



St. John of the Incarnation MESSENGER December 2016

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Services

8:15 and 9:30 am at St. John's

11:00 am at Incarnation

Sunday School – Grades K-6

9:30 AM at St. John's

ST. JOHN'S WEBSITE

<http://www.stjohnslynbrook.org>

December 2016						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Advent Service 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal 7:30 pm	2 Girl Scout Mtg 3:00 pm	3 ALL DAY Girl Scout Workshop
4 <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> Worship at St. John's 8:15 am & 9:30am Sunday School First Communion at 9:30 am service Worship at Incarnation 11:00am	5	6 Prayer Shawl Meeting 7:30pm	7 Confirmation class 7:00pm	8 Advent Service 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal 7:30 pm	9	10
11 <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> Worship at St. John's 8:15 am & 9:30am Sunday School Chocolate Houses after 9:30am service Worship at Incarnation 11:00am	12	13 Evangelism Mtg 7:00pm Council meeting 8:00pm	14 WELCA HOLIDAY LUNCHEON 12:00 pm Confirmation class 7:00pm	15 Advent Service 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal 7:30 pm	16 Girl Scout Mtg 3:00 pm	17
18 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> Worship at St. John's 8:15 am & 9:30 am Christmas Pageant ~ Decorating St. John's Worship at Incarnation 11:00 am Christmas Caroling 5:00 pm	19	20	21 Confirmation Class 7:00 pm	22	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Worship at St. John's 7:30 pm Worship at Incarnation 11:30 PM
25 <i>Nativity of Our Lord</i> Worship at St. John's 8:15 am & 9:30 am NO Sunday School Worship at Incarnation 11:00 am	26	27	28 NO Confirmation Class 7:00 pm	29	30	31 New Year's Eve

LOOKING FORWARD TO JANUARY.....

January 3 – Prayer Shawl Meeting

January 6-8 – Confirmation Retreat

January 8 – Deadline for Annual Committee reports

January 10 – Evangelism Meeting and Church Council Meeting

January 29 – Annual Congregational Meeting

SERVERS FOR DECEMBER 2016

DATE	TIMES	ACOLYTES	CRUCIFER	ASSISTING MINISTERS	LECTORS	USHERS
Advent 2	8:15			Dorothy Richetti	Dorothy Richetti	
12/4	9:30	Victoria Dunn	Victoria Dunn	Dan Gonzalez	Greg Kershner	Janet Pescatore & Richard Dietrich
Advent 3	8:15			Dorothy Criscuolo	Dorothy Criscuolo	
12/11	9:30	Christopher Dunn	Christopher Dunn	Janet Pescatore	Janet Pescatore	Dan Gonzalez & Aurelius Gonzalez
Advent 4	8:15			Dorothy Richetti	Dorothy Richetti	
12/18	9:30	Victoria Ramirez	Victoria Ramirez	Claire Lenz	Claire Lenz	Robert Reckhart & Tyler Rouse
Eve 12/24		Tyler Rouse	Tyler Rouse	1. Katharine Forte	Claire Lenz	Bill Davison & Richard Dietrich
	Torch Bearers	Kaitlyn Gavin	Kaylee Palmer	2. Dorothy Criscuolo		
	Gospel	Parker Sloan				
Christmas Day	9:30 am	TBD	N/A	TBD	TBD	TBD

If you cannot serve on a day you are scheduled, please find a replacement and notify the church office and the appropriate coordinator: **Claire Lenz**: Lectors & Assisting Ministers - 872-2063 or Lenzcr@aol.com
Church Office: Acolytes, Crucifers, Torch bearers and Gospel bearers- 599-0778
Pauline Feltkamp: Ushers- 599- 2273



Larry Lipitz
 George Verity
 Stephanie Moser
 Anthony Posimato
 Donna Valenti
 Dorothy Hafner
 Elaine Smith
 Joann D'Ambrosio
 Stephen Suppa
 Jean Weber
 Eleanor Haslett
 Vivian Monaco
 The Carver Family
 John Michael

Scott Masciello
 Rachel Jeremie
 Doreen Tietjen
 Lisa Goldman
 Inga Chiramonte
 Bob Robon
 David Pontius
 Al Davis
 Sister Irene
 Michael Simmons
 Dean Veremakis
 Ernest Weber
 Sherry Powell
 Linda Eagen

Robin Kalter
 Joe
 Larry Rienecker
 Joanne
 Francesca
 Bill
 Sandy
 Arlene
 Family of Amy Castrance
 Family of Donna Karfunkle

If you would like to request prayers for yourself or someone else, please write the name(s) on the prayer request card in your bulletin, call or email the office at 599-0778 or stjohnslynbrook@aol.com. Please write how long you would like the name to remain on the list otherwise it will be removed after three weeks. Feel free to repeat your request at any time, we can all use prayers.

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR ALEX....

Whether it's *Holly Jolly Christmas*, *Winter Wonderland*, or *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, I have already heard plenty of Christmas and holiday songs on the radio during this Advent season, and I'm sure you have as well. Never mind that Christmas is still a few weeks away. These familiar songs began playing the day after Thanksgiving (as if we needed any more motivation for our Black Friday shopping) and since then, it seems that wherever I go there is some sort of festive tune ringing in the air. Not that I'm complaining about this! I love Christmas music as much as anyone else does, and I must admit that it's pretty much the only thing that I listen to on the radio during this time of year.

But what exactly am I listening to? Have you ever noticed the songs that get the most airtime? Certainly not the traditional carols and hymns that we sing in church, that's for sure! According to one study of the 20 most frequently played Christmas songs on the radio (which account for 60% of all holiday tracks played during this season), **Jesus is nowhere to be found in any title or lyrics.** Instead of *Joy to the World* and *Silent Night*, we get *Jingle Bell Rock* and *Sleigh Ride*. In fact, the first overtly "religious" song on the list is all the way down at #23 with *Little Drummer Boy*. Thus, for a holiday that is supposed to be about the birth of Christ, the most popular songs on the radio seem to suggest otherwise. Apparently our culture wants to hear more about Frosty the Snowman than Jesus the Son of God.

So even though it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas (and even though I'm beginning to sound a lot like the Grinch), I do think it is important that we take a moment to remind ourselves again what this season is truly about. Sure, these timeless classics are nice and they make us feel all warm and fuzzy "as we dream by the fire," but do they really speak to the reality of our world? Do they give credence to all of the division and conflict that exists around us or even in our own homes? After all, for many people this is NOT the most wonderful time of the year or a season to be jolly. Andy Williams can sing about parties with friends and spending time with loved ones, but what about the widow who's spending her first Christmas without her husband? What about the homeless man who has nowhere to go on Christmas Eve?

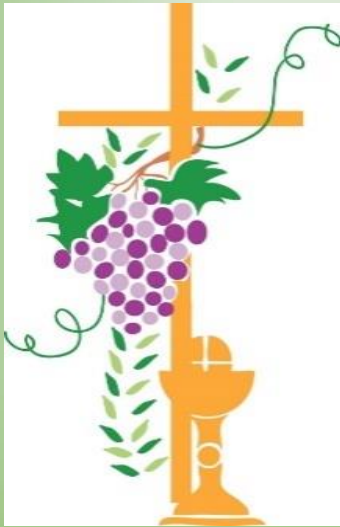
For those who are anxious, isolated, grieving, or fearful, an angel comes this season with a message of hope: "Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing good news of great joy for all people: to you is born a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." This is why we celebrate Christmas – not because Santa Claus is not coming to town, but because Jesus is coming to the world! He is true gift of Christmas – the one who shines light into darkness and brings peace on earth as the ultimate sign of God's love.

The late John Lennon sings, "A very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Let's hope it's a good one without any fear." Through Christ, may it be so for all of us in 2017.

See you in worship,

Pastor Alex

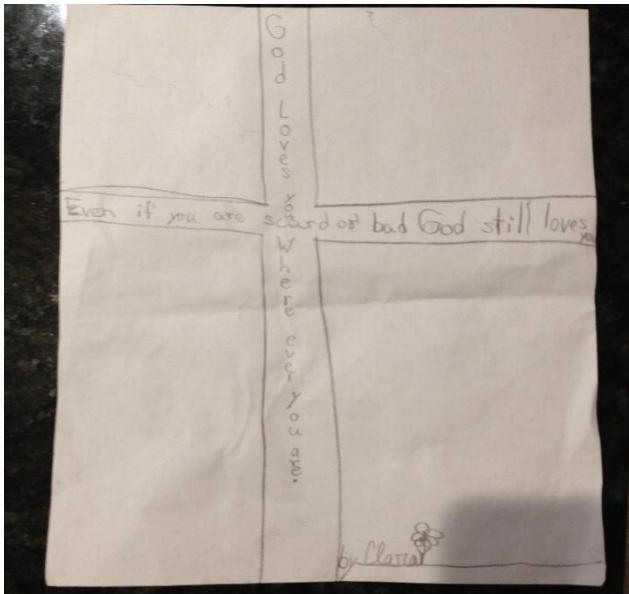




Congratulations to the children who received their First Holy Communion Sunday December 4th!

*Emily Artusa
Lola Artusa
Cassie Larke
Clara Larke
Andrew Reitler*

We rejoice with them and their families as they take this step in their faith journeys. Please keep them in your prayers.



Drawn by Clara Larke on the Sunday of her First Communion!

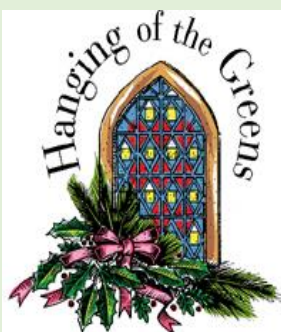
We would like to thank the following families who led us in the Advent Wreath litany during the four weeks of Advent

The Straub Family

The Larke Family

The Palmer Family

Robert Reckhart and Tyler Rouse



**HELP DECORATE
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON**

Join us **December 18th**
after the 9:30 am worship to help
decorate for Christmas this year.



ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS

If you would like a devotional booklet for Advent, pick up a copy of From Heaven Above devotional in the narthex.



WELCA will be hosting a Christmas Luncheon on Wednesday, December 14th, at 12:00 pm. If you would like to join us, please add your name to the sign-up sheet posted in the narthex.
Bring a friend!



One of the many beautiful Advent wreaths created at our annual wreath-making workshop sponsored by WELCA!

THANK YOU NOTES FROM OUR COLLEGE KIDS!

Dear Pastor Alex and St. John's,

Thank you so much for the care package containing so many useful items. They will certainly come in handy. It was very thoughtful of you to remember me. Best wishes and happy holidays!

Sincerely,
David Powell

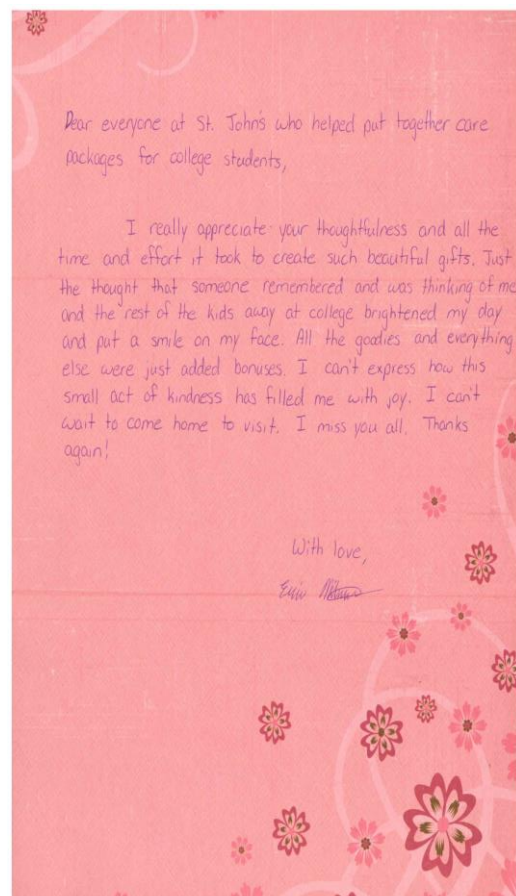
Dear Pastor Alex and all who contributed to the care packages,

I really appreciate the care package you sent me, it's a great feeling to know you all cared so much that you wanted to send me all these supplies and snacks. It always puts a tremendous smile on my face whenever my mom brings me one of these because of all the thought that clearly goes into making these. Thank you all so much for everything, I'm really touched by this wonderful act of kindness.

Wishing you all a delightful holiday season,
Chris Powell

Pastor Alex and the members of
St. Johns,

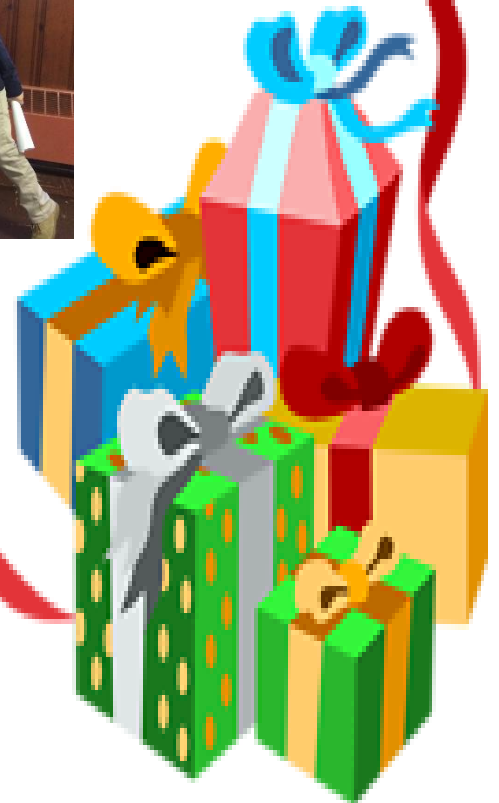
Thank you very much for my
care package. I was very excited
when I recieved it in the mail
and to see all the fun goodies
that college kids like me live
off of! Happy Holidays
- Caitlin O'Mara, SUNY Cortland + Colleen O'Mara,
university of Houston



*Please join the Sunday School on December 18th
at the 9:30 service as they share the good news
of the birth of Jesus by throwing a birthday party for Jesus!
Gifts for babies donated by the Sunday School children will be
collected and donated to the New Life Center. Adults are
welcome to donate gifts as well!*

*Afterwards, join us in the Knotty Pine Room for refreshments
and to see the Sunday School tree decorated with ornaments
made by the children.*

*Bring your cameras, your family and friends.
It's sure to be a wonderful time!*





God's work. Our hands.

This year, in conjunction with our annual Giving Tree Project, we would like to help the ELCA during this holiday season with some of the wonderful things they provide for the underprivileged in other parts of the world. Some of the ways you can help fight hunger and poverty along with the ELCA through this program:

Donations of ...

- ✓ \$10 buys a mosquito net, chicks, a fruit tree seedling, or a backpack stocked with food
- ✓ \$12 buys water jugs, \$20 buys honey bees, and \$38 will train an evangelist
- ✓ \$30 buys a pig, vaccinations for a child, or supports a young adult in a global mission for a day
- ✓ \$40 pays for school fees and uniforms
- ✓ \$50 buys a goat
- ✓ \$125 buys a sheep

How YOU can help ...

Our Advent Tree will be posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex near the bell. The tree will have ornaments in all the varied amounts stated above. After the 9:30am service on Sunday mornings you can go to the tree and select the ornament with the amount and type of giving (for example, honey bees for \$20) that you would like to donate. (If you do not see what you are looking for on the tree, please ask, as we do have extras.)

Please give your donation (cash or check made out to Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) to Lori Fernez in the Narthex -- and you may keep the ornament to hang on your Christmas tree at home, as a reminder that Christmas is all about giving to others! The tree will begin on Sunday, November 20th and donations will be collected through December 24th.

Thank you for your generosity and have a blessed Christmas season.

PAINT & SIP NIGHT AT ST. JOHN'S!



Pastor Chang wearing her new green stole that was given to her by St. John's in honor of her 20th anniversary of ordination!

