

From Pastor Dan

Confession is good for the soul. Therefore, I have a confession to make: my taste in Christmas music is fairly pedestrian. It tends more toward Bing Crosby's "White Christmas" than Handel's "Messiah." Now of course I like the hymns of the season... (By the way, just as a reminder to all those who wonder why worship in December is not replete with Christmas hymns, the official Christmas season on the church calendar doesn't begin until sundown on December 24th and continues for.... that's right, 12 days. Nevertheless, I try to sneak in a few.) ...yes, I like the hymns of the season and thoroughly revel in joining with the faithful singers of St. John in a heartfelt rendition of "O Come All Ye Faithful" along with all its Christmas season cousins. But overall, and much to the chagrin of some of my Christmas Chorale creating colleagues, my taste in Christmas music is pretty basic.

And the reason, I think, is because it was the kind of music which surrounded my cherished childhood Christmas experiences. I believe we remember most that which means the most. And for me, what means the most are memories associated with honest, sincere human connections; many of which seemed to occur with my family at Christmas time. Unfortunately, during most of the year those connections were pretty tepid; but during the Christmas season they flourished. Not sure why; it may have been the shared anticipation with my 3 brothers of Santa's impending visit or the frequent genuine smiles on my parents' faces. However I may have experienced them, those Christmas time connections are often associated with the pervasive music in my home at the time like "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" and Yorgi Yorgenson's "I Yust Go Nuts at Christmas." (The latter was one of my father's favorites; which could possibly explain some weak links in my genetic heritage.) Needless to say, a pageantry pipe organ production of Handel's Messiah was not on the playlist.

Those family memories are precious to me. Yet, another fond childhood memory of the season was singing Christmas carols with my BFF, Gretchen Platt. For three years (2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades), before she moved away (so much for the second "F"), Gretchen and I would joyfully go through our entire neighborhood door to door at least 2 nights a week during December singing the standard Christmas music of the day; again, basic stuff. And yes, two 7-year-olds were wandering around alone at night in snow and cold several blocks from home; but hey, it was the 1950's....

So, there you have it, my taste in Christmas music is pretty basic. I think it is because I associate those songs and hymns with cherished childhood memories. Yet, regardless of what kind of Christmas music any of us prefer, I ask you to allow the music of the season to wrap around you like a warm quilt on a cold night giving you a chance to reflect on the significance of honest, sincere connections in your life: connections with family, friends, children, parents, or spouse. And above all, I hope you will allow the music of this season to remind you of the significance of an honest and sincere connection with your God.

God bless you and Merry Christmas to all.

Pastor Dan

Council Members. Here is a list of Council Members. Please contact them with any concerns or issues you may have. Council meets once a month and welcomes input from the congregation.

President: Randy Knapp – 715-581-5558; rknapp@eojohnson.com

Vice President: Sue Cooley – 715-675-8566; cooley1512@outlook.com

Treasurer: Curt Cooley – 715-675-8566; usfcool@gmail.com

Secretary: Tammi Smith – 715-581-3892; tammism79@gmail.com;
tammism@aspirus.org

Trustees: Lee Sillars – 715-218-5041; lsillars@aol.com

Don Voelker – 715-675-7062; midmainefarms@hotmail.com

Evangelism: Duane Askew – 715-675-4111; daskew@airrun.net

Fellowship: John Marquardt – 715-675-3300; johnnym54401@gmail.com

Education: Connie Nowak – 715-675-1577; bcdenowak@gmail.com

Worship: Jan Mueller – 715-675-9558; dmjm5455.wau@gmail.com

Mission Statement: “We are called to serve God; serve each other; serve the community; serve the wider church.”

Serve God through worship, prayer, and the dedication of our lives to His kingdom.

Serve Each Other by mutual care and support to encourage everyone to fulfill their God-given potential. **Serve the Community** by making known the good news about Jesus and the love of God by word and deed. **Serve the Wider Church** through prayer and practical support to help spread the good news about Jesus throughout the world.

Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. Sunday Mornings

Please join us as we worship our Lord!

Homebound Parishioners. The following parishioners are no longer able to consistently attend worship services. I visit them to remind them that they are loved by God and loved by their community of faith, St. John. Sometimes it is helpful to hear those reminders from someone in addition to me.

Ann Kieckhafer 1347 Crystal Avenue Room 236-1 Naperville, IL 60563	Ellen Kruit 1821 N. 4 th Avenue Room 215 Wausau, WI 54401	Harriet Wanner 1240 Merrill Ave. Apt. 2 Wausau, WI 54401
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Christmas Decorating – December 2. Please join us on Saturday, December 2, at 9:00 a.m. to help decorate our Christmas tree and sanctuary. With plenty of help the decorating should take about an hour of your time. Thank you in advance for your help on this project.

Reminder! If you are in the hospital and would like Pastor Dan to visit, **PLEASE CALL** and let him know. Because of privacy issues, the hospital will not notify him or the church that you are there.

Food Pantry. The food items collected for the food pantry in December will be donated to The Salvation Army. Your donations are appreciated. If you are able to help out with delivering these items to the local organizations, please contact the church office.

Council Meeting Minutes. Copies of the minutes from the most recently held Council meeting are by the mailboxes. Please feel free to pick up a copy. If more are needed, please contact the church office.

Announcements. If you would like to have an announcement included in our weekly bulletin or newsletter, please submit the information in writing and put it in either Pastor Dan's mailbox or the administrative assistant's mailbox located in the narthex. If it is more convenient for you, you can submit your announcements via e-mail to stjohnwausau@msn.com. The deadline for submitting announcements for the Sunday bulletin is the Thursday before by 9:00 a.m. The deadline for the newsletter is indicated on the monthly calendar.

Our Greatest Need

**If our greatest need had been information,
God would have sent us an educator.**

**If our greatest need had been technology,
God would have sent us a scientist.**

**If our greatest need had been money,
God would have sent us an economist.**

**If our greatest need had been pleasure,
God would have sent us an entertainer,**

**But our greatest need was forgiveness and acceptance,
So God sent us a Savior.**

December Birthdays

12-1 Drew Detert
12-1 Brenda Tesch
12-3 Tom Ohrmundt
12-4 Robbie Haroldson
12-5 Ryder Schindler
12-5 Hudson Voigt
12-5 Jan Ziebell
12-6 Dan Detert
12-7 Sarah Sala
12-10 Laverne Grunenwald
12-10 Tari Harter
12-11 Maci Landwehr
12-12 Avery Oestreich
12-14 Levi Ohrmundt
12-14 Luke Saari
12-16 Mark Anderson
12-16 Marilyn Grunenwald
12-17 Lane Hoeft
12-17 John Rakow
12-18 Veronica LaVake
12-18 Pete Seubert
12-18 Serena Ugoretz
12-19 Andrew Harter
12-20 Braxtin Borth
12-22 Rebecca Voelker
12-23 Madison Voelker
12-24 Cherish Oestreich
12-24 Jacob Paulsen
12-25 Barb Nass
12-27 Deb Maley
12-28 James LaVake
12-29 Sue Cooley
12-29 Alex Zahn
12-30 Jesse Hein
12-30 Luciana Nass
12-30 Tammi Walter
12-31 Ava Knaup

December Anniversaries

12-5 Tom & Karen Ohrmundt
12-6 John Czarnota & Erin Randall
12-11 Don & Carol Prochnow
12-21 Duane & Patsy Askew
12-26 Bob & Kara Rode
12-29 Chad & Tammi Walter