

First Sunday of Christmas
December 31, 2023

10:15am

Saint John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

911 Emergency/GPS Location: 215 St. John Road, Elizabethtown, 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
Ron and Bonnie Erb	Greeters
Jacob and Marc Schaffner	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 Christ's birth.

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 of Lessons & Carols

God Gathers Us in Prayer and Praise

Announcements

Organ Prelude and Silent Prayer

*Carol #300 "The First Noel"

*Christmas Dialog:

L: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

C: **THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS, AND THE DARKNESS HAS NOT OVERCOME IT.**

L: Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

C: **WE HAVE BEHELD CHRIST'S GLORY, GLORY AS OF THE ONLY SON FROM THE FATHER.**

L: To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

C: **IN THE WORD WAS LIFE, AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE.**

*Greeting:

P: Today Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **AND ALSO WITH YOU.**

*Prayer of the Day

We Hear God's Word

Lessons and Carols:

First Lesson: Matthew 1:18-25

Hymn #294 "In the Bleak Midwinter"

Read by Kim Williard

Second Lesson: Luke 2:1-20

Hymn #277 "Away in a Manger"

Read by Barry Williard

Third Lesson: Luke 2:21-40

Hymn #289 "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Read by Pat Herb

Fourth Lesson: Luke 2:41-52

Hymn #283 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Read by Ginny Enders

Fifth Lesson: Matthew 2:1-12

Hymn WOV #646 "We Three Kings of Orient Are"

Read by Pat Herb

Sixth Lesson: Matthew 2:13-23

Hymn #296 "What Child Is This?"

Read by Kylie Bender

Seventh Lesson: John 1:1-18

Hymn #267 "Joy to the World"

Read by Kim Williard

We Respond to All That God Gives Us

A New Creed:

**WE ARE NOT ALONE,
WE LIVE IN GOD'S WORLD.**

**WE BELIEVE IN GOD:
WHO HAS CREATED AND IS CREATING,
WHO HAS COME IN JESUS,
THE WORD MADE FLESH,
TO RECONCILE AND MAKE NEW,
WHO WORKS IN US AND OTHERS
BY THE SPIRIT.**

WE TRUST IN GOD.

**WE ARE CALLED TO BE THE CHURCH:
TO CELEBRATE GOD'S PRESENCE,
TO LIVE WITH RESPECT IN CREATION,
TO LOVE AND SERVE OTHERS,
TO SEEK JUSTICE AND RESIST EVIL,
TO PROCLAIM JESUS, CRUCIFIED AND RISEN,
OUR JUDGE AND OUR HOPE.**

**IN LIFE, IN DEATH, IN LIFE BEYOND DEATH,
GOD IS WITH US.**

WE ARE NOT ALONE.

THANKS BE TO GOD.

-The United Church of Canada, 1968

Offering of Our Gifts

*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: May the Word that Mary brought to birth carry us into new and abundant life.

AII: AMEN

P: May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms enfold us with love and strength.

AII: AMEN

P: May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world.

AII: AMEN

P: And the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon us and remain with us always.

AII: AMEN

*Dismissal:

P: Go in peace. The Word made Flesh is with us.

C: WE WILL! THANKS BE TO GOD!

*Carol #290 "Go Tell It on the Mountain"

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* Please stand, if able to do so.

Next Sunday, December 31

9am Adult Bible Study (In-Person)
9am SONDay Celebration (In-Person)
10:15am Annual Liturgy of Lessons & Carols, Including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for In-Person Young Worshipers (In-Person and On Zoom) – **thank you to Jim Watson, our guest worship leader, and the readers who are sharing the Christmas Bible readings this morning! Until Pastor Tom's return to the office on Thursday, Pastor Patrick Wirick, who serves the Klingerstown Parish, is on call for any emergency needs for pastoral care, particularly in the event of a death or a critical illness. Should you need to get in touch with Pastor Pat, please call Fay Nichols, our Telephone Prayer Chain Coordinator, at 717-329-7447, who will both place the concern on the prayer chain and contact Pastor Pat. Because the pastors in our conference are still "stretched thin" with the continued inability of the Rife/Killinger Parish to locate an interim pastor, if an emergency is other than a death or critical illness, please clarify when you contact Fay whether you would like Pastor Pat to be notified or if you are calling "only" to place your need on the telephone prayer chain. Or, Pastor Pat can be reached directly by calling 717.439.9037.**

Tuesday, January 2

7:30pm Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, January 3

6:30-8pm **Do-nut Forget, Jesus Loves You** Gathering of **Celebration Club with Miss Laurie**

Thursday, January 4

8am-12pm Pastor Tom's Office Hours

Friday, January 5

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

Saturday, January 6

Epiphany of Our Lord

Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off

Next Sunday, January 7

Baptism of Our Lord

9am Adult Bible Study (In-Person)

9am Confirmation Class (In-Person)

9am SONDay Celebration (In-Person)

10:15am Worship, Including Recognition of Newly-Baptized, Sacrament of Holy Communion and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for In-Person Young Worshipers (In-Person and On Zoom)

Looking Ahead

"Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief will resume on Monday, January 8, at 9:00 A.M.

Book Discussion Group continues meeting on Zoom for the winter months, with snacks still a part of the experience! Pick them up in the kitchen on the Sunday which is the day before each book discussion gathering to share while online the following evening. The next Zoom gathering will take place at **6:30 P.M. on Monday, January 8**. If you have any questions or need to locate a book, please contact Ann (rahbruner@gmail.com) and she'll quickly locate a book for you. Please join in anytime – the fellowship is wonderful, the snacks are yummy, and all are welcome!

Our Equal Exchange/Fair Trade Products crew – Courtney Foreman, Grayson Foreman, and Ann Bruner – will host another fellowship time immediately following worship on January 14, downstairs in the "Sunday School" Room, to sample and purchase those products, the sale of which brings a fairer return to small growers around the world, including here in the US, while encouraging sustainable agriculture.

"The fourth quarter and year end audit will be held on Monday, January 15th at church at 10:00 a.m. Please have all records at the church for this very important audit. Also, don't forget to include a completed year end report which needs to be copied in the bulletin of reports. Thank you. Pat Herb"

Fill the Pew!

The ELCA women of the congregation are holding A Fill The Pew event the month of January. All items received will benefit the Weekend Snack Pack program.

Three items are especially needed at this time: Pop tarts, individual sized cereal, Vienna sausage – 4.6oz cans. Thank you in advance for supporting this event.

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

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** – Penn State Hershey Medical Center – Undergoing Inpatient Chemotherapy
- **Fred Weaver** – Rm. #306, Harmony at West Shore, 1910 Technology Parkway, Mechanicsburg, 17050

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