The GIFT of Service—serve all people, following the example of Jesus; The GIFT of Justice and Peace—strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

The true gift of Advent this Christmas, and the gift that we anxiously await is Emmanuel, "God with us." It is the gift of God Incarnate, born as an infant in a Manger. We receive the expression of God's gifts generously and graciously given. This season of Advent provides us with the opportunity to actively wait, with anticipation, to be on guard for and to share the 4 G's of Advent -- giving, generosity, gratitude, and grace, and to find God present with us in new, transformative, and life-giving ways.

In Christ Love
Pastor Keith

Blue Christmas Evening Prayer Service
Saturday December 21st 6:30pm
Saint John's Lutheran Church
Helena Montana



While Advent is a season of hope and Christmas is a season of joy, not everyone feels hopeful or like celebrating. For anyone experiencing loneliness, sadness and loss, the Christmas season can be difficult. But you are not alone, even those who are not struggling with losses may feel overwhelmed by the preparation and expectations of the Christmas season. Knowing we have all experienced loss. We come together seeking God's healing and space to name our woundedness. please join us in a simple Evening Prayer Service of song, readings and a reflection of God's hope for us and presence with us in feeling what we feel. All are welcome.

Social Ministry

December– Florence Crittenton: ELCA Good Gifts Giving Tree, and Bob's Pantry Winter Break Snacks. Please take a gift tag off the tree for Florence Crittenton and return your gift card by Sunday December 15th, so the families can purchase their own family gifts. Thank you for supporting families near and far; any cash donations will go towards snacks and future projects for Bob's Pantry.

Isaiah 9:6-7

For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful ..

Young Adult Retreat

Dec 27-29 2024 Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp \$100 per person

Registration by December 20

A time for young adults to share and rest in the wilderness of our lives and listen to God in the winter quiet. This retreat will be an opportunity to share our stories, enjoy God's creation on the ski hill, and learn about spiritual practices for wandering.

Come for fun, great food, spiritual growth, relaxation, meeting new friends— a great way to start the new year!

Visit FLBC.net for more information and to register



Thanks for Supporting Fair Trade

Your contributions to the basket by the coffee urn make it possible to support growers in developing countries get a fairer price for their coffee, tea, and chocolate. A new order of whole bean Congo coffee for individual sale has arrived and for each bag purchased \$1 will go to the Panzi Hospital in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Thank you for putting in your dollars so we can continue to serve fair trade coffee and come and check out the coffee, tea, cocoa, and chocolate bars that are available for individual sales.

www.info.equalexchange.coop/articles/congo-coffee-project

Women's Book Club for December

Meet in the Guild Room

Thursday, December 12 at noon

“Small Things Like These”

by Claire Keegan

Books are available from Kendra Wilde.

We keep conversations to an hour and welcome new members



Women of St. John's Lutheran Church

General Business Meetings: 2nd Tuesday— 12-1 pm

Bible Study: 4th Tuesday 9:30am / 6:30 pm

Festival Of Angels

December 7, 8 am –noon



shutterstock.com - 1252032805

Midweek Connection and Sunday School

Midweek Connection is Wednesday evenings, beginning at 6:30 PM for worship and 7:00 PM for Faith Formation. (We have changed our format this year. On the first Wednesday of the month, we will have a potluck and a birthday celebration beginning at 6:30 PM followed by Community Life together down in the Fellowship Hall. The rest of the month we will have worship with Holy Communion at 6:30 PM in the sanctuary followed by Faith Formation for all ages at 7:00 PM.)

Christmas Pageant

Save the date for one of our favorite Sundays of the year-our annual Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 15th during the 9:30 AM worship. Rehearsal for the pageant will be on Saturday, December 14th (time TBA.) Are you a student who takes music lessons? We would love to have you be a part of our special music that day. Please let me know if you are interested or if you have any questions.

January Activity

It would be great for our youth to have a fun activity to look forward to in those dark/cold days of January. I am looking for someone who is willing to plan an outing that month. It could be ice skating, skiing, bowling, Flying Giant, a movie night at your house, etc.

Gretchen Munding

Director of Youth and Family Ministry



Church Directory: Using the Servant Keeper program, we have the ability to update our data base with a picture including addresses, emails, phones, etc. If you would like to have your picture or family picture in the directory, send digitized photos to bingcroz@yahoo.com or to the church saintjohns@helenastjohns.org. Also, Bing will set up his camera to take portraits for the directory –

Sundays– December 8, 15, 22, and 29 after service

Wednesdays, December 4,11, and 18 at 6 until done



Pray for one another

In our prayers:

In our prayers: Linda McDonald, Susan Olson, Mike McDonald, Paula Blessinger, Diane Evans, Jeff Wahl, Tammy Tetrault, Susan Boettcher, Ken Downing, Rosita Moe, Bruce Gottwig, Bob Sorensen, Deb Berg, Meg Biggs and family, Richard Bomar, Jeff Shirley, Jeremy Stockstad, Tatiana Ceaicovschi, Randy Holmes, Kamila Ruth Baker, Vicki Alpiner, Brent Bushnell, Tom Andersen, Sally Indreland, Jana Clark, Dan Jacobson

For those who have died and now rest in God's merciful care: All the Saints in Heaven

For those in residential living centers, extended care or homebound: Mary Marty, Rev. Wayne Olsen, Rosita Moe, Esther Fuehrer, Julie Wolff, Adeline Rasmussen, Susan DeBree, Jimmie McGee

For those who are deployed and getting ready to deploy: Evan Ceaicovschi, Raffy Suchikul, Maggie Smiedala

Missionaries: Missionaries around the world; Willie Langdji in Cameroon

New Testament Bible Study

With the start of the new academic year, ***New Testament Bible Study will continue on Sundays at 10:45 am following worship and Tuesdays at noon. Classes will gather in the Guild room.*** We will once again be exploring the historical content, original sources, and the materials used in the writings that formed the New Testament Canon. Through a chronological reading, we will experience the timeline within the New Testament. This will be an opportunity to encounter the contents of each book, discuss the historical background, author, context, audience, and purpose (who, where, when, why). We will discover themes and messages within each of the Gospels, Pauline Epistles, Acts, and Revelation.

It is not required, but I do suggest having a good Study Bible. If you have one already, wonderful. If you are interested in getting a new one, I recommend either *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha 5th Edition NRSV* or the *Lutheran Study Bible* in the NRSV translation.



Handbell Program Opportunities

SJLC is so blessed to own high quality bell and chime sets. Please consider supporting this Ministry with your time and talents. All ages and abilities are welcome! We have lots of opportunities for you to get involved this year. Help us use our musical instruments for Worship through this wonderful Ministry.

Handbell Rehearsal Times:

Celebration Ringers Bell Choir Mondays 6-7 PM Abby Nyhof, Director

Bells of St. John's Bell Choir Wednesdays 5:15 pm - 6:15 pm Renee Slocum
and Christina Tielking, Directors

Please call the church office for contact information or questions.

Harvest Food Pantry

The Harvest Food Pantry is proof that we can accomplish more when we work together. Harvest Food Pantry is a collaboration of six churches and Logan Health and together they feed approximately 60 households each week. The six congregations rotate staffing the pantry each week. 10 volunteers serve for 3 hours to set up, serve, clean, and tear down the pantry.

Member church, St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cut Bank received a grant through the Montana Synod Hunger Fund to address a dramatic increase in food insecurity for both adults and children in the Cut Bank community. Participants can come every week and emergency food is available in addition to the weekly distribution. They average about 240 households per month and a large percentage of the people they serve are indigenous.

In 2024-2025, they plan to go to a "grocery table model" that will allow people to choose their food. They hope this will help reduce food waste and give a sense of dignity to participants. No proof of income or ID is needed to receive food.

We invite you to join in this work that God is doing through making a donation to the Synod Hunger Fund. You can donate online (be sure to select Montana Synod Hunger Fund) or checks can be sent to the Synod Office made out to Montana Synod with Montana Synod Hunger Fund in the memo line. Thank you for your support and thank you to the people of St. Paul's Lutheran in Cut Bank for your ministry!

"Volunteers are love in motion!"

author unknown



Bible Trivia

1. According to the Bible, which animals were mentioned as being present in the stable when Jesus was born?
2. Why did Joseph need to travel to Bethlehem, taking Mary along with him?
3. Which Old Testament Prophet foretold the birth of Christ?

Nominations for St. John's Bold Woman of 2025

St. John's Women of the ELCA will be observing Bold Women's Day in a few months. On Bold Women Sunday, we will join with other women across the country to celebrate all Lutheran women who have acted or are acting boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. In preparation, we are now calling for nominations from the women for St. John's Bold Woman of 2025.

The nomination process is simple. Any woman may nominate another woman at St. John's who is acting boldly on her faith in Jesus. Some women are bold in their prayers, others in their service to those in need. Still other women are bold in teaching, advocacy or through their hospitality and caring. We ask that the woman who nominates write a short paragraph describing the ways the nominee is boldly living her faith. Voting will take place in January. **Nominations need to be in by December 15 to Mary Ruedisili at nruedisili@yahoo.com or Mait Board at mightb210@gmail.com.**

St. John's Bold Woman of 2025 will join these sisters in Christ who have received this honor in past years:

2010 Verna Stoneberg & Betty Dotson

2011 Esther Fuehrer

2012 Ada Harlan

2013 Alta Mae Jensen

2014 Linda Roessner

2015 Mait Board and Karen Kmet

2016 Doris Crider and Erma Polich

2017 Janice Larison

2018 Noma Middlestead and Mildred Twingley

2019 Gretchen Munding

2020 Judy Kimball & Betty Olaf

2021 Laura Nachtsheim & Shirley Hautzinger

2022 Teresa Kinley & Barb Muir

2023 Dodie Walsh

2024 Annette Jacobson



Caring Friends

Caring Friends is a small but mighty ministry within St. Johns. Our mission is to provide love, support and fellowship to congregants and community members by way of in person visitation, phone calls and or e-mails. We visit receptive home bound, senior living, and assisted living residents as well as hospital patients and serve the sacrament of communion when desired or requested. We are reaching out to the congregation to request any referrals you may know of that may appreciate what we have to offer. Also, any St. John's members that may be interested in joining our ranks are asked to call Greg at 406-439-4505 or 406-266-4464. As a group, we meet every 1st Tuesday each month for a one hour, very informal get together at the church at 12:00 noon. We share fellowship, prayer and updates on our "visitees" and any new prospects to visit. If you're interested in a great way to enhance your faith journey in a fun and rewarding way, please check us out.

Funny Church Signs:

A Baby changes everything!

Merry Christmas



**The Hospitality Committee meets the
first Tuesday of each month
at 5:15 p.m.**



Choir Rehearsal Thursdays, 7 pm

Warm ups - Sundays at 9 am

QUILTING

EACH WEDNESDAY

9 AM— NOON

Birthdays in December

Maria Lee– December 07

Meghan Rake– December 08

Patrick Hicks-December 9

Marvin Olaf-December 10

Mildred Twingley-December 10

Linda Mosness– December 12

Rachel Skaalure-December 13

Honara Tetrault-December 14

Rachelle Timmer-December 15

Frederick Frey-December 16

Lilyan Carlson-December 17

Ken Ludtke-December 18

Adeline Rasmussen-December 18

Raquel Hicks– December 20

Gavin Carlson-December 21

Jimmie McGee– December 21

Joy Edgar-December 22

Jessica Gutierrez-December 22

Koda McMillin-Mattfeldt-December 22

Linda Wollitz-December 22

Doug Gedrose-December 24

Robert Berry-December 25

Chris Boucher-December 26

Mary Ruedisili-December 27

Maggie Smiedala-December 30

Miki Wilde-December 30

Pat Ford-December 31



December 20, Mike and Dora Lynn Walsh

December 30, Ron and Linda Mosness

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>9:30 am Worship</p> <p>10:30 am Fellowship</p> <p>10:45 am Bible Study</p>	<p>2</p> <p>10 am Staff Meeting</p> <p>6 pm Hand Bell (Celebration Ringers)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Noon Caring Friends</p> <p>Noon Bible Study</p> <p>5:15 pm Hospitality</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9 am Quilting</p> <p>9 am Wash Trays For Festival of Angels</p> <p>5:15pm Hand Bells (Bells of St. Johns)</p> <p>6:30pm Potluck</p>	<p>5</p> <p>7 pm Choir</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9 am Prepare trays (Festival of Angels)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>8 am Festival of Angels</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9:30 am Worship</p> <p>10:30 am Fellowship</p> <p>10:45 am Bible Study</p>	<p>9</p> <p>10 am Staff Meeting</p> <p>6 pm Hand Bell (Celebration Ringers)</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Noon WELCA</p> <p>Noon Bible Study</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9 am Quilting</p> <p>5:15pm Hand Bells (Bells of St. Johns)</p> <p>6:30 Midweek</p>	<p>12</p> <p>7 pm Choir</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Christmas Pageant Rehearsal 1:30 pm</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:30 am Worship</p> <p>Christmas Pagaent</p> <p>10:30 am Fellowship</p> <p>10:45 am Bible Study</p>	<p>16</p> <p>10 am Staff Meeting</p> <p>6 pm Hand Bell (Celebration Ringers)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Noon Bible Study</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9 am Quilting</p> <p>5:15pm Hand Bells (Bells of St. Johns)</p> <p>6:30 Midweek</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7 pm Choir</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Blue Christmas 6:30 pm</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:30 am Worship</p> <p>10:30 am Fellowship</p> <p>10:45 am Bible Study</p>	<p>23</p> <p>10 am Staff Meeting</p> <p>6 pm Hand Bell (Celebration Ringers)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Noon Bible Study</p> <p>Christmas Eve Wor- ship</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Christmas Day</p>	<p>26</p> <p>7 pm Choir</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:30 am Worship</p> <p>10:30 am Fellowship</p> <p>10:45 am Bible Study</p>	<p>30</p> <p>10 am Staff Meeting</p> <p>6 pm Hand Bell (Celebration Ringers)</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Noon Bible Study</p>				

Maybe Christmas, the Grinch thought,
doesn't come from a store. Maybe
Christmas, perhaps, means a bit more.



Bible Trivia Answers

1. None– The Bible does not specifically mention any animals– but it is likely that there were some. Typical of those days, donkeys, goats, sheep or even camels could have been present.
2. Caesar Augustus decreed a census and tax to be paid in a person's home town.
Read about it in Luke 2:1-5
3. Isaiah, in Chapter 9, especially verses 6 and 7

New Option for Online Giving

Please use the code here for a mobile device online
giving option.

Questions on how this works? Please contact the church office.



Return Service Requested

The Herald– October 2024
St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran
Church

1000 Helena Avenue
Helena, MT 59601



St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church
“Growing in grace, walking by faith, serving in love”

1000 Helena Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
(406) 442-6270
www.helenastjohns.org
email: saintjohns@helenastjohns.org
Pastor email: pastorkeith@helenastjohns.org
Like us on Facebook!

Worship Services
Sunday 9:30 am
Fellowship 10:30 am
New Testament Bible Study 10:45 am
In-person and online via our Facebook page
Services uploaded to YouTube

Office Hours
9:00 am-1:00 pm
Monday-Thursday
Office Closed on Friday

Ministering at
St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran
Church

Witness to the Gospel	Members of SJLC
Pastor	Pastor Keith Weatherford
Choir Director	Connie Conley
Worship Musicians	Connie Conley Gretchen Mundinger

Director of Youth & Family Ministries	Gretchen Mundinger
Office Administrator	Bonnie Stevens
Audio and Video	Angela Conley
Treasurer	Karen Hicks
Financial Secretary	Randy Rake
Sexton	Pat Gober
Church Council	Gail Vennes, President Paul Hilchen, Vice President Jennifer Wintersteen, Secretary Bing Crosby, Kari Ceaicovschi, Brian Tetrault Lee Rhodes, K’Lynn Sloan-Harris, Teresa Kinley

Submission Deadlines: For Bulletin- Wednesday by noon
For the Herald - 25th of each month