

# ST. JOHN'S EPISTLE

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
BERRYSBURG, PA | OCTOBER 2022

## Letter from the Pastor

Dear Friends in Jesus,

Just before writing these lines, I was putting some finishing touches on the calendar that is also a part of this **St. John's Epistle** and, as I looked it over, I was struck by how very "normal" the calendar looks – the most "normal" calendar we've had as a congregational family since February of 2020 in fact...

It once again speaks of a "Blanket Bunch" making those wonderful blankets for Lutheran World Relief on Monday mornings and of a Senior Choir coming together to make inspiring music on Tuesday evenings...

And it shows our Sunday morning life together taking place in-person in the historic building which is our congregational family home, now newly and beautifully-restored (and with an enhanced Zoom worship participation option available for those who cannot for any reason be here in person at any time), all thanks to the completion of our **St. John Restoration 250** project (although the funding of that project as yet remains to be completed – to that end you'll see a pledge/giving form included later in this **Epistle**).

What isn't readily visible in the calendar is that we are actively moving, beginning this month, toward our "new normal" when it comes to worship and other Sunday morning activities, with Acolytes once again acolyting, Ushers once again ushering, Greeters once again greeting, and our worship liturgy looking and sounding very much as it did prior to March of 2020.

It isn't that COVID infections are now a thing of the past, far from it and likely never to be so! Instead, we seem to be moving steadily from a state of COVID pandemic, with widespread suffering and death, to a place where the virus is endemic – a reality of our world that it would be very unwise to ignore

*(think the annual return of the flu)*

but for which we now have in place common-sense precautions and protections

*(think that annual flu shot – now with an annual COVID booster as well – and pausing hand-shaking when it gets particularly-bad – now with masks and additional distancing sometimes thrown in for good measure)*

all of which will help us to keep right on with our lives and the work God has given us to do, barring any unexpectedly dire turns.

We won't have all of the "new normal" in effect right away as of October 2. Instead, it will be more of a gradual phasing in over the next couple of months. And, through it all, I would ask your help with bringing to the process your patience and your good humor and your love in Jesus, along with your constructive ideas! (It is, after all, a "new normal" – not an automatic return to exactly what went on prior to March of 2020.) It is an exciting time – very much so – even as we realize (as the COVID years reminded us so vividly) that we aren't in control of what is to come and so all of our plans are tentative.

It's an adventure, living into God's Future. I'm really looking forward to continuing to share that adventure with you as a part of this wonderful congregational family which is St. John, the Hill Church!

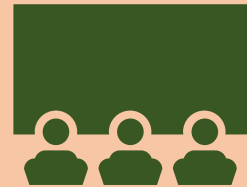
**Pastor Tom**

## News from Miss Laurie, Young Christians Minister

Happy fabulous fall, everyone! Autumn is all around us, and except for the getting dark so early part, I LOVE it!!

We've got lots of ways to add a little autumn to your faith formation, too! Grab your calendars and pen these awesome activities in:

- **Sunday, October 2nd** – It's our SONday Celebration Nature Walk! Join us as we explore the autumn beauty of God's earth!
- **Wednesday, October 5th** – Join us from 6:30 to 8:00 for the next Celebration Club! This month's theme is "Focus on Jesus"!
- **Saturday, October 15th** – It's the last Drive-in Movie of the season. Join us at sunset for the fun!
- **Sunday, October 16th** – We're having a "Pumpkin Palooza" in SONday Celebration! Come and get your "pumpkin" on!!
- **Sunday, October 30th** – Join us in SONday Celebration for some "Candy Corn Capers" and some other Halloween fun!



As you can see, we're gearing up for an amazing autumn! We hope you'll be part of the fun!

Have an outstanding October and get out there and experience the sights, sounds and smells of autumn!! See you at the Celebrations!!

**Miss Laurie**

## Please Make a Note!

Due to a scheduling conflict, the date of next year's Annual Strawberry Festival has been moved from June 14 (as set at the Festival Wrap-Up Meeting a couple of months ago and since publicized) to **Wednesday, June 7, 2023**. This will apparently be the first time we have ever planned the Festival for the first Wednesday in June, so it may take some extra work on all of our parts to help folks realize it won't be the very familiar "second Wednesday in June" next year. It has been checked and confirmed that going with this earlier date won't conflict in any way with local school schedules and shouldn't cause any problems with regard to having strawberries. (The first planning meeting remains unchanged, on Tuesday, March 7, at 7:00pm here at the church.)

## Book Group

Please join us for upcoming Book Group gatherings! We will meet at the church, in the pavilion or fellowship hall, at 6:30 pm. All are welcome to bring a snack to share.

- October 3 & November 7 -- Martin Luther: The Man Who Rediscovered God and Changed the World by Eric Metaxas
- December 5 -- The Parables of Peanuts by Robert L Short

Call or email Ann 717.362.7895 [rahbruner@gmail.com](mailto:rahbruner@gmail.com) if you need a book or have any questions. Hope to see you there!

## Midweek Bible Study

Our autumn session of Midweek Bible Study will get underway on **Wednesday, October 12** and run for six weeks, meeting each week from 6:30 to 8:00pm and wrapping up in time for Thanksgiving Eve, Advent, and Christmas. Pending COVID developments, we will plan to meet in-person at the church, with the option for participants who would prefer to do so to "Zoom in". Our topic this fall will be ***Signs and Wonders: A Beginner's Guide to the Miracles of Jesus*** by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine, in which she explores selected miracles of Jesus (such as the Raising of Lazarus) in their historical and theological context, looking at how past witnesses would have understood the events as well as how we today can draw meaning from Jesus's words and actions. Celebrated New Testament professor and scholar Dr Amy-Jill "AJ" Levine was the first Jewish person to teach New Testament at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome and describes herself as "an unorthodox member of an Orthodox synagogue and a Yankee Jewish feminist who until 2021 taught New Testament in a Christian divinity school (Vanderbilt) in the buckle of the Bible Belt". As always with these studies, no previous Bible study experience is required – only an interest and enthusiasm to study, reflect on, and (if and when you are comfortable doing so) discuss God's Word together! So that the correct number of study books can be ordered for our study, please register in advance (by speaking with Pastor Tom) **by the end of the morning on Sunday, October 2.**

## Finance Committee

The Finance Committee meeting to prepare the 2023 Current Fund and other budgets will be held both in-person at the church and on Zoom on **Tuesday, October 18, at 6:15 P.M.**

# St. John's Youth Group

St. John's Facebook: [facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch)  
St. John's Children and Youth Ministry:  
[facebook.com/childrenandyouthministry](https://www.facebook.com/childrenandyouthministry)  
ELCA Gathering Website: [www.elca.org/youthgathering](http://www.elca.org/youthgathering)



## Youth Group Faith Formation

The Youth Group Faith Formation class meets every **Sunday at 9:00 a.m.** in the youth group room on the balcony level of the church. All youth from 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to join us. The leaders are Matt and Olivia Williard.



## FALL OUTING FOR CAMP NAWAKWA'S FALL FOLIAGE DAY

On **Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>**, we will head out to Camp Nawakwa immediately following worship service. We will meet in the pavilion to gather before heading out. We will stop at the Wal-Mart shopping plaza in Carlisle to pick up lunch. Please bring along money to buy your lunch. Some options are: Panera Bread, Subway, or Wal-Mart To-Go options. We will take our lunches to Nawakwa for a picnic lunch.

The Fall Foliage Day runs from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. We should return to the church around 7:30 p.m. We will have dinner at Nawakwa. The cost for each youth group member is **\$5.00 each**. **Please RSVP by Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup> if you plan to attend.** Don't forget to fill out the St. John's Youth Group travel and medical forms!

## CHICKEN AND WAFFLES DINNER

On **Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>**, the youth group hosts the annual chicken and waffles dinner. Prep with parent help starts at 8:00 a.m., with the youth taking over at 9:00 a.m. The meal starts immediately following worship service and will be in-person. A free-will donation will be collected for the meal. Please watch your emails for more detailed information.

## UPCOMING RETREATS

In 2023, there will be two (2) opportunities for our youth to attend retreats hosted by the Lower Susquehanna Synod. The first is **WINTERFEST** in **January 2023** at the Wyndham Resort in Lancaster, open to high school and college age youth. The second is **ALiVE** in **September 2023** at Camp Nawakwa in Biglerville, open to middle school age youth (grades 6-8). We had such an amazing time with the Synod staff at the Boundless Retreat this past summer that we decided to join them again for Winterfest and ALiVE. Please watch your emails for more information

# HELP WANTED IN THE CHOIR

VOLUNTEER



Positions are open in the soprano, alto, tenor and bass sections of our choir.

**PHYSICAL QUALIFICATIONS:** Applicants must be able to carry light musical notes part way across the church. Vision must be good enough to see the director from ten feet away.

**EXPERIENCE:** No applications accepted from persons who have not sung, hummed or whistled in the tub or shower at some time.

**BEGINNING WAGES:** Guaranteed satisfaction and joy in the Lord's service.

**ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES:** Members who demonstrate unusual ability and courage might be asked to sing a solo some time.

**FRINGE BENEFITS:** Social security included. We promise you the security of fellowship with other fine members of the choir.

**HOURS:** An hour or so on rehearsal night one evening per week and one hour on Sunday (October through May).



**Join the Choir...**  
**You'll Be Glad**  
**You Did!**

Join the fun – first choir rehearsal on **Tuesday, October 4th at 7:30.**

Please contact Pastor Tom, Judy Ferree or Carol Hubler if you have any questions or need additional information. See you Oct. 4th.



## 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:

**Lilly Boyer**, The Pennsylvania State University, College Park Campus

**Reyann Cheatham**, Harrisburg University of Science & Technology

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

**Gracie Gehring**, West Chester University

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

Mail: University Hall -607A, 180 University Ave, West Chester, Pennsylvania 19383

**Kelsey Henninger**, Harrisburg Area Community College

Cell Phone for Texting: (717) 635-0876

**Ryan Henninger**, Harrisburg Area Community College

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

**Allison Mace**, Harrisburg Area Community College

Email: [allisonmace26@gmail.com](mailto:allisonmace26@gmail.com)

**Owen Mattern**, The Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg Campus

**Kinsley Schreffler**, Central Penn College, Enola

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

**Cameron Thompson**, Harrisburg Area Community College

In addition to the above young persons, we also note that **Carissa Barder** is working on her Associates Degree in Business Administration (with a Management emphasis) also at Central Penn College, Enola; that **Valerie Buffington** is working on her Bachelor's Degree in Organizational Behavior/Applied Psychology through Albright College; and that **Robert Foreman** is studying at Harrisburg Area Community College, pursuing his Associates Degree in Biology.

And finally, we also have a number of congregational family members who are pursuing post-graduate degrees: **Nicholas Motter** is pursuing his Master's Degree in Education at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia and **Kristen Spicher** is pursuing her Master's Degree for Certified Nurse Practitioner through the University of Southern California.

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*.

## Congratulations to Our Newest Parents!

Our prayers and congratulations go to **Sara & Joshua Paul**, following the safe and healthy birth of **Benjamin Allen Paul** on the afternoon of Saturday, August 20, at UPMC Harrisburg Hospital. Benjamin weighed 7 pounds 8 ounces and was 20 inches long.

## Pastoral Acts

### At the Altar

On Saturday afternoon, September 10, Pastor Tom presided at the marriage of **Kellie Shoop** and **Guy Snyder IV** at Himmel's Church in Rebuck, following a rehearsal the evening before. We pray God's blessing on Kellie and Guy, that they may each be given the grace and strength to faithfully live out their vows of commitment!

## News from the W-ELCA at St Johns

Although 2020 hit everyone and everything very hard; as the old saying goes, "It's hard to keep a good woman down." And here at St Johns there are a lot of good women. In 2022, the ladies had a Jammin' with the Ladies area at the Annual Strawberry Festival. It was a success with Jams, Jellies, and fresh baked bread. They were able to raise around \$500.00.

Last October, we had our first Soup Sale, and it was a success also. We earned enough to pay for our Mission Project this year. This project will help people where the need is as Lutheran World Relief sends it out, we packed up 502 Personal Care Kits for LWR. They are needed so badly.

And we are again having another Soup Sale this year. We will be selling Chicken Corn Noodle Soup, Ham and Bean Soup, and Vegetable Beef Barley Soup. The price will be \$10.00 a quart. Order forms will be available soon and we will take orders until October 22, 2022.

There are many things the ladies at St Johns are doing; making quilts and prayer shawls. If you are interested in helping with either project, contact Pat Herb for quilting or Barbara Bullock for prayer shawls. These ladies will help you get started. We also want to support Fay Nichols as she will be starting her new term working on the Women of the ELCA for Lower Susquehanna Synod.

There is another group of folks here in the Upper Dauphin Conference that has been busy. That is the Lutheran Youth Organization. On Sunday, September 18, 2022 the youth and advisors packed up 510 School Kits for LWR. Congrats to the youth for all your hard work; and their advisors, LOL!

# St John Restoration 250 Contribution/Pledge Form

## My Pledge

- I have included a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as a contribution to the St John Restoration 250 project.
- I am pledging \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as a contribution to the St John Restoration 250 project. This contribution will be made throughout the two-year contribution period ending May 30, 2024.

I would like my contribution to the St John Restoration 250 project to be recorded in the Memorial Record Book as:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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- ***All checks should be made out to St John Lutheran Church with Restoration 250 in the memo line.***
- ***The contribution period will extend two years until May 30, 2024.***



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
<b>*Both In-Person and on Zoom</b> <b>** In-Person</b>						Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>17<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am - Adult Bible Study**, Youth Bible Time with Matt & Olivia**, Confirmation Class** 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie** 10:15am – Worship*, including Sacrament of Holy Communion, and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person 6pm - Congregational Council Meeting	9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief 6:30pm - Monthly Book Discussion Group Gathering	6:30-8pm - First Holy Communion Instruction 7:30pm - Senior Choir Rehearsal	6:30-8pm - Monthly Celebration Club with Miss Laurie			Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
<b>18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am - Adult Bible Study**, Youth Bible Time with Matt & Olivia**, Confirmation Class** 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie** 10:15am – Worship*, including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person 11:15am - Mutual Ministry Committee Meeting 2pm - Women of the ELCA of St. John Meeting <b>Day of Prayer for Peace with Justice, Beginning in the Middle East</b>	9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief <b>Columbus Day</b>	Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off (instead of 10/15) 6:15pm - Property Committee Meeting 7:30pm - Senior Choir Rehearsal	6:30-8pm - Midweek Bible Study		Rehearsal for Klouser/Leitzel Wedding (off site)	<b>Deadline to Submit Items for November "St. John's Epistle"</b> 3pm - Marriage of Collin Klouser and Taylor Leitzel (off site)
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<b>19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am - Adult Bible Study**, Youth Bible Time with Matt & Olivia**, Confirmation Class** 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie** 10:15am – Worship*, including Sacrament of Holy Baptism, along with Sunny Sermon and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person	9am – Blanket Bunch	<b>Luke, Evangelist</b> 6:15pm - Finance 2023 Budget Meeting (In-Person and on Zoom) 7:30pm - Senior Choir Rehearsal	6:30-8pm - Midweek Bible Study		Pastor Tom Taking Monthly Extra Day Off	Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
<b>20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am - Adult Bible Study**, Youth Bible Time with Matt & Olivia**, Confirmation Class** 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie** 10:15am – Worship*, including Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person 1-6pm - Youth Group Attending Fall Festival at Nawakwa	9am – Blanket Bunch	6:30-8pm - First Holy Communion Instruction 7:30pm - Senior Choir Rehearsal	6:30-8pm - Midweek Bible Study		<b>Simon &amp; Jude, Apostles</b>	Pastor Tom's Weekly Day Off
30	31					
<b>Reformation Sunday</b> 9am - Adult Bible Study**, Youth Bible Time with Matt & Olivia**, Confirmation Class** 9am - SONDay Celebration with Miss Laurie** 10:15am – Worship*, including Sacrament of Holy Communion (with First Holy Communion), and Celebration Time with Miss Laurie for Young Persons In-Person	<b>Reformation Day</b> 9am - "Blanket Bunch" Blanket Making for Lutheran World Relief <b>Halloween</b>					

## 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:stjohnhillchurch@frontier.com">stjohnhillchurch@frontier.com</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
Carol Hubler, Choir Director	<a href="mailto:mchubler@gmail.com">mchubler@gmail.com</a>	570-758-5052
Rachel Henry, Secretary	<a href="mailto:henryfamily2004@gmail.com">henryfamily2004@gmail.com</a>	717-439-3897
Roy Henry, Council President	<a href="mailto:henryfamily2004@gmail.com">henryfamily2004@gmail.com</a>	717-215-9837
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](http://www.facebook.com/stjohnhillchurch)