

## Saint John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

### 911 Emergency/GPS Location:

215 St. John Road, Elizabethtown, 17023

### For US Mail Deliveries:

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## 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
Courtney Foreman	Holy Communion Assistant
Ginny and Delmar Enders	Altar Guild Preparation
Gail Billow	Lead Usher
Josh and Sara Paul	Greeters
Makayla Crabb and Isaac Schaffner	Acolytes
Matt Williard	Lectors
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 Kyrak.

This week's ***Altar Flowers*** are sponsored by Ira and Marilyn Antes.

Welcome to all who are worshipping with us this morning. If you are a visitor, please sign our guest book in the foyer. As we celebrate our Lord's Supper, we welcome to our table all baptized Christians who have received the sacrament in their home congregations. All persons who do not yet commune are invited to come forward to receive a blessing. Please worship with us again and join in other congregational family activities!

## Sunday Morning Liturgy – ELW Setting 10

### 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 REBUILD 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 #436 "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying"

\*Apostolic Greeting

Pg. 203

\*Kyrie (sung in unison)

Pg. 203

\*Hymn of Praise: "Come, let us join..." (sung in unison)

Pg. 204

\*Prayer of the Day

Advent Wreath Litany – ***See Insert in Bulletin***

### We Hear God's Word

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

Psalms: 80:1-7, 17-19

Second Reading: I Corinthians 1:3-9

\*Gospel Acclamation (sung in unison):

**ALLELUIA! LORD AND SAVIOR: OPEN NOW YOUR SAVING WORD. LET IT BURN LIKE FIRE WITHIN US; SPEAK UNTIL OUR HEARTS ARE STIRRED. ALLELUIA! LORD WE SING FOR THE GOOD NEWS THAT YOU BRING. (Pg. 205)**

\*Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

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

\*Nicene Creed

Pg. 104

\*Prayers of the Church

Offering of Our Gifts and Choir Anthem

\*Offertory Hymn (#182) (sung as gifts are brought forward):

**LET THE VINEYARDS BE FRUITFUL LORD, AND FILL TO THE BRIM OUR CUP OF BLESSING. GATHER A HARVEST FROM THE SEEDS THAT WERE SOWN, THAT WE MAY BE FED WITH THE BREAD OF LIFE. GATHER THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF ALL; UNITE THEM WITH THE PRAYERS WE OFFER NOW. GRACE OUR TABLE WITH YOUR PRESENCE AND GIVE US A FORETASTE OF THE FEAST TO COME.**

\*Offertory Prayer:

P: Let us pray... our Savior and Lord. All: **AMEN.**

## We Share in God's Supper

\*Great Thanksgiving (spoken):

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **AND ALSO WITH YOU.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **WE LIFT THEM TO THE LORD.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.**

P: ...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

\*We Respond in Praise (sung in unison):

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD, GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT, HEAV'N AND EARTH  
ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY. HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST. BLESSED IS HE  
WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST,  
HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST. (Pg. 207)**

\*Eucharistic Prayer:

P: ...we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

All Sing: **CHRIST HAS DIED. CHRIST IS RISEN. CHRIST WILL COME  
AGAIN. (Pg. 207)**

P: ...be all honor and glory in your Holy Church, now and forever.

All Sing: **AMEN, AMEN, AMEN. (Pg. 207)**

\*Our Lord's Prayer – traditional version on right Pg. 208

We Partake of Our Lord's Supper (As we share in the sacrament, please join in singing  
the praise song "O Lamb of God"):

**O LAMB OF GOD, YOU BEAR THE SIN OF ALL THE WORLD AWAY; YOU  
SUFFERED DEATH OUR LIVES TO SAVE: HAVE MERCY NOW, WE PRAY. O  
LAMB OF GOD, YOU BEAR THE SIN OF ALL THE WORLD AWAY; YOU SET US  
FREE FROM GUILT AND GRAVE: HAVE MERCY NOW, WE PRAY. O LAMB OF  
GOD, YOU BEAR THE SIN OF ALL THE WORLD AWAY; ETERNAL PEACE WITH  
GOD YOU MADE: GIVE US YOUR PEACE, WE PRAY. (Pg. 208)**

\*Post Communion Blessing:

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen us and keep us in his  
grace.

All: **AMEN**

## God Sends Us to Share the Good News

\*Post Communion Hymn (#204) (sung):

**THANKFUL HEARTS AND VOICES RAISE; TELL EVERYONE WHAT GOD HAS  
DONE. LET ALL WHO SEEK THE LORD REJOICE AND BEAR CHRIST'S HOLY  
NAME. SEND US WITH YOUR PROMISES AND LEAD YOUR PEOPLE FORTH  
IN JOY WITH SHOUTS OF THANKSGIVING. ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA!**

\*Post Communion Prayer:

P: Let us pray... Christ our Lord.

All: **AMEN**

\*Blessing and Dismissal:

P: Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever.

All: **AMEN**

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

All: **WE WILL! THANKS BE TO GOD!**

\*Closing Hymn #490 "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

\*Organ Postlude and We Depart to Serve

\* \* \* \* \*

\* Please stand, if able to do so.

### 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 – November 26, 2023

<b>Current – Approx. Budget Goal</b>	<b>\$2,796</b>
Current – Offerings Received	\$2,160
Benevolence – Offerings Received	\$190
Improvement – Offerings Received	\$45
Children & Youth Ministry – Offerings Received	\$145
Total Attendance	<b>Zoom – 18, In Person – 72</b>

### “St John’s Restoration 250” Financial Update – As of November 26, 2023

Final Total Project Cost (under \$220,000 Budgeted)	\$216,795
Memorials Interest Money Expended for	\$82,230
	(under \$88,000 Budgeted)
Total Financial Gifts Received	\$123,655
Total Financial Gifts Pledged, Not Yet Received	\$10,910

### Today, Sunday, December 3

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

***Our steeple stars will be lighted for the season, beginning this evening.***

### Monday, December 4

- 8-9:30am Pastor Tom’s Office Hours
- No Church Dartball League Match – St. John on a Bye Evening
- 6:30pm **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. (Thank you to Rita Glace who is providing the December 4 goodies – for our discussion of **Blessings** by Anna Quindlen. Copies are available in the church library and are circulating among the participants. If you have any questions or need to locate a book, please contact Ann ([rahbruner@gmail.com](mailto: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!

### Tuesday, December 5

- 8-9:30am Pastor Tom’s Office Hours
- 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal

### Wednesday, December 6

- 10am-12pm** Pastor Tom’s Office Hours – Shortened with Medical Appointment
- 6:30-8pm **Happy Birthday, Jesus** gathering of **Celebration Club with Miss Laurie** In-Person at the Church

### Thursday, December 7

- 8am-12pm Pastor Tom’s Office Hours
- 5:30pm Free Community Holiday Meal at Salem United Church of Christ, Elizabethtown (This meal in a series of Free Community Dinners is intended to especially benefit persons who are in need of food and/or fellowship support, but there are no income guidelines or restrictions of any kind. This ministry is being supported by a number of area christian congregations, including St. John, as well as local businesses and other organizations.)

### Friday, December 8

- 8-9:30am Pastor Tom’s Office Hours

### Saturday, December 9

- Day of Prayer for Peace with Justice Beginning in the Middle East**
- Pastor Tom’s Weekly Day Off

## Next Sunday, December 10

### Second 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)  
11:15am **Part One of our Annual Congregational Meeting** (In-Person and On Zoom, we will take action on the election of four members to our Congregational Council and proposed budgets for 2024. A copy of the main 2024 budgets is included in the December/January **St. John's Epistle**, along with the names of the four nominees for Congregational Council. All voting members – those confirmed members who have communed and contributed during 2022 or 2023 – are especially encouraged to attend this brief, but very important, meeting!)
- 2-4pm Everyone is invited to this year's different sort of Advent/Christmas Program, a Christmas Pajama Party!! Put on your favorite holiday pj's and come on out for a movie and other fun surprises! Please contact Miss Laurie to learn more.

## Looking Ahead

Congregational Council will hold their December meeting on **Wednesday, December 13, at 6:00 P.M.** at the church.

After hearing the regrets of folks who couldn't attend last year, on Sunday, December 17, from 6:00 to 9:00pm, Ty and Kim Troutman will again be hosting an Advent/Christmas Open House at their home for 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.

\* \* \* \* \*

The 2024 schedule of Greeters will soon be prepared. If you would be interested in serving occasionally in this important ministry, please speak with Pastor Tom. Basically, this ministry involves arriving about 15-20 minutes prior to worship on a Sunday morning when scheduled and standing (or sitting if needed – no problem) just inside the main doors in the foyer to say a warm hello to those arriving for the morning. For those coming through the doors for the first time, a point in the right direction can also be a great help. No experience is required, and the Greeter(s) assigned on a given morning can be a single person, a couple, or an entire family as desired. And, if it turns out that you aren't able to serve on a scheduled date, you can simply switch with someone else on the schedule or, if it is at the last minute, simply let Pastor Tom know. Thank you for prayerfully considering this call to serve!

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). 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).

**End of Used Battery Collection:** After many years of recycling and re-charging our old batteries, Larry Gessner has had to bring that ministry to a close. We thank him for all those years of faithful, behind-the-scenes service and ask that no more batteries be brought to the church.

Please be sure that, if you are a communing member of St. John, you turn in **at least one communion record card** this year. Also, if you are a contributing member of the congregation, please be sure that you **use your offering envelopes at least once** this year, so that you are on record as having made a contribution. Please help to make sure that our parish records are as accurate as possible!

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!

To make sure that our blessed prayer shawls get to as many folks in need of God's healing touch as possible, it is now possible for anyone from the St. John congregational family to deliver a prayer shawl to a person who is known to them to be hurting in body, mind, and/or spirit, and who would be blessed by receiving one of our shawls. To obtain a shawl, please first contact Pastor Tom, who will help you with the process. ***(Please bear in mind that it is the intention of the prayer shawl ministry that each person receive just one shawl "for life", to be used in whatever time(s) of brokenness they may face.)***

The Youth Group continues to collect aluminum – aluminum only, please – in the lower level of the barn, facing toward Elizabethville. ***Please be sure to place your aluminum inside the sliding door and not outside in the pull-in space, where the animals tend to create a mess with donations.*** Thank you for your help with this major fundraiser for our youth and help for our environment!