



# ST. JOHN'S EPISTLE

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
BERRYSBURG, PA | OCTOBER 2024

Dear Friends in Jesus,

At the end of this month and the beginning of November, I am planning to do something I have never before done in my 36+ years as a pastor – missing worship in my home congregational family for the “lesser” festivals of **Reformation Sunday** and **All Saints Sunday**.

What's happening is that Tim and Gabby are planning a large gathering to celebrate their March 2023 wedding at a venue near Gabby's home in Upstate New York – inviting friends and extended family members it was not practical to include back at that time. That gathering is planned for Saturday, October 26, with the family celebrating time extending over into the next day, which is of course Reformation Sunday. With this important event already planned for the last weekend in October, Ann and I then moved our traditional October vacation time to the end of October and the beginning of November, to allow us to spend some time in the Finger Lakes Region of New York, an area we came to know and love during the years when Dan and Richelle were doing their chiropractic training there. So, long story short, I won't be planning to return to the office until Thursday, November 7, which means I will also be missing All Saints Sunday worship here on November 3.

These two days are known as “lesser” festivals not because they don't matter all that much, but rather to distinguish them from the “big ones” – **The Nativity of Our Lord/Christmas Eve & Day**, **The Resurrection of Our Lord/Easter Day**, and **The Day of Pentecost**. (For these celebrations at the center of our Christian Year, I would never consider being away from my post unless I would happen to be gravely ill or no longer among the living, nor would any pastor worth her or his salt ever consider doing so.)

Among the “lesser” festivals, of which we Lutheran Christians observe almost 30, I would identify Reformation Sunday (*when we remember Martin Luther's October 31, 1517 “unleashing” of what would come to be known as the Protestant Reformation and, in doing so, focus on the fact that the Church of Jesus is always in need of reforming since it is after all made up of saved and redeemed sinners*) and All Saints Sunday (*when we remember that we are part of a very big Christian Family spanning 20 Centuries and, in so doing, call to mind our congregational family members who have died since the previous year*) as perhaps the most important, which is why I have always made it a priority to be present – up until this year when my calling to be Tim's Dad unfortunately conflicts with my calling to be a pastor. The fact that these are the two lesser festivals which we always make a point to observe on the closest Sunday if the festival day itself doesn't fall on a Sunday – while the others simply pass on by – confirms the importance we Lutheran Christians place on them.

And so I am writing these lines to ask that you please not think about my planned absence on October 27 and November 3 as implying in any way that these two festival days are one bit less important than ever – far from it! We are tremendously blessed here at St. John to have two very gifted worship leaders – Jim Watson and Matt Williard – who will be planning to step in during my absence to give these important days their “due”. So, please plan to be present those mornings just as you normally would, doing just what God would have us do – engaging in faith formation time and worship with our congregational family. And I will look forward to being back with you in worship on November 10, as our Christian Year begins to draw near its end – but that’s a subject for another day!

***Pastor Tom***

## **News from Miss Laurie, Young Christians Minister**

Autumn greetings, everyone! In recognition of this FABULOUS season, we’ve got a bunch of great faith formation activities set for October! Grab your calendars and pen in these awesome autumn opportunities:

- Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> – It’s the next meeting of Celebration Club! Join us in the pavilion (weather permitting) from 6:30 – 8:00 when our theme will be “You’re the APPLE of Jesus’ Eye”!!
- Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup> – Join us for an “I Be-LEAF in Jesus” SONday Celebration!
- Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup> – It’s “Candy Corn Capers” SONday Celebration! Join us for the fun! There will be a Sunny Sermon in church, too!
- Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> – Back by popular demand, it’s our Autumn Halloween Spooktacular! Join us in the pavilion (weather permitting) from 4:30 – 6:00 for a “fiendishly” good time!!
- Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup> – All aboard the hay wagon – it’s time for our Harvest Hayride! Dress for the weather and join us as we experience the beauty of God’s world “on the road (again)”!

Join us for all these great scheduled autumn activities!! It’s going to be a FANTASTIC FALL!!

One final note for your October calendars – I will be out of town on **Sunday, October 13<sup>th</sup>** so there will be **NO SONday Celebration or Celebration Time** that day!! Other than that day, see you at the celebrations!!

***Miss Laurie***

## **First Holy Communion**

First Holy Communion Instruction for baptized young persons in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade or older who have not yet communed is being held in two parts – on Tuesday, October 1, from 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. and Wednesday, October 16, also from 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. Because Pastor Tom is planning to be away on Reformation Sunday, our traditional day for celebrating First Holy Communion, they are instead tentatively planned for Sunday, November 10. If you know of an eligible young person who has not yet been contacted about the class, please speak with Pastor Tom as soon as possible.

## Book Group - October 2024:

Join us for September book group, Wednesday, October 9, 6:00 pm. We'll discuss *Fly Away Home* by Jennifer Weiner. If you need copies of the book, speak with Ann who has gathered extra copies from neighboring county libraries and bookstores. There's no requirement that you finish reading, so please come for the food and fellowship if interested! We'll plan to meet in the pavilion one more time this fall. Bring a favorite dish or snack to share! Everyone is welcome!

Questions? Contact Ann ([rahbruner@gmail.com](mailto:rahbruner@gmail.com)) or any member of the group.

## Acolyte Ministry

A new year of acolyte ministry will begin on Sunday, October 6. If anyone is interested in becoming an acolyte, please contact me at 717-503-6177, or Pastor Tom. I will schedule orientation sessions as needed. Thank you for your service! -**Sandra Paul**

## Finance Committee

The Finance Committee meeting to prepare the 2025 Current Fund and other budgets will be held both in-person at the church on **Sunday, October 6, at 6:30 P.M.**

## Sight and Sound!

The Youth Group is planning a fundraiser to see **NOAH** in 2025 at Sight and Sound in Lancaster. We are looking into group tickets for the St. John Congregation. If you're interested in attending, please reach out to **Rachel or Olivia**. This isn't a commitment, but it will help us gauge interest for ticket purchases. Thank you!



## Congratulations to the Newly-Expanded Paul Family!

**Sara & Joshua Paul** (and big brother **Benjamin**) welcomed twin sisters **Charlotte RoseLynn** and **EmmaRose Marie** into this world (in that order) on Wednesday, August 21 at UPMC Harrisburg (just missing Ben's second birthday by one day). After a few days at home, Charlotte headed back to the hospital, where she joined her sister EmmaRose in the neonatal intensive care unit, where their medical team has been better able to keep a close eye on their growth and other progress. As these lines are written in early September, the hope is that the girls will be returning home within the next week or so.



## St. John's Youth Group – October 2024



### Upcoming Events

- NOVEMBER MEETING: Sunday, November 10th - Soup and Salad Social Meal
- DECEMBER MEETING: To Be Announced
- DECEMBER ADVENT PROGRAM: Sunday, December 15th
- JANUARY SENIOR HIGH WINTERFEST: January 3rd to 5th
- JANUARY MEETING: Sunday, January 19th - Game Day



St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Berrysburg, Pa.

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**All Saints Day Centerpieces**

**November 3, 2024**

Arrangements by: Elizabeth's Flowers

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Centerpieces are being offered

“In Loving Memory of “

loved ones who have passed

Note: Centerpieces are purchased by the Flower Fund in memory of members who have passed since last All Saints Day, Nov. 5, 2023.

**Arrangements will be in beautiful fall colors and cost \$25 each.**

Number of Centerpieces: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Cost \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Please **print** desired memorial as you want it printed in the bulletin:

In Loving Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A sample centerpiece will be placed on the baptismal font on October 27<sup>th</sup>

Orders, with payment, should be given to any Flower Fund Committee Member: Sheila Barder, Gail Billow, Dana Klouser or Fay Nichols

**Absolute last day to order - October 20, 2024**

## Pray For Our Students in Higher Education

The following young members of St. John are currently involved in a first venture in higher education. Where it has been provided to Pastor Tom with permission to share, best contact information for each of our students is shown below, with the hope that many members of the congregational family will reach out in love and caring via text or email or phone or mail all through the year. Please refer to your congregational family directory for additional contact information where needed:

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**Reyann Cheatham**

Harrisburg University of Science &amp; Technology

Email: [r.cheatham14@gmail.com](mailto:r.cheatham14@gmail.com)

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**Gabe Gehring**

Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology

Email: [gabegehring3@gmail.com](mailto:gabegehring3@gmail.com)

Mail: Orange Street C322, 750 E. King Street, Lancaster, PA 17602

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**Gracie Gehring**

West Chester University

Email: [gehringge@gmail.com](mailto:gehringge@gmail.com)

Mail: East Village 258-02B, 181 Carey Drive, West Chester, PA 19383

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**Kelsey Henninger**

Harrisburg Area Community College

Cell Phone for Texting: (717) 635-0876

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**Ryan Henninger**

Shippensburg University

Email: [ryryhenninger@gmail.com](mailto:ryryhenninger@gmail.com)

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**RJ Henry**

Lebanon Valley College

Email: [royhenryjr88@gmail.com](mailto:royhenryjr88@gmail.com)

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**Aidan Roadcap**

Harrisburg Area Community College

Cell Phone for Texting: (717) 877-8857

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**Hoyt Schlegel**Eastern Mennonite University/ Aero-Tech Services  
(Flight School)Email: [Dinohoyt2006@gmail.com](mailto:Dinohoyt2006@gmail.com)

Mail: 107 Hillview Avenue, Millersville, PA 17551

Cell Phone: (717) 294-9959

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**Kinsley Schreffler**

Harrisburg Area Community College

Email: [kschreffler2003@gmail.com](mailto:kschreffler2003@gmail.com)

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While not one of our undergraduate students, Caroline DeSoto has begun four years of "high school" study at a residential arts school in Michigan:

**Caroline DeSoto**

Interlochen Arts Academy

Mail: Interlochen Arts Academy

Thor Johnson, Rm 223, PO Box 200, Interlochen, MI 49643

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In addition to the above young persons, we note that **Courtney Foreman** is working on her Masters Degree in Nursing (Leadership & Management) through Western Governors University and **Robert Foreman** is studying at Harrisburg Area Community College, pursuing his Associates Degree in Biology.

Please remember these students with your prayers and expressions of caring. If any students have been missed, or if any of the above information is in error, please contact Pastor Tom and corrections will be made in the next issue of the *Epistle*.

## St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

### Congregational Council Minutes

July 14, 2024

The council meeting was called to order by President Joshua Paul. Devotions and Prayer were offered by Pastor Tom.

**Present:** Pastor Tom Bruner, Joshua Paul, Ty Troutman, Jeff Lehman, Sandra Lamenza, Justin Adams, Sandra Paul, Gail Billow, Christie Kahler, Matthew Riland, Karen Gehring, Craig Peters and Courtney Foreman.

**Minutes:** Motion by Joshua Paul to accept the May 19, 2024 minutes, Second by Matt Riland. Motion approved unanimously.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Tom reviewed his May and June reports than handed everyone a letter to officially announce his plans to retire from pastoral ministry effective February 28, 2025. Plan is to announce to the congregation on Sunday July 21, 2024.

Motion to accept Pastor Tom's reports for May and June was made by Joshua Paul, 2nd by Matt Riland. Motion approved unanimously.

**Children and Youth Ministry Report:** Motion to accept Miss Laurie's report for May & June made by Justin Adams. 2nd by Christie Kahler. Motion approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** Joshua Paul reviewed the May & June Treasurer's Reports from Jamie Doyle and Bicentennial Festival fund report from Lynn Henninger. Pastor provided a summary of these reports. Motion to accept the treasurer's reports by Gail Billow 2<sup>nd</sup> by Courtney Foreman. Motion approved unanimously.

**Reception of Petitions and Communications:** Pastor shared a thank you card from a person who received a Prayer Shawl.

Pastor reported the organ has been fixed and repair costs have been submitted to the insurance company.

The claims adjuster has identified a computer board that is expected to fix the elevator, and the repairs will start soon.

Pastor Tom requested vacation from October 22 to November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 and Wednesday December 25<sup>th</sup> to January 1, 2025. Motion by Craig Peter to approve, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Justin Adams. Motion approved unanimously.

Petition- Lynn & Helen Henninger requested we share a gift of money to the local YMCA, motion made by Craig Peters to give \$300.00 to the local YMCA, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Sandy Paul. Motion approved unanimously.

Courtney received a request from Nicole Radel to allow (2) Girl Scouts, Abigail Adams and Brianna Radel to set up a collection box at the Church for Hygiene products to be given to the Northern Dauphin Human Services Center. Motion made by Courtney Foreman 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ty Troutman. Motion approved unanimously

#### Reports of Standing Committees:

**Church Property:** Ty reported property committee continues work on pavilion.

**Finance** – No report

**Worship and Music:** Lykens Valley Bluegrass is interested in sharing musical talents again this year, date still to be determined. Sunday September 22, Blankets will be on display for everyone to enjoy. Sunday September 29<sup>th</sup> will be blessing of animals outside. October 6<sup>th</sup> services will be Ingathering Service inside with Holy Communion.

**Faith Formation:** VBS starting tomorrow

**Mutual Ministry:** Looking for (4) additional committee members.

**Executive:** No report.

**Nominating:** Lori Motter has agreed to be on this committee.

**History and Archive:** No report

**Cemetery Committee:** Cemetery Walk through scheduled in June was postponed due to excessive heat and is rescheduled for September.

**Bell Ringing:** No report

**Creation Care:** No report

**Strawberry Festival:** 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting scheduled for Monday March 10<sup>th</sup> 2025. Next Strawberry Festival will be held June 11, 2025

**Women of the ELCA:** No report

**Youth Group:** Amy & Clint Gehring are stepping down after the camp out event this weekend. Starting in September Roy & Rachel Henry have agreed to be advisors along with Matt & Olivia Williard . Pastor made a motion to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joshua Paul, motion approved unanimously.

**Other Report** – Discussion was had regarding individuals on the rolls that no longer attend, if they should be removed as members. Pastor explained these members are no longer considered Active Voting members. In order to be an active voting member you need to receive Holy Communion and Contribute within the year. These individuals remain on the roll unless they request to be removed.

**Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**Next Council Meeting:** Sunday, September 15th 2024, at 6 PM.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Joshua Paul to adjourn the meeting. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Gail Billow. Motion approved unanimously. The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Paul, Secretary



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9:30 Pastor Tom at Conference Pastors Meeting 6:30 – 8:00 First Holy Communion Instruction 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	2 6:30 – 8:00 Monthly Celebration Club with Miss Laurie – <i><b>You're the Apple of Jesus' Eye</b></i>	3	4	5 Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
<b>20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9:00 Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9:00 Youth Group Bible Time (In-Person) 9:00 Confirmation Class (In-Person) 9:00 SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 10:15 Worship, Including Sacrament of Holy Communion, Annual LWR Ingathering, and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person (In-Person and On Zoom) 6:30 Finance Committee Meeting to Prepare 2025 Budgets	10:00 "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief	7:30 Choir Rehearsal	<b>Day of Prayer for Peace with Justice, Beginning in the Middle East</b>  6:00 Book Group Gathering in the Pavilion			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
<b>21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9:00 Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9:00 Youth Group Bible Time (In-Person) 9:00 Confirmation Class (In-Person) 9:00 SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 10:15 Worship, Including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person (In-Person and On Zoom) 11:15 Mutual Ministry Committee Meeting	10:00 "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief  6:30 Special Congregational Council Meeting  <b>Columbus Day</b>	6:15 Women of the ELCA of St. John Gathering 7:00 Online 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of ELCA World Hunger Appeal 7:30 Choir Rehearsal <b>Deadline to Submit Items for November "St. John's Epistle"</b>			<b>Luke, Evangelist</b>	Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9:00 Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9:00 Youth Group Bible Time (In-Person) 9:00 Confirmation Class (In-Person) 9:00 SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 10:15 Worship, Including Sunny Sermon and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person (In-Person and On Zoom)	10:00 "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief	Choir Rehearsal	<b>Pastor Tom Taking Time Off October 22 through Wednesday, November 6, returning to the office on Thursday, November</b>			
27	28	29	30	31		
<b>Reformation Sunday</b> 9:00 Adult Bible Study (In-Person) 9:00 Youth Group Bible Time (In-Person) 9:00 SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie (In-Person) 10:15 Worship with <u>Guest Leader Matthew Williard</u> , Including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person (In-Person and On Zoom) 11:15 Youth Group Halloween Party & Movie Begins with Lunch	<b>Simon &amp; Jude, Apostles</b>  10:00 "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief	7:30 Choir Rehearsal		<b>Reformation Day</b>  <b>Halloween</b>		

**Pastor Tom Taking Time Off October 22 through Wednesday, November 6, returning to the office on Thursday, November 7**

Pastor Tom's Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday: 8am – 9:30am  
Wednesday, Thursday: 8am – 12 noon  
Friday: 8am - 9:30am

(Other times by appointment)

**Contact Information**

The Rev. Thomas Bruner, Jr., Pastor	<a href="mailto:pt@stjohnhillchurch.org">pt@stjohnhillchurch.org</a>	717-362-9519 (O) 717-362-7895 (H)
Laurie Little, Young Christians Minister	<a href="mailto:misslaurie.little@gmail.com">misslaurie.little@gmail.com</a>	717-571-5058
Lewis Weaver, Sexton	<a href="mailto:bootsdagreat@gmail.com">bootsdagreat@gmail.com</a>	570-809-1014
Grace Weaver, Sexton	No Email	570-809-1510
Judith Ferree, Organist	<a href="mailto:jjferree@epix.net">jjferree@epix.net</a>	717-362-4228
Ty Troutman, Choir Director	<a href="mailto:kimjtroutman@gmail.com">kimjtroutman@gmail.com</a>	717-686-2758
Rachel Henry, Secretary	<a href="mailto:henryfamily2004@gmail.com">henryfamily2004@gmail.com</a>	717-439-3897
Joshua Paul, Council President	<a href="mailto:joshpaul1995@gmail.com">joshpaul1995@gmail.com</a>	717-460-0670
Fay Nichols, Prayer Chain Coordinator	<a href="mailto:fnichols46@comcast.net">fnichols46@comcast.net</a>	717-329-7447

**911 Emergency/GPS Location:**

215 St. John Road, Elizabethville, 17023

**For US Mail Deliveries:**

PO Box 270, Berrysburg, 17005-0270

Church Website: [www.stjohnhillchurch.org](http://www.stjohnhillchurch.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch)