

The Season of Advent



The First Sunday of Advent: Hope

Sunday, November 30th, 2025

8:00am & 10:30am



St. John's Christian Church

700 South Defiance St. | Archbold, Ohio 43502

"The Church on the Corner whose Cornerstone is Christ."

Welcome! We are so glad you are here.

Welcome to SJCC! We are so glad you have chosen to join us as we worship the Lord together. We hope you feel God's love in a refreshing way. Please let one of our ushers know you're new (*they may have already noticed your new face!*) so they can give you a welcome bag filled with helpful information about our church. We also invite you to fill out a quick survey so we can get to know you a little better. Simply scan the QR code to the right with your phone's camera while you're waiting for worship to start!



Nursery Care/Diaper Changing Stations

Nursery Care is offered during our 10:30AM service for children ages four months through pre-school in the second floor room at the south stairs. Parents can register children for Nursery Care online at www.stjohnsarchbold.org/nursery or by scanning the QR code to the left before checking into the nursery for the first time. Diaper changing stations are located in the office of the Director of Youth and Young Adults and in the nursery. An usher will gladly direct you if needed!



Children's Busy Bags are located in the narthex for children ages one-year to third grade. Bags are marked by age (**Pink** = Ages 1-2; **Green** = Ages 3-5; **Yellow** = Grades K-3). Please be sure to return bags at the end of our service today. If you would like to mark a bag specifically for your child(ren) each week, please contact the church office.

Large Print Bulletins are available at a table in the narthex.

Hearing Assistance devices are available for use with the sanctuary sound system. Please see an usher if you'd like to check out one of these devices for our service today.

Let's Connect!



WELCOME TO OUR WORSHIP OF GOD!

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~ SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Enter to Worship God in the Fellowship of Others

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise." (Psalm 100:4)

Ringling of the Tower Bells and Lighting of the Altar Candles

"To the Glory of God, and for the Calling of the Faithful to Worship." (Inscribed on the Bells)

Welcome & Announcements

Mission-A-Month Sharing – Crossroad Child & Family Services

Roger Zimmerman

Scripture and Prayer of Invocation

Micah 4:1-2

The Nativity Scene – The Manger

Carol Response

#141, v. 1, "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

The Advent Wreath – The Candle of Hope

Carol Response

"The Candle of Hope"

The candle of hope we light in this hour

Proclaims that the Lord is coming in power

We wait for a future now hidden from view

When Christ in his glory will make all things new

Children's Message

† Congregational Hymn

bulletin page 8, "In the Bleak Midwinter" *

Prayer of Dedication and the Sharing of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

"Immanuel"

Scripture Reading

Mark 13:24-37

Sermon

"Keep Awake"

Advent Communion Service **

A Congregational Christmas Story
"Birth of a King"

Gospel Reading Carol	Luke 1:26-31 #145, "O Come, All Ye Faithful"
Gospel Reading Carol	Luke 2:1-7 #157, "Away in a Manger"
Gospel Reading Carol	Luke 2:8-12 #148, "O Holy Night!"
Gospel Reading Carol	Luke 2:13-17 #132, "Angels We Have Heard on High"
Gospel Reading Carol	Matthew 2:1-2, 7-8 #166, "We Three Kings of Orient Are"
Gospel Reading Carol	Matthew 2:9-11 #137, "What Child Is This?"
Reading † Carol	Reflection #147, "Silent Night! Holy Night!"
Prophetic Reading † Carol	Isaiah 9:6 #125, "Joy to the World!"

† Benediction

**This 19th century carol displays the power of God sending his Son to be born in simple and humble circumstances in Bethlehem. The song ends with a personal reflection of what we each can give to the Christ Child...our heart.*

****We Practice Open Communion**

All adults and older youth who profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are invited to commune. Grape juice is served in the trays of the cup.

At 8:00 worship, communicants will be invited to come forward in groups.

At 10:30 worship, communicants will be served in the pews, partaking at one time.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Micah 4:1-2 In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. ² Many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Mark 13:24-37 "But in those days, following that distress, "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; ²⁵ the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' ²⁶ "At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens. ²⁸ "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁰ I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. ³² "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. ³⁴ It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. ³⁵ "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back-- whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. ³⁶ If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. ³⁷ What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

DISCOVERY DAILY DEVOTIONAL Below is the list of daily readings for this week:

- Nov 30 Doing Life With God ----- Psalm 15
- Dec 01 Maturing Love ----- Song of Solomon 7:9b-8:14
- Dec 02 The Stunning Confrontation ----- Acts 9:1-9
- Dec 03 A Different Vision ----- Acts 9:10-19a
- Dec 04 Rescuing a Killer ----- Acts 9:19b-31
- Dec 05 Quiet Miracles ----- Acts 9:32-43
- Dec 06 The Church is Spreading! ----- Acts 10:1-8

P R E P A R E

Season of Advent

Anyone who has hosted a Christmas dinner or party can tell you, there is a ton of preparation that goes into throwing these holiday celebrations. Many of us find ourselves doing lots of preparing in this busy season of lights, tinsel, and wrapping paper. Yet, what are we really preparing for? *Who* are we really preparing for? This Advent, hear God's call: "Prepare!" – for the coming one, Jesus. Hear this imperative as an invitation to strip away all the fuss and ready your heart and life for the change that is coming when Jesus arrives.

"Advent is an invitation to stay awake as we wait for and recognize God's inbreaking."

(Inbreaking – referring to the Second Coming of Christ, foretold to be a sudden, awesome arrival; while also referring to an awakening of faith in a person's heart or in the church)

Reflection – Think of moments where God was present in subtle or surprising ways in the midst of the past week – were you aware in the moments, or aware only upon reflection?

- ◆ "Being awake to God"

Discussion – We live in a world that draws our attention to certain things – the news headlines, commercials, billboards – what things were not in the headlines this week? What good things happened in your life that were not printed?

- ◆ "Staying awake to what God is doing"

God – Bible – Mark 13:24-37 – the "little apocalypse" – "revelation"

- ◆ "Advent is about the coming revelation of God into the world and into our lives anew"
 - ◇ V. 26 ~ "At that time..."
 - ◇ V. 28 ~ "Now learn this lesson..."
 - ◇ V. 32 ~ "No one knows about..."
 - ◇ V. 35 ~ Therefore keep watch..."

THE CHRISTMAS STORY SHARED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A KEY STORY CHARACTER

Joseph's Reflection

When I first heard about the baby I was angry . . . angry at Mary for getting herself pregnant, angry at God for allowing it to happen, angry at myself for being tangled up in the mess of a pregnancy scandal. I couldn't give Mary away – it would be the end of her reputation and maybe even her life. But choosing silence implicated me in her pregnancy and the disgrace I would bring to my own good name was more than I could bear. I made up my mind to quietly divorce her. It was the only scenario I thought would give each of us any hope for the future. I would not openly accuse her, but I could not claim her child as mine.

Then one night an angel appeared to me in a dream. He told me not to be afraid to marry her – that Mary was in fact telling me the truth, and that her child was God's Child. Everything changed. I understood that God had chosen my fiancé to carry the Promised Messiah . . . and that He had chosen *me* to be His earthly father.

As we neared Mary's delivery, we were alone in a new city with no place to stay. I tried to be brave for Mary's sake, but I was lost in my own fear. I'd never delivered a baby before and I wanted so desperately for everything to be right. And then Jesus came into the world perfect and beautiful. It was the greatest moment of my life . . . possibly the greatest moment of all time . . . and the world *became* right.

I first met God's Son as a tiny helpless baby in the arms of my young wife . . . needing all the care and attention this finite and incapable dad could give to Him . . . yet He is my Savior. It is one of the many complexities I am sure to encounter over the course of my changed life. I have embraced this new story I've been given with everything I am. I know I'll never compare to His Father God, but I'm going to do my best to be the father He needs here on earth.

In The Bleak Midwinter

Words by
Christina Georgina Rossetti

Music by
Gustav Theodore Holst

VERSE

♩ = 100

F Dm B^b F/A Gm7 C F

1. In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan; Earth stood hard as
 2. Our God heav'n can - not hold Him, nor earth sus - tain; Heav'n and earth shall
 3. An gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there; Cher - u - bim and
 4. What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a

6 Dm B^b C F B^b/D F7/C B^b Dm F/A B^b C

i - ron, wa - ter like a stone. Snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow;
 flee a - way when He comes to reign. In the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed, the
 ser - a - phim throng'd the air. But His moth - er on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,
 shep - herd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise man, I would do my part;

13 F Dm B^b C F

In the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
 Lord God Al - might - y, Je - - sus Christ.
 wor - shipped the Be - lov - ed with a kiss.
 Yet what can I give Him? Give my heart.

MISSION-A-MONTH - DECEMBER - CROSSROAD CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

For more than 135 years, Crossroad Child & Family Services in Fort Wayne, Indiana, has focused on the needs of children and families who have few alternatives. Today, they work with emotionally troubled children other providers have chosen not to work with, or have failed to help. Through many prayers and financial support, St. John's strives to help change the futures of young people. More information is available at www.crossroad-fwch.org/. You can give to Crossroad by selecting that option on your offering envelope or by selecting "Crossroad" in the "Give to" drop-down menu in Breeze's online giving feature.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ♦ **Many thanks** to all of you who offered your time to decorate the church! It was a blessing to see everyone working together to make it special for our congregation and visitors this Christmas season!
- ♦ **Christmas Cheer Tags** - Our Christmas Cheer Trees filled with paper ornament tags are located near the Chapel and the Church Office. As you leave church in the coming weeks, consider picking out one or more tags off the tree. Shop for the things on the tags you've chosen and bring the items **back here to the Church by Sunday, December 7th**. The donations we collect will be delivered to the Fulton County Fairgrounds on Monday morning, December 8th.
- ♦ **Advent Season Worship** - The Advent season begins today, Sunday, November 30th. With the various plans for each week's service, and to have the Advent wreath and Nativity stable viewable by everyone, Pastor Erich would like to have the 8:00AM services held in the sanctuary through the Advent season.
- ♦ **St. John's Senior Citizens Christmas Dinner - December 4th at 5:30 PM**. Final count was needed by November 16th.
- ♦ **Siberian Solstice 2025** – Coming to SJCC **Saturday, December 6th, at 7:00PM**. Twelve Performers, Exciting Light Show, Video, Narrated Story. No tickets needed, free-will donation. Bring your friends, spread the word and come enjoy a wonderful evening of music.
- ♦ **Fulton County Christmas Cheer 2025** - Volunteers are needed to help at the store with a variety of jobs. Starting at 9:00AM Monday, December 8th through Thursday, December 11th. Lunch is provided for volunteers by area churches. Sign up by dialing 419-551-6573 or by email at lilliradabaugh1@gmail.com.
- ♦ **2026 Offering Envelopes** - Offering Envelopes are ready for pickup in the sanctuary narthex. If you don't see your name, and want envelopes, please let Gloria in the church office know.
- ♦ **MCC Comforter Bash - Wednesday, January 7th, 2:00PM-8:00PM** at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold. People of all ages, abilities and faith traditions will come together to knit comforters and fellowship at our annual MCC Comforter Bash. A handmade comforter provides not only warmth but also a tangible message to people that their needs are not forgotten. All necessary tools will be provided. Donations will be accepted to help cover the cost of materials and supplies. Contact Chris Wyse, 419-516-4164, for any questions.

BUILDING PROJECT STATUS REPORT AS OF NOVEMBER 26, 2025

Highlights and Info of the Short Work Week

- ◆ The concrete contractor was to be back on site on 11/26 for work on the south accessible ramp.
- ◆ The south doors and frame are set up wrong for the power opener, so it all needs to be replaced.
- ◆ All three drinking fountains are now working and ready for use, with a bottle filler available at the unit between the south family restrooms.
- ◆ The flooring crew worked diligently to install the cove base along the walls of the hallway.
- ◆ The general contractor has worked out the tariff situation with the elevator company, so the final steps of testing and inspection are being scheduled.
- ◆ The main heat equipment for the second floor is in the process of having final connections made.
- ◆ New paraments for the sanctuary (the cloths that hang on the lectern, pulpit and above the altar) are in process, being ordered through the company that supplied the first paraments in the 1950's.
- ◆ Coat racks will be made in house, featuring rods for coat hangers and pegs for coat hooks.
- ◆ New signage throughout the building is in the works, identifying rooms by name and number.
- ◆ We are working with Habitec Security to upgrade the system and to add electronic control of entrance door locking and unlocking, as well as a camera and phone extension at the south entrance. Their work will be scheduled for early January.
- ◆ Once the south accessible ramp is in place, the south entrance will be designated as the main entrance to the building Monday through Friday. All other doors will be kept locked so we gain awareness and oversight of who enters the building. There will be exceptions to this when we know an event is happening, such as the community meals and meetings in the Fireside Room.
- ◆ A walk-through of the project with two architects from Beilharz Architects will take place on Monday, December 1st.

BULLETIN STEWARDSHIP REPORT AS OF NOVEMBER 26, 2025

Operating Fund Year to Date Report

2025 Operating Budget	\$	437,965.00
Total Donations	\$	331,520.67
Total Expenses	\$	344,185.88
Net Operating Balance	\$	(12,665.21)

Mission Fund Year to Date Report

2025 Mission Budget	\$	173,000.00
Total Donations	\$	142,977.20
Total Disbursements	\$	120,904.47
Net Mission Balance	\$	22,072.73

Imagine Your Faith Building Capital Campaign

2025 Project Budget		\$	2,757,000.00
Fund Balance (EGR)	\$	597,146.85	
Buehrer Fund Current	\$	6,649.50	
Fund Balance (F&M)	\$	101,522.68	
Expenses to Date	\$	2,049,409.95	
Total	\$	2,754,728.98	
Funds Still to be Raised	Currently	\$	2,271.02
Funds Still to be Raised	as of 2/2/25	\$	196,763.00
Change from 2/2/25 to 11/26/2025		\$	194,491.98

TODAY'S WORSHIP SERVANTS

Accompanist	Lynne Christman
Song & Worship Leader	Roger Zimmerman
Children's Message	Matt Hines
(10:30) Easy Worship	Jenna Stuckey
(10:30) Sound	Kelly Ducey / James Grime
(10:30) Live Stream	Cayla Swisher
(8:00) Usher	Judy Sears
10:30) Head Usher	Greg Walker
(10:30) Ushers	Craig & Jenny Grieser, John & Deb Kauffman
(10:30) Nursery	Eric & Anna Yoder

Siberian Solstice 2025

A Trans-Siberian Orchestra Tribute Since 2006

*Twelve Performers, Exciting Light Show, Video, Narrated Story
Show at 7:00 PM, No Tickets Needed, and Free-will Donation*

St. John's Christian Church

Archbold, OH

Saturday, 12/6, 2025 7:00 PM

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 30TH AT ST. JOHN'S CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Sun	8:00AM	Worship (Sanctuary)
	8:30AM	Pause for Praise (96.1 WMTR)
	9:15AM	Children's Christmas Practice / Sunday School
	10:30AM	Worship (Sanctuary and YouTube Live)
	7:00PM	Evening Advent Service
Mon	6:30PM	Fellowship Committee (Fireside Room)
Tue	9:15AM	Bible Study (Fireside Room)
	10:30AM	Staff Meeting (Fireside Room)
	5:00 PM	Community Meal (Archbold Area Schools)
Wed	6:00PM	Children's Christmas Practice PreK-5th
	6:00PM	Confirmation
	7:00PM	JYF/SYF Children's Christmas Practice
	7:30PM	Adult Bell Choir (Sanctuary)
Thur	5:30PM	Senior Citizen's Christmas Meal (Parish Hall)
Fri	7:05AM	Rest & Restoration Bible Study (Rest & Restore Spa)
Sat	8:00AM	Shepherd Staff Discovery Visit (Fireside Room)
	7:00PM	Siberian Solstice (Sanctuary)
Sun	8:00AM	Worship (Sanctuary)
	8:30AM	Pause for Praise (96.1 WMTR)
	9:15AM	Children's Christmas Practice / Sunday School
	10:30AM	Worship (Sanctuary and YouTube Live)
	7:00PM	Evening Advent Service

PRAYER JOYS, CONCERNS, AND REQUESTS:

Please pray for...

- ◆ Sue Buehrer, dealing with some health issues, going through a series of tests, praying for answers.
- ◆ Mark & Jodi Beltz, as Jodi will be receiving monthly injections for the next year, in order to build bone and slow down bone loss; and as Mark will be having lower back surgery on December 4th to repair two discs.
- ◆ Kenny & Shirley Nafziger, brother of Judy Salisbury and Mary Ellen Johnson, are now both in a nursing home in Florida. They could use some encouragement, so if you could send a card their address is: Kenny and Shirley Nafziger, Highlands Lake Central, 4240 Lakeland Highlands Rd, Lakeland, FL 33813. Kenny and Shirley are both in room 315.
- ◆ Dave Walker, as he recovers from ankle replacement surgery on November 11th.
- ◆ Gary Mohre, father of Brittany Martinez, who is scheduled for prostate cancer surgery on December 2nd; also praying for the children and schools while he is off work from his position as the Williams County Diversion Officer.
- ◆ Joanie Grieser, who continues in rehab at Rupp Rehab.
- ◆ Chloe Merillat, continues in rehab and healing, now at home.
- ◆ Greg and Deb Weddleman, as Greg was to start his 6th round of chemo on Thursday, but due to C. Diff infection it is postponed until after December 1st.
- ◆ Josie Grieser, diagnosed with MS, continues to do well and continues to work every day. She goes to Cleveland Clinic every six months for scans and infusion treatment.

Care Center Residents...

- ◆ Marilyn Baron, Fulton Manor, 725 S. Shoop Ave, Wauseon 43567
- ◆ Linda Hayes, 407 E Lutz Road, Room 401, Archbold, 43502
- ◆ Charlene LaFountaine, 407 E Lutz Road, Room 180, Archbold, 43502
- ◆ Mike Meyer, Fountain Park, 1391 N. Main St., Room 130, Bryan, 43506
- ◆ Dencel Miller, 407 E Lutz Road, Room 166, Archbold, 43502
- ◆ Alice Tedrow, 600 Haven Drive, Apt. 111, Archbold, 43502

And those serving in the Armed Forces...

- ◆ Kyle Ducey, San Antonio, TX (Navy) (Son of Kelly & Betsy)
- ◆ MAJ Jared Kuntz, Hawaii (Army) (Son of Keith & Kelli)
- ◆ Taylor Pitts, Dayton, OH (Air Force)
(Granddaughter of Nan Neill)
- ◆ Shayne Pitts, Middle East (Air Force)
(Grandson-in-law of Nan Neill)

ST. JOHN'S CHRISTIAN CHURCH

700 S. Defiance St., Archbold, Ohio 43502
419-446-2545 + www.stjohnsarchbold.org

Pastor - Rev. Erich Christman (Cell: 419-551-0401)
Dir. of Youth & Young Adults - Jocelyn Walker (Cell: 419-575-4218)
Director of Music Ministry - Buffy Riley (Cell: 419-572-6880)
Administrative Assistant - Gloria Beck (office@stjohnsarchbold.org)