



First Sunday of Advent

November 28, 2021

8:15 a.m. -spoken

10:30 a.m. - with music

Welcome to St. John

St. John Lutheran Church 1802 Skippack Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422

www.stjohnbluebell.org www.facebook.com/stjohnbluebell

Nursery School website: www.stjohnsns.com

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Staff:

Pastor Rachel Manke

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Ray Hopkins, Director of Youth and Family

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Carrie Engel, Nursery School Director

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Our Council Members are listed on our website.

Celebrating 252 years of mission and ministry, 1769-2021.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

Parents with young children: Please know that your children are welcome and cherished in worship! Wiggles and all! If you find a need to step out with them during worship, we have arranged a special corner in the Great Room down the sanctuary stairs. We are working to connect our livestream to the TV in that space for you as well. As things improve with covid we will move back toward a staffed nursery room.

This service is livestreamed on the church's YouTube page.

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"My Heart Shall Sing" Advent Candle-Lighting by Barn Geese Worship is licensed under CC BY-NC 4.0. [edited for length].

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Order for Worship

Prelude~ “Lost in the Night”

Chancel Choir

Lost in the night do the people yet languish,
Longing for morning the darkness to vanquish,
plaintively heaving a sigh full of anguish.
Will not day come soon?

Must we be vainly awaiting the morrow?
Shall those who have light no light let us borrow,
giving no heed to our burden of sorrow?
Will you help us soon?

Sorrowing wanderers, in darkness yet dwelling,
dawned has the day of a radiance excelling,
death’s dreaded darkness forever dispelling.
Christ is coming soon!

Text: Finnish song, tr. Olav Lee

Music: Finnish folk tune, arr. Kyle S. Haugen

We ask that members and visitors please take a moment and sign in using the red information folders located in each pew and pass it on to your neighbor.

The assembly may rise.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who alone does wonders,
who lifts up the lowly,
who fills the hungry with good things.

C: **Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God for whom we wait,
C: **in the presence of one another,**
we confess our sin before you.
We fail in believing that your good news is for us.
We falter in our call to tend your creation.
We find our sense of self in material wealth.
We fear those different from ourselves.
We forget that we are your children
and turn away from your love.
Forgive us, Blessed One,
and assure us again of your saving grace.
Amen.

P: God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!
Through the power of the Holy Spirit,
✠ your sins are forgiven.
You are children of the Most High,
inheritors of the eternal promise,
and recipients of divine mercy.
God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.
C: **Amen.**

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.
C: **And also with you.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

P: Even when God is active in this world,
hope is a work in progress.

Each candle on our wreath
represents a person
or a place
or a moment in time
that still awaits God's goodness.

P: God, through your love,
C: **a familiar light**
can banish the fear of the other;

P: Through your love,
C: **the warmth of good cheer**
can extinguish cold-hearted injustice.

P: Through your love,
C: **the song of faith**
can rekindle hope for the hopeless.

P: We light this candle
as a small act of our great anticipation.

(10:30)



Text: John Helgen, b. 1957
Music: JESUS BRINGS PEACE, John Helgen
Text and music © 2013 Augsburg Fortress

A: This is the first candle.
A sign that God's goodness
still burns brightly
even when it seems fragile, temporary,
easily extinguished.

Many candles yet remain.
Each reminding us
that God's healing
has not yet fully spread
throughout the earth.
How long must this world wait
to see God's glory?

You are God's people,
called to serve this world
and to let your light shine.
Let the fire of justice burn in your heart,
for the dead still cry
for the flicker of new life we carry.

Prayer of the Day

P: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

The assembly may be seated.

Children's Message

Word

First Reading: Jeremiah 33: 14-16

A: The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

Word of God, word of life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

(8:15 spoken/10:30 sung)

Psalms 25

(Choir, then ALL)



Lord, make me know your ways. Lord, teach me your paths.
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me, for you are God my savior.
In you I hope all the day long. **Refrain.**

The Lord is good and upright, showing the path to those who stray,
guiding the humble in the right path, and teaching the way to the poor. **Refrain**

God's ways are steadfastness and truth for those faithful to the covenant decrees.
The Lord's friendship is for the God-fearing; and the covenant is revealed to them. **Refrain**

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

A: How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. Word of God, word of life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

The assembly may rise.

Gospel Acclamation

Sung Once by All.



Choir: Stand up and raise your heads your redemption is drawing near.
(Repeat Alleluia)

Gospel: Luke 21:25-36

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

P: Jesus said: "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.
C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly may be seated.

Sermon

Pastor Rachel Manke

Following a time of silence for reflection, the assembly may rise.

(10:30) Hymn of the Day ~ “Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending”

1 Lo! he comes with clouds de - scend - ing,
2 Now re - demp - tion, long - ex - pect - ed,
3 Yea, a - men, let all a - dore thee,

once for our sal - va - tion slain;
comes in sol - emn splen - dor near;
high on thine e - ter - nal throne;

thou - sand thou - sand saints at - tend - ing
 all the saints this world re - ject - ed
 Sav - ior, take the pow'r and glo - ry,

join to sing the glad re - frain:
 thrill the trum - pet sound to hear:
 claim the king - dom as thine own.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.
 lu - ia! See the day of God ap - pear!
 lu - ia! Thou shalt reign, and thou a - lone!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.
 Music: HELMSLEY, Thomas Olivers, 1725–1799

The assembly may rise.

Apostles Creed

P: *Together, let us confess our faith:*

C: **I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

A: In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

A brief silence.

A: God of presence and peace, strengthen your church around the globe to proclaim the message of your love coming to the world. Open our hearts to recognize your face in all people and in all of creation. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

A: God of mighty redwoods and microscopic plants, fields and city parks, the wind and the waves, be a healing balm to our wounded planet. May we nurture what you have lovingly created. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

A: God of equity and compassion, bring righteousness and goodness to all peoples of the earth. Give a heart of discernment and integrity to leaders in our communities both near and far. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

A: God of comfort and care, be present with those who watch and wait. Come to all who await births, deaths, divorces, new unions, new jobs, retirements, healing, and life transitions of every kind. We pray for all who are sick and suffering especially Marie, Diana, Gerry, Amy, Melissa, Tom, Kimberly, Jim, Joshua, Carolyn, Jean, Lois, Dick, George, Robert, Tim, Kate, Susan, Randy, Dorothy, Robert, and Donna. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

A: God of promises kept, and new dreams awakened, shelter your people from destructive storms. We pray for those whose lives have been upended by natural disasters for the work of Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Relief, and other relief organizations. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A: God of companionship and community, we give you thanks for the saints who journeyed with us and now abide in you especially Eunice Reeder. Even in distress and uncertainty, make us confident that your promises endure forever. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

A: God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.

C: **Amen.**

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

(10:30) Anthem~ "E'en So Lord Jesus Quickly Come "

Chancel Choir

Peace be to you, and grace from Him who freed us from our sins,
who loved us all and shed His blood, that we might saved be.
Sing Holy, Holy to our Lord, the Lord, Almighty God,
who was and is and is to come; sing Holy, Holy, Lord!

Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein,
rejoice on earth, ye saints below, for Christ is coming soon!
E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come, and night shall be no more;
they need no light nor lamp nor sun, for Christ will be their all!

Text: Rev. 22

Music: Paul O. Manz

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

During this time, we will not be passing the offering plates. We are grateful for all who are able to continue their support of St. John. There are three ways to share tithes and offerings:

- 1. Simply giving - You can arrange for a regular gift (weekly, monthly, quarterly) to be deducted from a bank account. Please contact Marcie Godby, our bookkeeper, to arrange for this (stjohn1802bookkeeper@gmail.com).*
- 2. You may go to St. John's website, <https://www.stjohnbluebell.org/>, and under "Quick Links" hit the "Online Giving and Donations" button.*
- 3. You may put your offering envelope (checks are preferred) in another stamped envelope and mail it to St. John: 1802 Skippack Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422 (Attn: Marcie).*
- 4. You may make use of the offering plate located on the table in the back of the sanctuary.*

***For communion:** Be sure to take a pre-packaged cup/wafer from the usher on your way into worship. If you forgot please alert an usher who will help bring you one. Pastor will indicate when in the service we will receive the elements together. All are welcome to Christ's table.*

The assembly may rise.

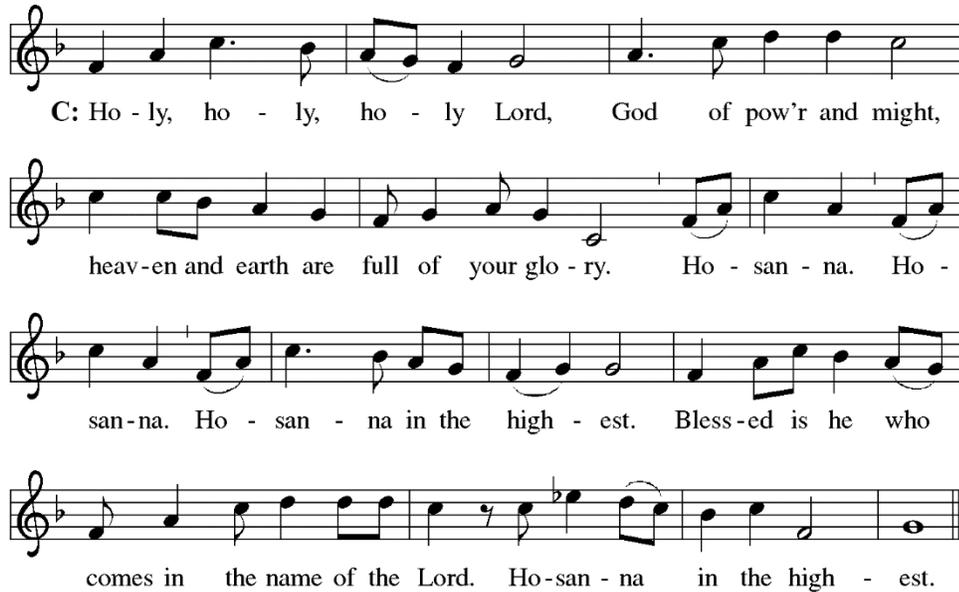
Offertory Prayer

- P:** God of abundance,
we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation,
and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope
as we care for all those in need
until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.
- C:** **Amen.**

The Meal

- P:** The Lord be with you.
C: **And also with you.**
P: Lift up your hearts.
C: **We lift them to the Lord.**
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

P: In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy name,
 thy kingdom come,
 thy will be done,
 on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those
 who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For thine is the kingdom,
 and the power, and the glory,
 forever and ever. Amen.**

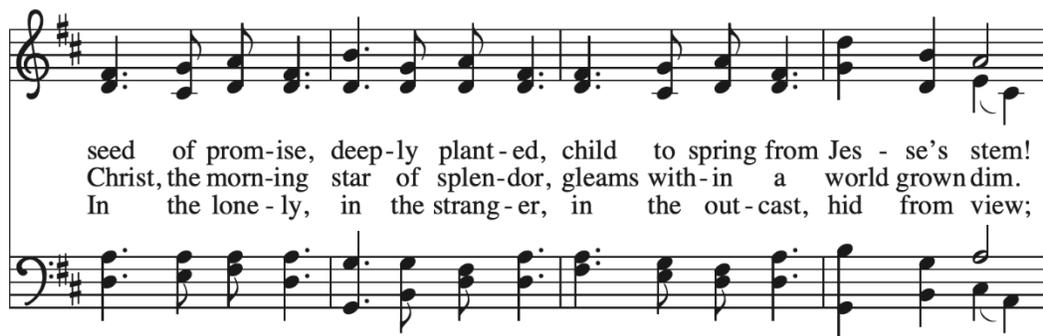
The meal is shared together with the pastor leading with the words, "The body of Christ, given for you." then, "The blood of Christ, shed for you."

The assembly may be seated.

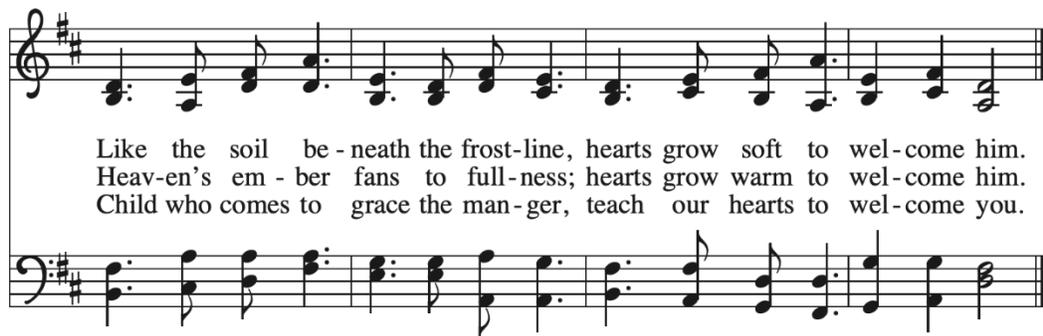
(10:30) Communion Hymn~ "Now the Heavens Start to Whisper"

1 Now the heav - ens start to whis - per, as the veil is grow - ing thin.
 2 Heav - y clouds that block the moon - light now be - gin to drift a - way.
 3 Christ, e - ter - nal Sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of wis - dom's seed,

Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten to the stir - ring, faint with - in:
 Dia - mond bril - liance through the dark - ness shines the hope of com - ing day.
 come to bless with fire and fra - grance hours of yearn - ing, hurt, and need.



seed of prom-ise, deep-ly plant-ed, child to spring from Jes - se's stem!
 Christ, the morn-ing star of splen-dor, gleams with-in a world grown dim.
 In the lone - ly, in the strang-er, in the out - cast, hid from view;



Like the soil be - neath the frost-line, hearts grow soft to wel-come him.
 Heav-en's em - ber fans to full-ness; hearts grow warm to wel-come him.
 Child who comes to grace the man-ger, teach our hearts to wel-come you.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953
 Music: SUO GÂN, Welsh melody; arr. hymnal version
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 Arr. © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

Announcements

The assembly may rise.

Benediction

P: The God of hope
 fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
 so that we may abound in hope
 by the power of the Holy Spirit,
 through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

C: **Amen.**

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is near.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude~ "Fanfare on Lo! He Comes"

Karl Osterland

Assisting with Worship

Pastor	Pastor Rachel Manke
Director of Music	Lawrence Baker
Lector 8:15	
Usher 8:15	Charlie Sowers
Lector 10:30	Betty Jeanguenin
Usher 10:30	Barbara Tornetta
Wreath lighters 8:15	Greyson family
Wreath lighters 10:30	Calhoun family

Our Prayer List is printed separately from the bulletin. You may find a copy of the list in the Great Room.

Flowers are given today by the Sowers family.

Flowers are also given today by Barry and Rita Stock in honor of Cailin and Brayden's birthdays.

Announcements

Giving Envelopes- 2022 Envelopes for Congregational giving are now available and will be placed out in the Great Room for you to pick up starting this Sunday. We give thanks for your continued support of our ministry together!

Christmas bags for our homebound members- We have compiled these bags to be distributed to homebound members the week of November 28. These bags are white with red or green tissue. The name and address of a homebound member is attached to each bag. There is a sign-up sheet in the Great Room, and you can take a bag to deliver. These folks will greatly appreciate your visit and have wonderful memories and stories to share. Let your presence be their present!!

Advent Resources- Advent begins Sunday! You'll find in the Great Room a number of resources for Advent! There are calendars and weekly studies from World Hunger as well as a daily devotional from Society of St. Andrew, and resources from the ELCA Good Gifts. Pastor Rachel will be sharing a brief weekly prayer service through video for midweek devotion every Wednesday for you to take time to be still in your busy week/season. (Check Facebook and emails.)

Sponsor Poinsettias- You can sponsor/dedicate a Poinsettia for Christmas. Envelopes are out in the Great Room to sponsor a small (\$7.50), large (\$15), or (very large - \$25) plant for around the font. Prices listed here are from the previous year. Envelopes can be placed in the offering plate or sent to the office.

St. John Collectible Pint Glasses & Facemasks- We have St. John Collectible etched 16 oz. pint glasses for sale just in time for the holiday season. We have 46 glasses left from our order for the Oktoberfest Events and all funds raised will benefit the Youth Ministry program for youth in grades 6 - 12th and events for 2022. You can pick up (1) for \$12 each or (2) for \$20. We will make these available while supplies last. There are also about 25 reusable tie-dyed masks remaining for a \$5 donation. Two ways to share St. John with your family and friends this year!

First Communion- Is your child ready to begin receiving communion? Please get in touch with Pastor Rachel as she tries to schedule a learning session and other dates.

Worship Assistance Help Needed!!! - As we return to worship in the sanctuary, we need your help! We are looking for volunteers to act as ushers, readers, flower/bulletin sponsors and technology team volunteers. Get in touch with the Church Office if you can help in any way.

Flower & Bulletin Dedications are back - You can sign up on a physical sheet at the church or soon we will have an online link to use. Dedications need to be to the office by end of day on Wednesdays.

Variety Club's Holiday Lane Event- Walk along a decorated and lighted "lane" at the Variety Club Camp in Worcester from December 1st to 4th.

Annual Business Meeting is December 5 - Our annual business meeting of the congregation will be held in two parts following each service. You may attend either following the early or late service. If a member is unable to attend in person for safety concerns, please contact Sue in the office to sign up for a Zoom connection following the late service. We have a short agenda primarily approving our 2022 operating budget.

Evangelism News- We are once again decorating the outside tree on **December 12**. Bags will be ready for you to take home after services on Sunday, November 28 and December 5. Each bag will contain the materials and directions to complete several different ornaments. One of each for you to use at home and one of each that can be used to decorate our outdoor tree. We ask that you return your completed "church" ornaments for our decorating party at **2 p.m.** on Sunday, **December 12**.

Christmas Eve Services- On Christmas Eve, we are intending to have a 4 p.m. Family service, as well as a 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. Traditional service. More details will be coming in December.

Coat Collection for MLK Day of Service - St. John will be hosting a coat collection as part of January's MLK Day of Service. Coats and winter gear will be given to economically insecure adults working in the Mural Arts Program. Coat collection will begin **January 1**. Also, Rita Stock has kits for no-sew blankets for one of the MLK projects. See her for details.

Youth News...

Upcoming Dates –Dec. 5, and Dec. 19 (The Advent Party)

Christmas Cookie Time is Here! An order form is available for placing orders for cookie dough. Deadline for ordering is December 5. Cookie dough will be available on December 12 for pick up. All funds raised will go to the National Gathering fundraising efforts to get our group to Minnesota in July 2022.

This Week at St. John...

Sunday, November 28 First Sunday in Advent

8:15 Worship
9:15 Adult Bible Study
9:15 NO SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:30 Worship

Monday, November 29

9:00 Nursery School
9:30 Quilting Group [YC, MPR]

Tuesday, November 30

9:00 Nursery School
10:30 Nursery School [GR]
10:30 Pastor's Bible Study

Wednesday, December 1

9:00 Nursery School
9:30 Spirit Walkers [Wentz Park]

Thursday, December 2

9:00 Nursery School
12:30 Yoga [FH]
6:30 Cub Scouts [MPR]
6:30 Handbell Choir [TR]
7:30 Chancel Choir [TR]

Friday, December 3

9:00 Nursery School

Sunday, December 5-Second Sunday in Advent

8:15 Worship
9:15 Annual Business Meeting
9:15 Sunday School for Children & Youth
10:30 Worship
11:30 Annual Business Meeting
5:00 Youth Group [FH]

Locations:

[FH] Fellowship Hall
[TR] Troster Room
[GR] Great Room
[YC] Youth Classroom

