

Watching, Waiting, and...Wrestling?

"Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry."

-from verse 4 of "Rejoice Rejoice Believers."

We are quite familiar with the watching and waiting that the season of Advent brings, but wrestling? That's a new one! It's that time of year when we picture shepherds and angels, not luchadors and John Cena. We're more accustomed to the softness of the season, not suplexes. I could keep going, but you probably get the point.



Where does wrestling enter the picture of Advent? It's wrestling with the changes that the baby in the manger brings to our lives. It's wrestling with the call of faith to hold out for hope, peace, joy, and love when they all seem noticeably absent from our lives and the world. It's wrestling with preparing for Jesus' coming again, even when we have no idea when it will happen. Continuing the work of caring, sharing, tending, and loving that faith calls us to, even if we don't see the results.

It's not a passive watching and waiting that we do during this season. We light candles, sing songs, decorate, give gifts, and remind ourselves that though darkness may settle in, there is still connection and growth that can happen. We wait and watch for light to dawn on our weary world. We can also be signs of that light in the world!

So if you are struggling this season and wrestling a bit, you're not alone. It's a part of this time that we don't talk about all that often, but it's there. Blessings and peace to you as you watch, wait, and wrestle. The God of hope, peace, joy, and love be with you in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. Have a blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas!

In Christ, Pastor Jonathan

Thanksgiving Church Office Hours

The Church Office will be closed Wednesday – Friday, November 26th – 28th. Happy Thanksgiving!



Advent Devotionals & Calendars

Advent begins November 30th! Devotional booklets for adults & Advent Calendars for families are available at the back of the sanctuary.



Christmas Decorating

Saturday, December 6th at 9:00am

It's time! Please join us to decorate the Sanctuary and narthex for Advent & Christmas. You'll help make our spaces look festive as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus! Please contact Nola Gustafson with any questions.



Quilt Blessing

Sunday, December 7th during worship

Our Quilters have been working hard all year to create homemade quilts for donation. On Sunday, December 7th, the quilts will be blessed and donated to CASA of the Coastal Bend, supporting children in Nueces and Aransas County foster care.



Confirmation Class

for 7th & 8th Grade students is held on 1st & 3rd Sundays at 2:00pm at St. John Lutheran. See Pr. Jonathan for questions.



St. John's Ladies Bible Study Group

December 9th @ 11:30am

Bring your sack lunch. Drinks will be provided.

Desserts will be provided by

Karen Boyd and Lauren Miller.

The study will be on "Dorcas", page 213 in *Women of the Bible* by Jean E. Syswerda, and led by Pastor Jonathan. Please come for quality God/good time with your sisters in Christ. All are welcome!



Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 14th at 1:20pm

Gather in the church parking lot and we'll take our hearts and voices to our three area nursing homes. Let's share our joy as we approach the celebration of Christ's birth!



Nursing Home Cold Weather Donations Needed

Evangelism is gathering donations of cold weather items for our three local nursing homes. Consider donating socks, footies (socks with grips), gloves, mittens, caps, and scarves. Place your donation in the narthex donation basket by December 14th.



Poinsettia Donations

Help us add beauty to the sanctuary for Christmas with a Poinsettia. Please bring them to the Sanctuary beginning December 14th. They can be taken home after our Lessons & Carols service on December 28th.



Staff Christmas Gift

The Church Council is collecting donations toward the Staff Christmas Gift through Sunday, December 14th. Gifts can be placed in the tin in the sanctuary or coordinated with Verne Benson or Florine Haug. *They will be shared with our staff on Christmas Eve, December 24th.*



St. John Food Pantry

Wednesday, December 17th, 9:00 – 11:00 am

Third Wednesday of Every Month

Thank you to those who serve!

Volunteers appreciated, arrival time 8:15am.



Newsletter Deadline

Thursday, December 18th

Due earlier because of holidays.

stjohnrobtown@gmail.com



Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 21st during the 9:00am service

Our young disciples will share with us the

Christmas story from Luke 2 as a part of worship!

Practice will be each Sunday at 8:30am during

Sunday School beginning November 30th.

If you have children or youth visiting with you on December 21st, we would love for them to participate during the Program! Please contact Chelsea or Cindy so they know.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Wednesday, December 24th at 7:00pm

Join us in celebrating the birth of Jesus, Emmanuel!



Name Tags

We'll have more visitors during the Christmas

season! To help these folks get to know us, please

remember to wear your name tag. *If your name tag*

is missing, please contact the church office and

Lauren will create one for you. Thanks!



Church Office Closed

Wednesday - Thursday, December 24th - 25th for Christmas and Wednesday - Thursday, December 31st - January 1st for New Years.



Lessons & Carols Worship

Sunday, December 28th at 9:00am

We'll sing Christmas hymns together and hear scripture celebrating Jesus' birth.



Noisy Offering

Sunday, December 28th beginning of worship

Bring noisy coins or quiet bills to donate toward our outreach ministries.



New Year's Eve Family Party

Sunday, December 28th, 4:00 – 6:00pm

All ages are invited to celebrate the arrival of 2026! Bring **Finger Foods** to share. We'll be playing **White Elephant Bingo**, so bring **White Elephant**

Prizes either wrapped or in a bag. We plan to give out nice **Door Prizes** so your help donating one would be very appreciated. *Our Doubles & Singles group looks forward to celebrating with you with food, fun, & fellowship!*



Year End Giving

As you consider your year-end giving, please keep St. John in mind and **ensure any gifts are given by Tuesday, December 30th**. This will help Lauren close out our books for this year in a timely manner as we get ready for 2026! Thank you.



2026 Altar Flower Sign-Up

is available on the narthex bulletin board. If you'd like to add beauty to our Sanctuary, please print your name and your celebration or remembrance on the sign-up sheet on the Sunday when you can bring an altar flower.



Board Directors' 2025 Annual Reports

are due Monday, January 5, 2026 to Lauren. This will give her time to prepare and publish the 2025 Annual Report two weeks before the January 25, 2026 Annual Congregational Meeting. Thanks!



Christmas Decoration Clean Up

Saturday, January 3, 2026 at 9:00am

Join us on Saturday, January 3rd at 9:00am to help us clean up Christmas decorations around the church. Many hands make the work light!



Church Office Coverage Needed January 12-15

Lauren needs help covering the office Monday – Thursday, January 12-15, 2026 from 9am - 2pm. Duties are simple and include answering the phone and receiving deliveries. If you can help one or more days, please contact the church office:

stjohnrobtown@gmail.com, 361-387-9481. Thank you!



St. John's Quilters

On break, returning January 21, 2026.

When we return, join for a time of fellowship & service. Extra hands appreciated! *No experience necessary.*



Sunday School

8:30am – Children's Sunday School is held in the Sunday School classrooms (first door on the left as you go down the hall toward the Fellowship Hall).

During December we'll be practicing for the Christmas Program to be held on December 21st! Then we'll be on break December 28th & January 4th for Christmas & the New Year.

Following Worship – Adult Sunday School

in the Fellowship Hall.



THANK YOU

Our family wants to thank our amazingly thoughtful church family for the many prayers and expressions of heartfelt love, support, and concern during this time of Steve's mom and our Nana, Vernie Miller's health issues and passing. We truly appreciate the prayers, beautiful cards, visits, calls, text messages, hugs, memorial gifts, good food, and outpouring of love at her visitation and funeral. You will never know how blessed we feel to have such a kind and loving church family. Thank you Pastor Jonathan and Lauren for always being there for our family with your comfort and support. Our faith in God continues to bring us strength, peace, and comfort through all of you. God bless you!

-Steve & Lauren Miller



Snapshots from November



Nola Gustafson celebrated a milestone birthday with us in worship on November 16th. Members of the congregation gifted her with a beautiful Christmas quilt made by St. John's Quilters as a thank you for all the ways she supports St. John.



The electricity was out at the church during the rainy morning of Sunday, November 23rd. Thanks to everyone who helped us pivot to worship in the Fellowship Hall. Power was restored during the middle of worship, and a neighborhood dog even joined our worship for a moment! It was lovely to worship closer together in a unique way.

(First two photos were before electricity was restored, last three were after)

December Birthdays

4	Maria Vasquez	6	Don Thigpen
7	Pat Rychetsky	14	Debbie Armstrong
15	Celia 'Sally' Flores	18	Lucas Lys
24	Butch Roecker	24	Brent Beverly
31	Cindy Fair		



Altar Guild Volunteer Schedule

Call Nola Gustafson at 361-215-3388 if you can volunteer.

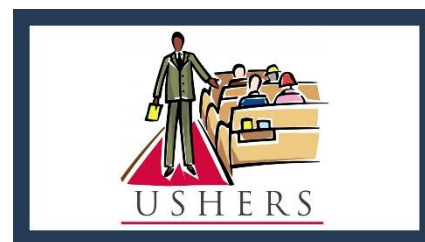
Jan	Paula C., Shotzie A.	Feb	Jennifer J., Misty Ham
Mar	Cindy R., Janice K.	Apr	Amelia S., Karen B.
May	Nola G., Karen B.	June	Paula C., Shotzie A.
July	<i>vacant</i>	Aug	Priscilla J., Amelia S.
Sept	Paula K., Cindy R.	Oct	Lauren M., Karen D.
Nov	Sally F., <i>vacant</i>	Dec	Stephanie V., Monica B.



December Ushers

Capt. Butch Roecker	Howard Fels
George Johnson	Jimmy Kimball
Mando Vasquez	David Marion
Mason Vasquez	

January Ushers



Yard Care – Help Needed

Call Howard Fels at 361-877-9618 if you can join the volunteer lawn crew rotation. Many hands make the job light!

November	24-29	Don Thigpen
December	1-6	Mando Vasquez
December	8-13	Howard Fels, Terry Signor
December	15-20	<i>Volunteer(s) Needed</i>
December	22-27	Don Thigpen
Dec – Jan	29-3	Mando Vasquez

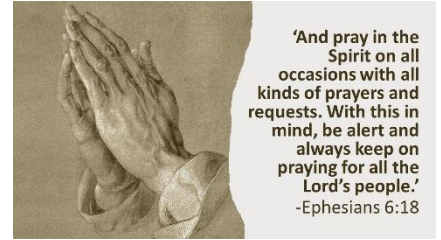


PRAYER CONCERNS LIST

Members and Family & Friends names will be removed after four weeks unless the church office is otherwise notified.

Long-Term Prayers names will remain until the requester asks for removal.

Prayer list submissions can be emailed to stjohnrobstown@gmail.com or submitted with the Sunday attendance card.



MEMBERS:

David Hartman; Verne Benson ♦ ♦ Sylvia Hellberg

FAMILY & FRIENDS:

♦ ♦ Julian Galloway (Ham Family's 10yo family friend); Pansy White (Mary Sue Schieble's request)

OUR CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY & FRIENDS OF:

Patty Wilson (Shirley Hartman's mother) ♦ ♦ Vernie Miller (Steve Miller's mother)

LONG-TERM PRAYERS:

Richard Alvord; Peggy Butler; Paula Campbell; Regina Emshoff; Margie Fair; Paula Kennedy; Loleta Riley; Donnie Schwirtlich; Mando Vasquez



Thank you for your continued support of St. John Lutheran Church and its ministries.

General Fund				Special Fund Bal Oct 31 , 2025			29,356.17
Cash at September 30, 2025			69,058.07				
Current Benevolence	13,943.99						
Trans from Special Fund	204.34						
Trans from Memorial Fund	-						
Less: Monthly Expenses	(16,266.87)						
	(2,118.54)	(2,118.54)		Mem Fund Bal Oct 31, 2025			25,771.08
Change in Short term liabilities		(842.06)					
Cash at October 31, 2025			66,097.47				
Year To Date General Fund Cash							
Cash at Jan 1, 2025			72,034.68				
Cash at October 31, 2025			66,097.47				
Decrease in cash 2025			(5,937.21)				

St. John Contribution Options:

Online or Through a Mobile App

If you would like to financially support St. John, you can do so through your smart phone by downloading the Vanco Mobile app from your phone's app store.



Or you can give online by visiting our website: stjohnrobstown.org. Click Donate Now. You will be directed to our own secure online donations page where you can choose your donation type, one-time or recurring donation, and payment method.

Thank you for supporting the ministries of St. John! ~Stewardship Board

CHURCH COUNCIL



The following is a synopsis of important discussions and actions taken during the Church Council meeting held on November 18, 2025:

- The Board of Christian Education has a Christmas Program scheduled on December 22.
- The realty office being built next door has discovered an existing easement that will be surveyed.
- Now that Hurricane Season is ending, the Evangelism Board has decided to donate their funds to our food bank, the Coastal Bend Food Bank, and to The Bridge.
- Due to Benevolence currently being short of the budget by about \$6000 from January through the end of October, the council voted to apply funds from ingathering to the general fund.
- The first Congregational Meeting of 2026 has been scheduled for January 25.
- The Church Council will not be meeting in December.

November Worship Attendance

First Sunday	63	
Second Sunday	45	
Third Sunday	66	
Fourth Sunday	40	
Fifth Sunday		<Will share next month



Not Able to Attend Worship in Person?

Our 9:00am Sunday Worship is always available to view on St. John's [YouTube & Facebook pages](#). Don't forget to register your online attendance!: stjohnrobstown.org/onlineworship



St. John Lutheran Church 3316 Hummingbird Lane, Robstown, TX 78380-6067 December 2025 Church Office: (361) 387-9481, stjohndowntown@gmail.com Pastor Jonathan: (979) 255-4148, pastordjlys@gmail.com						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 7:30pm Church Prop	2	3	4 6:00pm Stewardship	5	6 9:00am Christmas Decorating
7 8:30am Children's Sun. School 9:00am Worship / Quilt Blessing 10:15am Adult Sunday School 2:00pm Confirmation Class	8	9 11:30am Ladies Bible Study 2:00pm Lay Ministry	10 6:00pm Christian Ed	11	12	13
14 8:30am Children's Sun. School 9:00am Worship 10:00am Evangelism Mtg. 10:15am Adult Sunday School 1:20pm Christmas Caroling	15	16	17 9:00am Food Pantry	18 Newsletter Deadline	19	20
21 8:30am Children's Sun. School 9:00am Worship / Children's Christmas Program 10:15am Adult Sunday School 2:00pm Confirmation Class	22	23	24 7:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Church Office Closed	25 Merry Christmas! Church Office Closed	26	27
28 9:00am Lessons & Carols Worship / Noisy Offering 10:15am Adult Sunday School 4:00pm New Year's Eve Family Party!	29	30	31 Church Office Closed	1 Happy New Year! Church Office Closed		

Reminder: Children's Sunday School is on break December 28th & January 4th.

Updates to calendar after publication of newsletter will be made on stjohndowntown.org/news-calendar