



# HOPEWELL NEWS GAZETTE

## St. John Lutheran Church (Hopewell Township)

February  
2025

As I am writing, it is 2 degrees out and the windchill is somewhere down in the negative twenties. Hopefully it will be considerably better weather as you read this!

I really don't like winter. At all.

It's cold. I often feel trapped inside the house... even though all I would have to do is put on my coat and go out. I know I am not really trapped, not actually stuck inside... but I feel like it. And the colder it is, the more I feel it. It is actually something of relief when enough snow falls that I have to go out and shovel... because then I do go out and stay out for awhile and actually do something physical!

But not today. Today it is cold and windy, and I feel like... like I am stuck. Trapped. Cut off from normal life. Anything but free.

It is a common feeling among us as people. Children growing into teenagers and young adults feel it as they bump up against the authority of their parents. They want to be independent and to make their own decisions and do what they want... but they are stuck. Trapped. Cut off from independent life. Anything but free.

Adults feel the same way facing the responsibility of adult life... work... bills... spouses... children. Some of these things we voluntarily take on ourselves, but others are the common burden of life. And we dream of vacations and retirement... of the freedom to do what we want, when we want.

And then, as we age, many of us really do become confined to home, especially in poor weather.

We long for something different than the various ways that this broken and sinful world oppresses us... and from how our sinful selfish selves see oppression in relationships and responsibilities that are great gifts.

In February, we get to see some signs of the coming end of winter oppression. On Groundhog Day, February 2, with some silly ceremony involving large rodents and shadows, we will remember that we are halfway through winter, at least according to the calendar. Then on Valentines Day we can turn our attention to the subject of love – those who love us, and those who we love.

They are signs of the times and a reminder of the coming spring, of warmth, and of renewed life.

May this article also be a mid-winter sign of the times. Remember that "It was for freedom that Christ has set us free, no longer to subject to a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5: 1) True freedom is coming. Freedom from this broken and sinful world to instead live the Lord's own heaven. Freedom from sin and our selfish ways to live as children of God, freely living in God's grace and love. Freedom to love our Lord and serve our neighbors without compulsion, but in joy.

Our Lord Jesus has won our freedom. We are not trapped, even if we feel like it sometimes. And the figurative winter is ending. "Spring" is coming. Jesus is coming!

Thanks be to God!

Pastor Adam

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**Acolyte Schedule for the month of February—**

*Acolyte for the Month*



2nd	Bailee Menchhofer
9th	Aaron Sheets
16th	Caleb Poe
23rd	Isaac Menchhofer



**The Church Women** do not have a meeting in February. We will, however, have a luncheon trip on Wednesday, February 12 at 11:30 a.m. at Brew Nation in Celina. Please join us for fun and fellowship. Weather permitting, we may walk to the end of the block to visit Winans Chocolates! A sign-up sheet is at the back of the church.



**The St. John Lutheran Men in Mission** will be meeting on Wednesday, February 19th, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The Bible Study, "God's Man at Home – "As for me and my household" based on Joshua 24:1-27, will be led by Don Smith. Paul Miller will share the scripture and prayer. All men are invited to attend.



**Catechism Class & Youth Group Information: Here is the schedule for January.**

1) Sunday, Febreuary 9th, at Zion (Chatt) - Catechism Class - Time ~ T.B.D. NO Chatta-John Youth Group this evening.

2) Sunday, February 23rd, at Zion (Chatt) - Catechism Class from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Youth Group from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Please bring a friend!

**Our benevolence contributions** for the month of February will benefit the Rockford Food Pantry .



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**Volunteers for the Backpack Program**




Our "Backpacker" volunteers will continue their duties on Tuesday, February 4th, & 18th at the C.A.L.L. Food Pantry in Celina beginning at 9:00 a.m. Thank you for your help with this ministry.



The next monthly meeting of the St. John Church Council will be held on Wednesday, February 12th, beginning at 7:00 p.m. All members of the church are always invited to attend the St. John Council meetings as guests.

Copies of the minutes of the Church Council meetings will be on the table in the back of the sanctuary (when available).

# FEBRUARY 2025 CALENDAR -- St. John Lutheran Church (Hopewell Township)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>Come Worship the Lord</b></p> 						1
<p>“Ground Hog” Day Worship with Holy Communion 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m.</p>	3	4 Volunteers for the Backpack Program 9:00 a.m.	5	6	7	8
<p>“Souper Bowl” Sunday 9 Worship &amp; Noisy Offering 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Catechism Class at Zion Time ~ T.B.D. <u>No</u> Chatta -John Youth Group</p>	10	11	12 Women of the Church Luncheon at Brew Nation, Celina 11:30 a.m. / Winan’s Chocolate Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.	13	14 Valentine’s Day! 	15
<p>Worship with Holy Communion 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m.</p>	17  <b>Newsletter articles are due.</b>	18 Volunteers for the Backpack Program 9:00 a.m.	19 Lutheran Men in Mission Meeting 7:00 p.m.	20	21	22
<p>Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Catechism Class at Zion 5:00 p.m. -6:00 p.m. Chatta-John Youth Group at Zion 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.</p>	24	25	26	27	28	