

## Saint John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

911 Emergency/GPS Location: 215 St. John Road, Elizabethville, 17023

For US Mail Deliveries: PO Box 270, Berrysburg, 17005-0270

717-362-9519 | pt@stjohnhillchurch.org | www.stjohnhillchurch.org

### Our Mission

*St. John congregation, responding to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, unites together to preach and teach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission. With God's guidance and grace, we strive to boldly proclaim by word and action the reconciling Gospel of Jesus: Working together for justice and peace, and caring for those in need in our community and world. We invite everyone to join us wherever you are on your faith journey.*

Adopted December 8, 2013

### Serving Today

The Rev. Thomas G. Bruner, Jr.	Pastor
Laurie Little	Young Christians Minister
Judy Ferree	Organist
Ty Troutman	Senior Choir Director
Gail Billow	Lead Usher
Harold and Pat Herb	Greeters
Brady Dresel and Kyan Peters	Acolytes
Matt Williard	Lector
Joshua Paul	Council President

For the month of December, the **Celebrate Inserts** are presented by Bob and Faye Weaver as we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. The support of one pastor for one month in the **Konde Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania** are presented by Sandra and Randy Paul for the Glory of God. **Tree 4 Hope** is presented by Delmar and Ginny Enders for the blessing of grandchildren: Miana, Olivia, Caleb, Axten, Sophia and Kyrah.

The **Altar Flowers** are presented by Rob and Courtney Foreman in honor of Grayson's 8<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Welcome to all who are worshipping with us this morning. If you are a visitor, please sign our guest book in the foyer and please worship with us again and join in other congregational family activities!

### Sunday Morning Liturgy

#### God Gathers Us in Prayer and Praise

Announcements

Organ Prelude and Silent Prayer

\*Confession and Forgiveness:

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, our life, our mercy, our might.

P: As we await the day of the Lord, let us confess our sin.

*(brief silence follows)*

P: Great and Holy One,

C: **IN THIS TIME OF WANING DAYLIGHT, WE CONFESS THE SHADOWS OF SIN IN OUR LIVES. WE BUILD OURSELVES UP AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHERS. WE RELY ON OUR OWN EFFORTS TO MAKE OUR LIVES SECURE. YET YOU, O LORD, ARE THE POTTER, AND WE ARE THE CLAY. COME TO RESTORE US IN YOUR IMAGE, REMAKE US INTO YOUR PEOPLE, AND REBULD WHAT SIN HAS BROKEN, THAT WE AND THE WHOLE CREATION MAY REJOICE. AMEN.**

P: Fear not, people of God: the Almighty has done great things for us. God casts away our sin from us and makes of us a new creation. In Jesus Christ, God comes to set us free. Take heart in the tender compassion of our God.

C: **AMEN.**

\*Opening Hymn #249 "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"

\*Greeting:

P: Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the promised gifts of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **AND ALSO WITH YOU.**

\*Prayer of the Day

Advent Wreath Litany – *See Insert in Bulletin*

#### We Hear God's Word

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Psalm: 126

Second I Thessalonians 5:16-24

\*Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Response after the reading is announced: **GLORY TO YOU, O LORD.**

Response after the reading is concluded: **PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST.**

Young Persons Go with Miss Laurie for Celebration Time

Sermon

#### We Respond to All That God Gives Us

\*We Proclaim Our Faith:

**I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST, GOD'S ONLY SON, OUR LORD, WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY, SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE, WAS CRUCIFIED, DIED, AND WAS BURIED; HE DESCENDED TO THE DEAD. ON THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN; HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, HE IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER, AND HE WILL COME TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD. (THIS MEANS THAT) I BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST, TRUE GOD, BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER IN ETERNITY, AND ALSO A TRUE HUMAN BEING, BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY, IS - MY LORD. HE HAS REDEEMED ME, A LOST AND CONDEMNED HUMAN BEING. HE HAS PURCHASED AND FREED ME FROM ALL SINS, FROM DEATH, AND FROM THE POWER OF THE DEVIL, NOT WITH GOLD OR SILVER BUT WITH HIS HOLY, PRECIOUS BLOOD AND WITH HIS INNOCENT SUFFERING AND DEATH. HE HAS DONE ALL THIS IN ORDER THAT I MAY BELONG TO HIM, LIVE UNDER HIM IN HIS KINGDOM, AND SERVE HIM IN ETERNAL RIGHTEOUSNESS, INNOCENCE, AND BLESSEDNESS, JUST AS HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD AND LIVES AND RULES ETERNALLY. THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE.**

-Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*

Offering of Our Gifts and Choir Anthem

\*Prayers of the Church

\*Our Lord's Prayer:

**OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE THY NAME, THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.**

**GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD; AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US; AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.**

**FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.**

#### God Sends Us to Share the Good News

\*Blessing:

P: God most high, God with us, God poured out on us, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless us now and forever.

C: **AMEN**

\*Dismissal:

P: Go in peace. Prepare the Way.

C: **WE WILL. THANKS BE TO GOD!**

\*Closing Hymn #259 "Fling Wide the Door"

\*Organ Postlude and We Depart to Serve

\* \* \* \* \*

\* Please stand, if able to do so.

## POINSETTIA MEMORIALS

In memory of John & Maryellen Hoover by Bonnie & Ron Erb

In memory of Paul & Gloria Erb by Bonnie & Ron Erb

In honor of The Christ Child's Birth by Bob & Faye Weaver

In honor of the birth of Jesus and for our many blessings by Louise & Carl Baumgardner

In honor of our parents, Faye & Bob Weaver and  
Mary & Carl Baumgardner, Sr. by Louise & Carl Baumgardner

In honor of the birth of Jesus by Lois & Jim Watson

In memory of our parents, Jean & Austin Watson by Lois & Jim Watson

In memory of Paulino Ventura, Felomina Ventura, Epehema Ventura &  
Melagros Ariola by Wayne & Daisy Thomas

In memory of Duane Billow and Betty & Warren Hassinger by  
Gail Billow, Holly, Corey, Granger & Bristol Scheib

In honor of Barry & Barb Williard by Kim & Barry Williard, Jr.

In memory of Paul & Lovel Welker by Kim & Barry Williard, Jr.

In memory of loved ones by Dale & Carol Hassinger

For the many blessings of parents, children and in celebration of the  
birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ by Tim & Lori Motter

In memory of our parents: George & Mary Yeager; Richard Klouser &  
Jean Klouser Kessler by Chris & Dana Klouser

In memory of her husband, Jeff Ressler, her parents George & Mary Yeager,  
and her Uncle Terry Witmer by LuAnn Ressler

In memory of their nephew, Mason Miller by Dana Klouser & LuAnn Ressler

In honor of the Birth of Jesus by the DeSoto Family

In honor of the birth of our Savior, who is Christ the Lord and for our many blessings by Judy & John Ferree

In celebration of the birth of Jesus and for our many blessings by the Barder Family

For the many blessings of our family and church family by Heidi & Jeffrey Lehman

In memory of our parents, Ira "Pete" & Alberta Antes and Eugene Howard by Marilyn & Ira Antes

For the many blessings of family and friends this holiday season by Rob, Courtney & Grayson Foreman

In memory of the Christ Child's birth by Delmar & Ginny Enders

In loving memory of husband, father and grandfather, Andrew Nichols, by the Nichols Family

**Today, Sunday, December 17**

9am Adult Bible Study (In-Person)  
9am Youth Group Faith Formation with Matt & Olivia (In-Person)  
9am Confirmation Class  
9am SONDay Celebration (In-Person)  
10:15am Worship, Including Lighting of the Advent Wreath and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for In-Person Young Worshipers (In-Person and On Zoom)  
6-9pm Advent/Christmas Open House Hosted by Ty and Kim Troutman (After hearing the regrets of folks who couldn't attend last year, Kim & Ty will again be welcoming all members of their St. John Congregational Family who can stop by at any point during those hours, While many of us may already know their home as "the Christmas house in Loyaltown" their address (also in the current directory) is 100 Deitrich Road, Lykens.)

**Monday, December 18**

8-9:30am Pastor Tom's Office Hours

**Tuesday, December 19**

8-9:30am Pastor Tom's Office Hours  
5:30mpm Choir Gathering  
7pm Church Dartball League Match – St. John at Lykens United Methodist (*note change of evening*)

**Wednesday, December 20**

8am-12pm Pastor Tom's Office Hours

**Thursday, December 21**

8am-12pm Pastor Tom's Office Hours

**Friday, December 22**

8-9:30am Pastor Tom's Office Hours

**Saturday, December 23**

Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off

**Next Sunday, December 24**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent:**

9am Adult Bible Study (In-Person)  
9am Youth Group Faith Formation with Matt & Olivia (In-Person)  
9am Confirmation Class  
9am SONDay Celebration (In-Person)  
10:15am Worship, Including Lighting of the Advent Wreath and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for In-Person Young Worshipers (In-Person and On Zoom)

**The Nativity of Our Lord/Christmas Eve:**

4pm Christmas Eve "Celebration" Worship (In-Person and On Zoom)  
8pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship (In-Person and On Zoom)

**Looking Ahead**

For our worship on December 31, when Pastor Tom is planning time away and Jim Watson will be leading our traditional Liturgy of Lessons and Carols, ***Pastor Tom is still looking for 5 more readers*** for the traditional Christmas readings which make up an important part of the morning. In recent years, members of Youth Group have handled this ministry duty but, this year, a number of our youth will be away at a retreat that morning and so readers of all ages are being sought. Please speak with Pastor Tom as soon as possible if you would like to share in this joyous morning.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our Women of the ELCA of St. John remind us all, as we send our Christmas cards, to remember and include the folks in our congregational family who are "homebound" and who get out very little if at all.

2024 offering envelopes are available in the foyer. Please stop by the table and take along those of family members and neighbors!

Four new 2024 sponsor sheets are now posted on the bulletin board in the foyer area – three of them 1. for continuing ministry support for our ***Celebrate*** bulletin inserts (\$22/month); 2. for ***Tree 4 Hope***, an innovative anti-poverty ministry begun by our neighbors at Tree of Life Evangelical Lutheran Church, Linglestown Road, Harrisburg, and serving those in need in Guatemala, involving an orphanage, mission trips from our area, and, now, a new girls' school called "Hope Academy" - a world mission with a local connection (\$50/month) – and 3. for providing one month of a ***Konde Diocese (in Tanzania, Africa) Pastors Salary*** (\$50/month). The fourth is the separate sign-up sheet for sponsoring weekly altar flowers in 2024, (\$35 per week) – ***please note that we are especially in need of sponsors for our altar flowers for Sundays, January 21 and 28.*** To sponsor any of these four ministries in honor or in memory of loved ones or events, please simply stop by to sign up or, if easier, please feel free to call or email Pastor Tom, who can place your name on the desired month(s).

Please place your non-perishable food donations for the food pantry at the Upper Dauphin Human Services Center in Lykens on any shelf inside the north (right side, coming in the front doors) closet in the foyer, where the door is labelled accordingly. As the contributions add up, deliveries will be made to the pantry by **Larry Gessner**. Thank you!

**Hospitalized/Residing in Senior Living/Dealing with Acute Illness:**

- **Cindy Carr** – At Home, Undergoing Treatment for Autoimmune Disorder and Resulting Organ Damage
- **Judy Cheatham** – Rm. #47B, Complete Care at Annapolis, 900 Van Buren Street, Annapolis, MD 21403
- **Timothy Enders** – Rm. #120, The Gardens at York Terrace, 2401 W. Market St., Pottsville, 17901
- **Cora Mace** – Rm. #3647, Roosevelt 3, Masonic Health Care Center, 600 Freemason Drive, Elizabethtown, 17022
- **Joyce Matter** – Rm. #128, Viva Senior Living at Harrisburg, 150 Kempton Avenue, Harrisburg, 17111 (717.909.0417)
- **Steven Schlegel** – Home, Recovering from Latest Round of Inpatient Chemotherapy
- **Fred Weaver** – Rm. #103, Spring Creek Rehab. and Healthcare Center, 1205 S. 28<sup>th</sup> St., Harrisburg, 17111

**Our Faith Active in Worship – December 10, 2023**

<b><i>Current – Approx. Budget Goal</i></b>	<b>\$2,796</b>
Current – Offerings Received	\$2,586
Benevolence – Offerings Received	\$180
Improvement – Offerings Received	\$85
Children & Youth Ministry – Offerings Received	\$305
Total Attendance	<b>Zoom – 17, In Person – 75</b>

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