

THE LORD IS COME

THE SAVIOR REIGNS

HE RULES THE WORLD WITH TRUTH & GRACE

THE LORD IS COME

NO MORE LET SINS & SORROWS GROW

*Joy* TO THE WORLD

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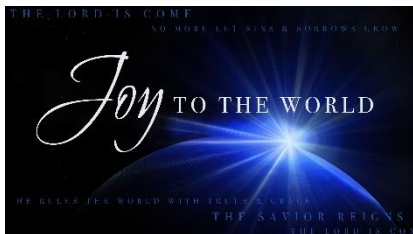
December 8-9, 2018

# THE WEEKLY CONNECTION

**ONE IN JESUS...REACHING MANY!**

**Week of December 9, 2018**

## **WORSHIP CELEBRATION**



### **ADVENT MESSAGE SERIES**

The coming of Jesus into our world as the promised Savior from sin and death brings joy! Don't let the rush of the holiday season get in the way of this true joy! Be sure to join us throughout the weeks of Advent for a time of spiritual preparation and celebration of all that Jesus comes to bring to our world... and to our lives!

### **4:30 PM & 7:00 PM | ADVENT MIDWEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

With the season of Advent come more opportunities to gather in God's presence for worship not only on weekends but also on Wednesdays. As we seek to include more and more family members of all ages in worship as well as in opportunities to experience shared life together, we are happy to announce our Advent Midweek worship schedule. Advent Midweek worship occurs on Wednesdays at 4:30 PM & 7:00 PM, with an intergenerational family meal served between both services in the school gymnasium (see related article in the Shared Life section)! Make plans now to join us!

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are placed by Bob and Sally Hobson in thanksgiving to God on the occasion of their 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

**LESSONS & CAROLS** – Please join us TODAY, Sunday, December 9 at 2:00 PM and 4:30 PM in the church sanctuary for our annual St. John Christmas Concert, featuring many of our St. John music ensembles and instrumentalists. This year's concert will once again follow the format of the traditional English Lessons and Carols service. Festive orchestral and brass music will begin 15 minutes prior to each service. "O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!"

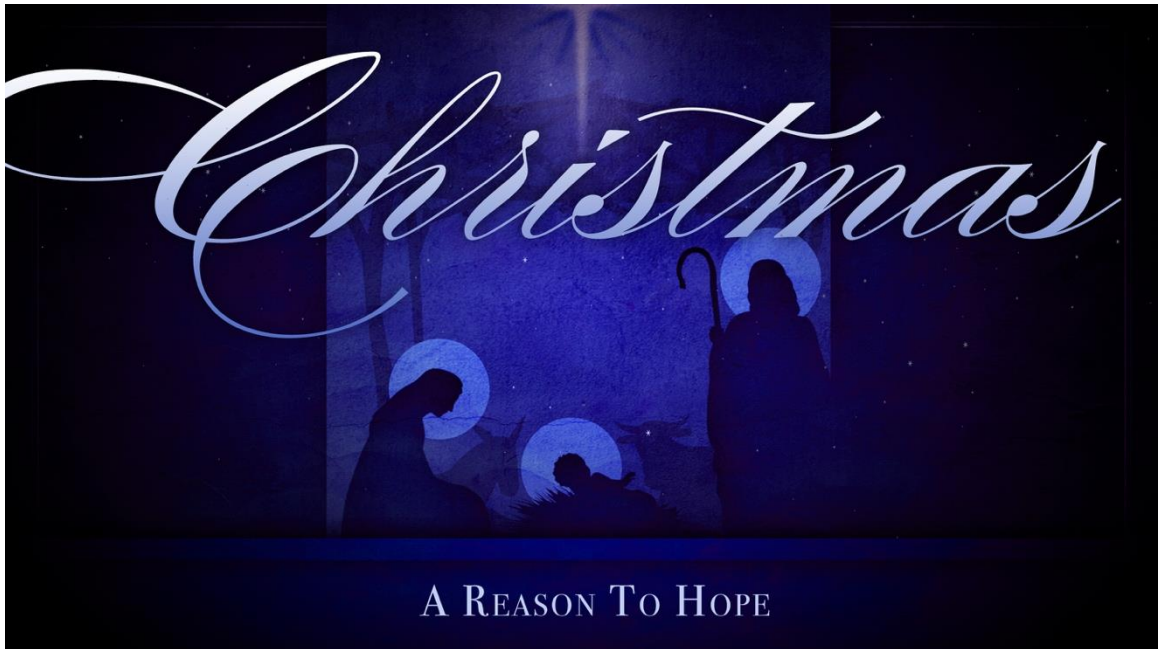


**WORSHIP ATTENDANCE UPDATE** "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together... but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."—Hebrews 10:24-25

Attendance for the weekend of December 1-2..... 854

Attendance for Wednesday, December 5..... 453

All articles submitted to *The Weekly Connection* will be subject to approval and editing by the staff. Articles may be sent via email to [connection@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:connection@stjohnrochester.org) and must be received no later than Wednesday at noon the week of publication.



#### **CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE - Monday, December 24**

##### **1:00 PM & 3:00 PM Family Christmas Celebration**

This family friendly worship celebration will feature beloved Christmas carols led by an acoustic band, a special message for children, as well as the lighting of individual candles for Silent Night.

##### **5:00 PM & 7:00 PM Christmas Candlelight Celebration**

This traditional favorite will feature beloved carols led by pipe organ with special music from soloists, bell choir, and brass. The service will include the lighting of individual candles for Silent Night. About 15 minutes before worship begins, the congregation is also invited to join in singing additional familiar Christmas carols. There will be a special message for children at 5:00 PM as well.

##### **11:00 PM Christmas Candlelight Celebration with Holy Communion**

This late night traditional favorite will feature beloved carols led by pipe organ with special music from the Senior Choir. After the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the service will also include the lighting of individual candles for Silent Night.

#### **CHRISTMAS DAY SCHEDULE - Tuesday, December 25**

##### **10:00 AM Christmas Day Family Celebration with Holy Communion**

Join us for a Christmas morning communion celebration featuring more beloved carols led by traditional pipe organ, with special music from the Men's Chorus.

## **BIBLICAL DISCOVERY**

**OUR FALL AND EARLY WINTER BIBLE STUDY OFFERINGS FOR ALL AGES** will wrap up during the week of December 16. Watch for the new edition of Get Into the Word coming soon, where you will find a complete listing of Sunday Bible Class selections, as well as those held during the week.

**THE VISUAL FAITH GROUP** will meet offsite Saturday, December 15 from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. Questions? Please contact Candice Schwark at [candice@mac.com](mailto:candice@mac.com) or 248-652-9449.

**JOY TO THE WORLD ADVENT READING PLAN** – If you don't already have one, please feel free to pick up a bookmark to take home for you and your family. The bookmark is intended to help you and your family members take time this Christmas to focus on Jesus and Him coming near to us. There is a very short reading suggested for each day to help get us all focused on the joy we have in Jesus.

## SHARED LIFE



**GRAB A CUP OF COFFEE AND INVITE A NEW FRIEND.** Following all our Sunday morning services, coffee and refreshments are served in Luther Hall. What a wonderful opportunity it is to get to know someone in worship with us. What a great way to be the church by encouraging each other in Jesus' name!

**ADVENT MIDWEEK DINNER** – Join us this Wednesday between the 4:30 PM and 7:00 PM worship services for a delicious family meal in the gymnasium. The St. John Youth will be preparing and serving grilled chicken and burgers for all to enjoy. Approximate serving time will be 5:30-6:45 PM. Free will donations will benefit the Youth Mission Trips in 2019.

**OWLS (Older Wiser Lutherans in Service)** - Join us for the next OWLS luncheon on Friday December 14 at 12:00 PM in Luther Hall. This will be a festive Christmas gathering. We will be providing a delicious lunch and ask that you please bring in some of your special holiday cookies, if possible. We will have special Christmas music provided by the St. John School choirs. Mr. Patrick McKay from the Rochester Hills Museum will be our presenter. He will be covering Rochester's role in the Civil War. Please RSVP to Diana Sell (248.375.9293). We really hope to see you there.



### **NEW POSITION OPENING: WELCOME RECEPTIONIST for St. John Lutheran Church & School**

Are you an energetic, spirit-led people person who has God-given gifts of being friendly, hospitable, and encouraging? Do you have general office knowledge and skills, a love for our Savior Jesus and children, as well as the desire to make people feel welcome in Jesus' name? We are now accepting resumes for a new full time/12 month position of Welcome Receptionist. This individual will be located at the front desk in the Main Office and will serve as the first point of contact for those calling or arriving on our campus during office hours. A detailed job description is available in the Main Office. If interested, please submit a resume via email to [jeller@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:jeller@stjohnrochester.org) or via hard copy to the Main Office by 12 noon on Friday, December 21.

**GRIEFSHARE** will continue meeting every Saturday morning through January 12 , 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM in the Church Library. In the coming weeks we will focus on topics such as guilt and anger, complicating factors, and being "stuck" in grief. We learn what God has in store for us in Heaven, and how to go on with our lives after the death of a loved one. All are welcome and you may join us at any time. Contact Linda Baroli 248-895-0310, Joanne Curran 248-877-7309, or Marlene Leinberger 586-365-8870.

**THE LUTHERAN WITNESS MAGAZINE** - Now is the time to order or renew your subscription of THE LUTHERAN WITNESS for 2019! The Lutheran Witness is the official periodical of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is published 11 times a year. It provides stories and information that complement congregational life, foster personal growth in faith, and help interpret the contemporary world from a Lutheran Christian perspective. It also includes the *Michigan in Touch* supplement. The new

subscription year begins March 2019 and **orders need to be turned in to the pastoral office by Monday, December 10** to take advantage of a discounted rate of \$11.60/year. Checks should be made to 'St. John Lutheran Church' with 'Lutheran Witness' written on the memo line. Our Church Library has recent issues of this magazine available if you would like to check it out first. Please contact the pastoral office at 248-402-8020 or [church@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:church@stjohnrochester.org) for more information.

## CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



### ST. JOHN LUTHERAN SCHOOL NEWS

**St. John in the Rochester Christmas Parade:** Thank you to the many students and parents who marched in the Rochester Hometown Christmas Parade last Sunday. It was a great day for a parade! Students sang Christmas carols, recited Bible verses and shared "Merry Christmas" all along the parade route.

**Merry Christmas Marketplace:** Kindergarten to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students enjoyed the annual St. John Merry Christmas Marketplace this past week. To help prepare for Christmas, students have the opportunity to shop at the market for presents for their loved ones from a

selection of items purchased throughout the year by the volunteer Marketplace coordinators Kelly Wisniewski and Kristin Drummelsmith. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped make the event a fun and memorable experience!

### Save the Date for 2019-2020 School Year Enrollment:

- Current student re-enrollment/congregation and current student sibling early enrollment: January 21 – February 2
- Kindergarten Preview Night: Wednesday, January 16, 7:00 – 8:00 PM for parents of prospective Kindergarten students
- Preschool Preview Night: Thursday, January 24, 6:30 – 7:30 PM, for parents of prospective Preschool students
- Preschool to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Open House: Sunday, January 27, 12:00 – 2:00 PM, for anyone interested in learning more about St. John Lutheran School!

St. John Lutheran School offers Preschool to 8<sup>th</sup> grade in a Christ-centered setting. Established in 1943, the school is accredited by Michigan Non Public Schools Association and by National Lutheran Schools Accreditation. For enrollment information or to schedule a private tour, please contact Beth Dameron, Director of School Admissions, [bdameron@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:bdameron@stjohnrochester.org) or 248-402-8012 or visit [stjohnrochester.org/school](http://stjohnrochester.org/school).



### HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

**Today (Sunday)** we will be serving a light meal to the musicians between the Christmas Concerts. Arrive at 2:30 PM, help serve, and then attend the 4:30 PM concert. After the concert we will have our annual viewing of the award winning "ELF"! Popcorn and pop will be provided.

**Wednesday, December 12** we get to serve Advent dinner! Please arrive after school to help set up tables. We will be grilling chicken and burgers! All funds collected will go toward our 2019 mission trips!

**Group Mission Trip 2019 registration** is underway! Group Mission Trip is an opportunity for students 12 yrs. and older to go to a community (Knoxville, TN) for a week to serve the less fortunate, elderly and disabled through building projects, along with 300-400 students from across the country. The total cost per person is \$350. A \$60 deposit is due. This is a life changing experience from beginning to end.

**Mexicali 2019** planning is also underway! Trip dates are March 31-April 5, and we have booked a block of airline tickets so that the lower rate is locked in. **Paperwork and deposit are due TODAY** (Sunday) at 12:00 PM in the Youth Room!.

**Freshmen Families**, Mrs. Hammett is so excited to have bagels with you at “Bagels with Hammett.” Our families here at St. John are such a blessing!

For more information, please contact Director of High School Youth Ministry Melissa Hammett at 248-402-8008 or [mhammett@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:mhammett@stjohnrochester.org).

## SACRIFICIAL GENEROSITY



**HAT, SCARF, MITTEN AND GLOVE COLLECTION IS UNDERWAY** – Donations may be placed directly on the Atrium Christmas tree. With cold weather now upon us, we look forward to blessing others with the warmth that these items will bring.



**GIFTS FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN THANK YOU** – Our St. John church & school family generously shared Jesus’ love through the Gifts for All God’s Children program by sponsoring 231 children this year! Thank you to everyone who was able to participate in this program and supply Christmas gifts to those in need. Gifts for All God’s Children ([giftsforallgodschildren.org](http://giftsforallgodschildren.org)) connects cities and suburbs, profit and non-profit, faith-based and secular organizations together to help at-risk

children through year-long programs, the largest of which is providing thousands of Christmas gifts to children in need. Thank you also to the many volunteers who have helped in Jesus’ name!



### NEW ONE LEGACY UPDATE

The past several weeks have been very active in our pursuit of a Building Construction Management partner. A Request for Proposal was sent out, and we are happy to announce that five firms responded with quality responses. Our Campus Evaluation Team, Vestry and Ministry Leadership Team are reviewing the responses, and will be conducting interviews next week with the intention of making a proposed selection to our Vestry this month. Please continue to pray for guidance as we evaluate our alternatives for a recommendation, and as we assemble information to present at upcoming congregation forums.

**Congregation Forums: Mark your calendar!** – Please plan to attend one of two identical Congregation Forums where our new construction manager will be introduced and updates on project schedule and budget will be provided. The forum dates are:

**Sunday, January 13** at 12:30 PM in the Church Sanctuary

**Monday, January 14** at 7:00 PM in Luther Hall

**We remain beyond grateful** for the generous response and demonstration of sacrificial giving so many of you have made in response to your Savior's love! Please keep it coming! So far over \$1.3 million has been given of close to \$3.5 million pledged around this time last year. Every pledge and every gift makes a difference as we prepare to finalize our construction loan financing in the next few months, and every dollar given now will be one less dollar financed once construction begins. Perhaps last fall was not a good time for you and your family to make a pledge or one time gift. If so, would you prayerfully consider doing so now before the end of the year? For more information, visit our website ONE Legacy info page, pick up a pledge card at the display in the Atrium, or contact our Financial Office. "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen!" - Ephesians 3:20-21



The image shows a 'ONE LEGACY PLEDGE CARD' form. It is divided into two main sections. The left section is titled 'PLEDGE CARD' and includes the text 'St. John's Catholic Institution and equal gifts, but equal sacrifice' and 'ONE LEGACY'. It has fields for 'NAME' and 'ADDRESS'. Below these is a disclaimer: 'Understanding that all we promise is a gift from God, I/we agree to this agreement to participate voluntarily as "ONE LEGACY". This is a statement of faith (trust) and may be altered in circumstances warranted.' The right section is titled 'In response to God's blessings, I/we promise to give:' and contains a table for recording gifts. The table has columns for 'CASH GIFTS', 'GIFTS IN KIND', and '3 YEAR TOTAL'. It also includes a 'Description of gift:' field and a 'DATE' field. There are checkboxes for 'weekly or 100 weeks or monthly or 12 months or annual or 3 years or as follows' and 'approximate value of gift'.

**ONE LEGACY CONTRIBUTION LOGISTICS – IMPORTANT REMINDERS!** Thanks be to God for the generosity of our St. John family members, as donations to the ONE Legacy initiative continue to come steadily in. As those contributions are made, it is a big help to us in streamlining the process in our financial office for a few steps to continue to regularly happen. (1)Please be sure to write a **separate check for ONE Legacy donations**, not to be combined with regular contribution checks. ONE Legacy funds are in an entirely separate account from our General Contribution Fund, so separate checks are important. (2)Please make the check **payable to St. John Lutheran Church, with ONE Legacy written on the memo line**. (3)Please use your **yellow ONE Legacy envelope** (or a plain envelope with ONE Legacy and your envelope number clearly marked on the outside) to ensure that your contribution is appropriately credited. Many thanks for your kind assistance and for your continuing generosity!

**GIFTS OF SECURITIES TO ST. JOHN** - For those friends of St. John who wish to contribute securities (stock or bonds) to the church either on paper or electronically, the transaction is processed directly by Thrivent Financial. You can initiate a request by contacting Jerry Kulczycki, Thrivent Wealth Advisor, at 248-822-7700 or [jerry.kulczycki@thrivent.com](mailto:jerry.kulczycki@thrivent.com).

The value of the stock contribution is based on the average of the high and the low of the stock on the day it is traded. A letter of contribution will be sent to each securities contributor. To receive contribution credit for the current year, the transaction must be completed with Thrivent Financial before the last business day of the year. Please allow adequate time for the processing of the transaction and be aware of the holiday business schedule of the financial institutions so that the transaction can be completed to your satisfaction. For additional information or to designate your contribution to accounts other than the General Fund of the church (such as One Legacy, for example), please contact Director of Operations Mike Wilusz at 248-402-8010 or [mwilusz@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:mwilusz@stjohnrochester.org).

**STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFT** - Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, During the Christmas season, we celebrate God's fulfillment of His promise to send the greatest gift of all—a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. In response to this Good News, a spirit of gratitude and thanksgiving is a focus of our lives and relationships.

This season of giving also provides an opportunity to share our blessings and express our appreciation to our dedicated staff of servants at St. John Lutheran Church & School who daily witness God's love and serve Him throughout the year. Therefore, we encourage you to prayerfully consider recognizing their faithful ministry by providing a special staff Christmas gift.

Gifts may be placed in your blue “Designated Gift” offering envelope or any envelope marked “Staff Gift” and deposited in the offering plate during worship services. Gifts may also be dropped off at the St. John Main Office or mailed to St. John Lutheran Church at 1011 W. University Drive, Rochester, MI 48307. Checks should be made payable to “St. John Lutheran Church” with “Staff Gift” on the memo line. Please submit by Tuesday, December 25.

We also encourage gifts to St. John's “Love for Others Fund” used to assist Congregation members and Rochester area residents who are experiencing financial challenges during this Christmas season.

Thanks for your help! In His service and yours, St. John Elders

### FINANCIAL UPDATE

“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God!” - 2 Corinthians 9:11. Thank you so much for your ongoing generosity that allows us to make an eternal impact in Jesus’ name!

**GENERAL MISSION & MINISTRY** Offerings for December 1-2... ..\$42,646.00

Special Contributions for December 1-2... ..\$25.00

As of 12/2/18 Y.T.D. Budgeted Offerings: \$ 970,215.66

As of 12/2/18 Y.T.D. Actual Offerings: \$ ~~936,699.37~~

As of 12/2/18 Y.T.D. Variance to Budget: \$ (33,516.29)

As of 12/2/18 Y.T.D. Special Contributions: \$5,856.00

*(St. John's fiscal year is 7/1/18 through 6/30/19.)*

### ONE LEGACY INITIATIVE

As of 12/4/18 Amount pledged..... \$3,458,334.79

As of 12/4/18 Amount received.....\$1,324,552.72

## COMPASSIONATE SERVICE

**SERVE AS DOOR GREETERS** - Guests, friends, family and neighbors are more likely than any other time of the year to come to church for Christmas! You can joyfully let people know that YES, there IS “room in the inn” here at St. John this Christmas. Let’s give each and every person a warm and winsome welcome so they know how glad we are that they come to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This is a wonderful, simple way for you individually or as a family to experience the joy of serving at Christmas. Choose the day and time you want to serve and then contact Mission & Ministry Coordinator Jennie Eller at 248-402-8087 or [jeller@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:jeller@stjohnrochester.org) to sign up and join others serving as door greeters this Christmas!



## CONSTANT PRAYER

**WE WOULD LOVE TO PRAY FOR WHATEVER IS ON YOUR HEART.** To submit a prayer request, please text or email it to [prayer@stjohnrochester.org](mailto:prayer@stjohnrochester.org) at any time or fill out a Prayer Request Card and hand to an usher during worship. These requests are received by our pastors and are passed along when requested to be included in the weekly prayer list that is sent out to our prayer warriors and included in weekend worship.



### **THIS WEEK:**

**Guidance & Strength:** Lessons & Carols Service

**Hope & Healing:** Wilma Horan – heart surgery this week, Bobbie Baker - heart surgery this week, Florence Raetzel – continued recovery from surgery, Marilyn Meyer – shingles, Faith Ebert - hospitalized in Ohio, Traci Schmitt – cancer, Shirl Neinas - cancer...Continued healing for: Jerry Bantin, Vic Ulrich, Hailey Noonan, Sarah Leinberger, Linda Madson, Marilyn Miller, Raymond Pauli and Linda Glisman

**Bereavement:** – “For the family of:” Catherine Lick’s mother

### **LAST WEEK:**

**Thanksgiving:** For all those who helped in decorating for the Advent-Christmas season, Gifts for all God’s children, Mission partnerships – Bell Choir & ESL who served at St. Paul, Pontiac on Sunday

**Guidance & Strength:** Those facing job loss and those in financial difficulty, Laura Mastrangelo

**Hope & Healing:** Brandon Spencer – tonsillectomy (Dec. 3), Gayle & Jaime, Ryan Jankovich, Kerry – good results from blood test, Don Ehlen (Dave’s father) – heart surgery

**Bereavement:** – “For the family of:” Brother-in-law of school parent Kristine Howe, Joan Tenuta (mother of Nicole Graber), Former President George H.W. Bush

**Nation & World:** Earthquake in Alaska

### **PRIOR WEEK:**

**Thanksgiving:** All the blessings of the year, Food collection & distribution to mission partners & families in need, Future City Team back from China

**Guidance & Strength:** All traveling over the Holiday weekend, For victims of crimes and those in prison

**Hope & Healing:** Jerry Jagers (friend of Tim Noonan) – cancer, Henry Lind – hospice, Corrine Robinson – broken elbow

**Bereavement:** – “For the family of:” Lillian Williams (mother of Linda Schultz), Sue Barge, Mahdi (father of Feriba Hartfiel)

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN

### OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK

Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

### FACILITY HOURS THIS WEEK

Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM – 9:00 PM

Saturday: 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM

\* The facility may be closed on Saturdays when no daytime events are scheduled.

### Sunday

9:30 AM

Adult Bible Study – Concordia Hall

9:30 AM

Sunday School – School Classrooms

12:00 PM

Mexicali Trip Deposit & Paperwork Due – Youth Room

2:00 PM

Lessons & Carols Concert – Church Sanctuary

4:30 PM

Lessons & Carols Concert – Church Sanctuary

### Monday

9:00 AM

MOPS – Luther Hall

1:30 PM

LifeLight (Proverbs) – Mary Martha Room

### Tuesday

11:30 AM

International Bible Glass – Room 128

1:00 PM

ESL Class – Concordia Hall

6:30 PM

Casual College – Offsite at Oakland University

7:00 PM

Women's Bible Study (Experiencing God) – Church Library

7:00 PM

LifeLight (Proverbs) – Mary Martha Room

### Wednesday

8:45 AM

School Chapel – Church Sanctuary

9:15 AM

LifeLight (Proverbs) – Mary Martha Room

1:00 PM

Women's Bible Study (The Shepherd With Me) – Concordia Hall

4:30 PM

Advent Worship Service – Church Sanctuary

5:15 PM

Advent Supper - Gymnasium

7:00 PM

Advent Worship Service – Church Sanctuary

### Thursday

9:00 AM

MOPS – Luther Hall

1:00 PM

Esther Circle – Mary Martha Room

4:30 PM

Skit & Drama Ministry for Kids – Church Sanctuary

8:00 PM

Alcoholics Anonymous – Concordia Hall

### Friday

8:00 AM

LCEF Stamp Sales – Atrium

9:00 AM

ESL Class – Concordia Hall

12:00 PM

OWLS Christmas Lunch – Luther Hall

### Saturday

8:00 AM

Bibles & Basketball – Gymnasium

10:00 AM

GriefShare – Church Library

5:00 PM

Modern Praise – Gymnasium



### **Worship Celebration Schedule**

Traditional Praise: Sundays @ 8:00 AM | 9:30 AM | 11:00 AM

Modern Praise: Saturdays @ 5:00 PM | Sundays @ 10:45 AM

Advent Midweek: Wednesday @ 4:30 PM | 7:00 PM

**1011 W. University Dr. | Rochester, MI 48307 | 248.402.8000 | [stjohnrochester.org](http://stjohnrochester.org)**