

ST JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
3597 WEST MAIN STREET
PO BOX 5716
BELLEVILLE PA 17004

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Parish Messenger



St. John's Lutheran Church, Belleville, Pennsylvania

OCTOBER 2024



Our Mission Statement

*We, the members of St. John's congregation,
promise to share the good news of Jesus Christ
and to love one another through worship and service
in our homes, church, community and the world.*

St. John's Lutheran Church
3597 West Main Street
P.O. Box 5716
Belleville, PA 17004

9:00am Worship
10:15am Sunday School
September through May

Church Office ~ 935-2032
St. John's Christian Day Care and Preschool ~ 935-2959
E-mail us at secretary@stjohnsbelleville.org
Website ~ stjohnsbelleville.org



Pastor's Page

One of my favorite psalms is one that many people would not likely list as one of their top 10 favorites. The psalm of which I speak is Psalm 90. The first line of this prayer reads: "Lord, you have always been our home."

There are so many images of God in the Psalms; Father, Mother, Shepherd, King. Martin Luther loved the 46th psalm, which speaks of God as our fortress. In fact, he wrote his great hymn, A Mighty Fortress Is Our God based on this psalm while he was under friendly protection in the Wartburg Castle.

The great hymn writer, Isaac Watts caught the sense of the 90th psalm when he paraphrased it in the hymn, O God Our Help In Ages Past.

O God our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

Both the hymn and Psalm 90 emphasize God as HOME. In his poem, "The Death of a Hired Man", Robert Frost (President John Kennedy's favorite poet and one of mine as well) wrote: "Home is the place, where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in".

God, says the 90th Psalm, is like that. God is like a home where you are welcomed whether or not you think you ought to be welcomed. It is a place where you are received, whether or not you felt worthy of such kindness. God is like a home where you are accepted, not because you are worthy, but in spite of your unworthiness, you are always welcomed.

The Christian faith has always understood forgiveness in terms such as this, which is why I believe we so love Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son. Away and lost in a foreign land, the prodigal comes to his senses and with some fear and trepidation, makes his way home to where he knows he belongs, all the while wondering whether or not he will find acceptance when he returns. And waiting for him is his father, standing on the front porch, overcome with joy that his lost son has been found and is not dead but alive and now home once again safe and sound.

Who is the God that we worship? The 90th psalm has a very clear answer to that question. God is our eternal home. He is willing to forgive us our sins and provide for us that place where we shall one day dwell in the fullness of eternal life in His kingdom, in that place that he has made for us with His own hands. Jesus said of that place that there are many mansions, many abiding places.

I am happy to think of that Kingdom as a welcoming place, a home where we belong and where we shall be welcomed by our Lord. In these uncertain and difficult times we can take great comfort in the 90th psalm.

In Christ,

Pastor Sigler

Pastor – Reverend Mike Sigler
 Office hours ~Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
 10:00am till noon
 (subject to change to accommodate meetings, etc.)
 Phone ~ 717-437-7007
 Organist – Susie Yoo
 Sextons – Calvin and Kelly Byler
 Church Secretary – Kelly Byler
 Office Phone 935-2032
 Email us at secretary@stjohnsbelleville.org

**St. John’s Christian Daycare
 and Preschool**

Angela Parko, Director
 Phone 717-935-2959

St. John’s Congregational Council

	<u>Term Expires</u>
Ed Bilich ~ Treasurer	end of 2024
Jim Buchanan	end of 2025
Carol Fultz ~ President	end of 2026
Michele Harshbarger ~ Secretary	end of 2025
Joe Kanagy	end of 2025
Nancy Penepacker ~ Vice Pres	end of 2024

Meetings are held at 6:30pm, the 2nd Thursday of each month, with the exception of July and August, when there are no scheduled meetings.

St. John’s Financial Report

Checking account balance 9/26/2024
 \$ 9,187.89

January 1 through September 26, 2024

Income \$ 159,789.51 Expense \$ 157,852.27
 Net Income \$ 1,937.24

*Does not include offering for Sunday, Sept 29

Daycare Financial Report

Checking account balance 9/26/2024
 \$ 8,339.47

January 1 through September 26, 2024

Income \$ 240,837.35 Expense \$ 239,719.29
 Net Income \$ 1,118.06

* Does not include end of month deposit



Our congregational meeting is coming up in December, and council representatives will be on the agenda. Please prayerfully consider serving. We currently have 6 persons, but a few more would be helpful, especially when one or two members are unable to attend a meeting. Meetings begin at 6:30pm and are held the 2nd Thursday of each month with the exception of July and August, and “normally” last no longer than 1-1½ hours.



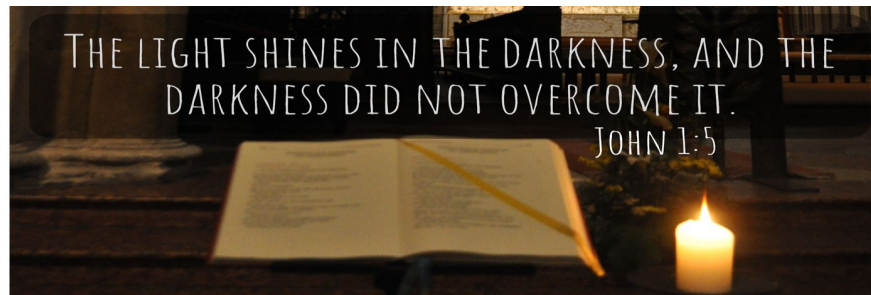
Please Note ~ Holy Communion will be observed on October 13 (Bishop’s visit) and again on the 27th (Reformation Sunday) in October. There will NOT be communion on the 6th or 20th.

IN OUR CHURCH and COMMUNITY

Advent begins on Sunday, December 1 and we are hoping to compile another devotional **IF**, enough people are interested. This year's theme is *A Light in the Darkness*.

Volunteers are needed to write the meditations. A sign-up sheet along with scripture readings can be found in the narthex. **Submissions are needed by Friday, November 8...PLEASE.**

Take time to read the scripture and meditate on its meaning. You can tell a story that relates to the passage and end it with the point you would like to make. A short prayer can also be included. Most importantly, be yourself, and let it reflect what is in your heart.



The 2025 church service schedules are being compiled. If you would like to help or no longer wish to serve, please contact the church office. Volunteers are needed to greet, lay read, altar care, deliver weekly bulletins, elevator and help with the sound system.



Synod Bishop, Craig Miller is coming to St. John's on Sunday, October 13. We will be observing Holy Communion. The monthly Social hour will be held that morning instead of the 6th so members have the opportunity to greet and speak with him. He will be leaving immediately following the service to attend worship at St. Paul, Allensville.

We will be bringing in new members October 27 which is also Reformation. If you have been attending St. John's and would like to join, please see the pastor or contact the church office.

There will be a fellowship time in the blue room before/after the worship service to welcome our new members. Please stop in and enjoy some refreshments and conversation.



Our church directory will also be updated at this time to include our new members. **If your address or phone number has changed recently, please contact the church office with the correct infor-**

Our Prayer Chain is in need of a contact person. For the last several years Dorie Remensnyder started the chain when contacted, and we "thank" her for the countless times she made certain those requests were passed along and prayers were offered.

Anyone who would like to join and/or is willing to be the new contact person is asked to please call the church office.

Prayer is a way for us to reach out of ourselves, for the sake of another. It is an important and meaningful way to serve our church and others... no skills needed!



Daycare

The Daycare calendar fundraiser to help with the Security Camera expense begins on October 1. Sunday, September 29 is the last day to purchase and cost is \$10. If interested, there are still several available in the narthex.

This year's gift show is scheduled for Friday, November 29 and Saturday, November 30. We are pleased to have returning vendors along with some new. Sign-ups for wreaths and baked goods will be placed in the narthex the end of this month. Homemade soups and ham potpie will be available to eat-in or take out. Carol Fultz is in need of another "Holy Roller" to help with the potpie dough. If you would like to become a member of this elite group, please see Carol or contact the church office.

At their September meeting, Council voted to designate all *loose offering* on month's having a 5th Sunday to the Discretionary Fund. We will observe one on September 29 and again on December 29th. If you wish to donate using a check, please notate Discretionary on the memo line or envelope.

Anyone who volunteers as a lay reader will find a red *Lectionary for Worship* book on the lectern. It contains the readings, **with exception of the Psalm**, which are found in your celebrate each Sunday. If you prefer larger print, you may wish to use it.

The 2025 birthday calendar will be completed in November. Any member who would like to add/remove persons to/from the calendar is asked to PLEASE contact the church office with the name(s) and birthdate(s) **by Sunday, November 10th**.

Reminder ~ only the names of active members, along with persons they have requested to add will be included on the calendar.

Blanket Sunday is October 6th. Envelopes were included in the September 29 bulletin and can also be found in the narthex. A selection of comforts they finished this past year will be displayed throughout the narthex and sanctuary.

Your donation to support this ministry, can be made through Sunday, October 13th.



The knotters always have a need for full and queen size sheets to be used for comfort backs. Any color or pattern would be appreciated. And, blankets in good, clean, usable condition can be packed and shipped along with the comforts. If you are able to provide any of these, please place them on the counter in the blue room.



Seafarers International House

Lutheran Church in Shamokin Dam.

Seafarers International House supports the crew members on the containerships who are responsible for transporting 90% of world trade. These "unseen essential workers" are often at sea for extended periods and have little shore leave time. Joe Kanagy has provided information on their *Christmas at Sea* program, along with satchels to fill with the small list of items which are given to the crew members.

On the next page is an article written by Pastor Sarah Hershberger, wife of Camp Mt. Luther Director, Chad Hershberger. Sarah serves Grace

Located in the narthex is more information on the seafarers and this outreach project supported by the ELCA. **For those who would like to help, you can purchase some or all of the items listed or make a monetary donation and we will purchase the items for you. Please be sure to notate "seafarers" on your check or envelope.**

Donations will be accepted through Sunday, October 20.

WHY CHRISTMAS-AT-SEA IS MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL

By Pastor Sarah Voorhees Hershberger of Grace Lutheran Church, Shamokin, PA (Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA)

Dear friends in Christ,

When I met my friend Rev. Marsh Drege, we had an instant connection. He was from North Dakota; I was on my way to my first call at a church in North Dakota. We talked at length about the good people there, and the heartiness required to withstand a normal North Dakota winter.

When my husband Chad and I learned that Marsh was going to be the Executive Director of Seafarers International House (SIH) in New York City, we knew it was the perfect fit for him. SIH is a ministry that helps seafarers in countless ways. Men and women who work on ships are frequently away from home for weeks or months at a time. This ministry gives them a home when they are away from their loved ones. Staff members offer counseling services and sacraments.

In 2023, Seafarers International House distributed more than 3,216 Christmas-at-Sea bags or "satchels" to seafarers away from home. They're filled with little things that mean the world to a seafarer; a sweatshirt; a knitted cap; a chocolate bar; a hand-written card. These bags have made an enormous difference to people who are away from their loved ones, and the Upper Susquehanna Synod has been collecting them for years. The churches that have participated have found that it turns out to be mutually beneficial for both the giver and the recipient.

How could it possibly be mutually beneficial? Imagine this scenario: You're out shopping. On your list, you have your own groceries, plus a few items for your Christmas-at-Sea satchel. You head to Walmart or Target, wherever you can get it all done in one stop. You



head over to the clothing department to find a sweatshirt. You find a plain sweatshirt in your favorite color and decide on that one. \$14.99 on sale, for a shopping win. You wonder if it's the favorite color of the person who will open it on Christmas. You continue to find a neat-looking hat that has a thermal lining. Into the cart it goes. You imagine a person smiling as they put it on, knowing that it will keep them warm when their ship comes to a cold place. Now you're in the candy section. You can smell the chocolate from the next aisle. You find your way to your favorite kind, because you want whoever gets their hands on this bag to know how amazing that kind of chocolate really is. Because it's a treasure, you lay it gently on top of the other items.

After checking out, you head for home. You find some stationery that looks friendly. You start to write your note. "Dear Seafarer..." You pause. Now what? How do I tell this person that I feel sort of connected to them, just from buying a few things for them? Here is an idea:

"Merry Christmas! I hope this Christmas season finds you well. I chose these items with you in mind, and as I folded them and put them in the bag, I prayed for you. I prayed that you might be kept

Upper Susquehanna Synod volunteers filled two vans with satchels in 2023. Bishop Craig A. Miller (left), Rev. Sarah Hershberger (fourth from left) with Rev. Marsh Drege to her right.

warm and peaceful, just as the infant Jesus was kept warm and peaceful on the night that he was born. While you and I will likely never meet, I hope you know that we are connected as children of the most loving God.

May you be blessed with peace in this season. <your name here>

P.S.: I hope you like the color of the sweatshirt. It's my favorite."

Imagine how it would feel to seal that envelope and tuck it into the satchel that you know will be received by someone who needs to read your words and feel the love of God. Imagine how it would feel to receive the satchel. Talk about a mutually beneficial ministry!

I hope that you consider filling a Christmas-at-Sea satchel this year. If you'd like to know how to get your hands on the bags, just contact the folks at SIH (see opposite page).

And I hope that no matter what, you remember God's love for you in the coming months. Because God's love is alive and on the move. ⚓

OCTOBER SERVICE SCHEDULE

October 6

Elevator: Joe Kanagy

Greeters: Chelsea and Merritt Reed

Lay Reader: Chelsea Reed

Money Counters: John and Denise Chester

Sound System: Ed Bilich

October 13

Elevator: Ed Bilich

Greeters: Ken and Nancy Wyland

Lay Reader: Ken Wyland

Money Counters: Sue Lynch and Carol Fultz

Sound System: Joe Kanagy

October 20

Elevator: Mike Harshbarger

Greeter: Jane Fultz

Lay Reader: Joe Kanagy

Money Counters: Jay and Joy Byler

Sound System: Jay Byler

October 27

Elevator: Randy Harshbarger

Greeters: Jay and Joy Byler

Lay Reader: Deb French

Money Counters: Joe Kanagy and Randy Harshbarger

Sound System: Jay Byler

Altar Care ~ Michele Harshbarger

Altar Flower Delivery ~ Michele Harshbarger

Bulletin Delivery ~ John and Brenda Boring

Social Hour ~ **NO Social Hour on October 6** ~ There will be a fellowship time on Sunday, October 13th before worship for members to meet and visit with Bishop Miller.

Please remember:

If you are unable to be present on your scheduled day, **it is your responsibility**, to find a replacement.

Aside from being included in each newsletter, a copy of the service schedule for those fulfilling monthly worship duties can be found on the bulletin board in the hallway

St. John's Lutheran Church
Minutes of the June 6, 2024 meeting

Mission Statement: We, the members of the St. John's congregation, promise to share the good news of Jesus Christ and love one another through worship and service in our homes, church, community and the world.

Vision Statement: To be welcoming people who encourage God's love in our community through our prayers, devotion, benevolence, and deeds.

The monthly meeting of St. John's Lutheran Church council was held on, June 6, 2024 at 6:30 pm in the blue room.

Present: Pastor Mike Sigler, President Carol Fultz, Ed Bilich, Jim Buchanan, Michele Harshbarger, Joe Kanagy and Nancy Penepacker.

The meeting was called to order by Carol Fultz

Devotions: Michele Harshbarger led devotions.

The devotion schedule for 2024 is:

February –Ed Bilich

March –Jim Buchanan

April –Joe Kanagy

May –Nancy Penepacker

June – Michele Harshbarger

July & August – no meetings

September –Jim Buchanan

October –Ed Bilich

November – Joe Kanagy

December – Nancy Penepacker

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the 05/9/24 meeting were presented. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Pastor Sigler and seconded by Nancy Penepacker. Motion carried.

Financial Reports:

The financial reports were presented by Ed Bilich.

St. John's – A motion to accept the church financial report was made by Michele Harshbarger and seconded by Nancy Penepacker . Motion carried.

St. John's Daycare – A motion to accept the daycare financial report was made by Pastor Sigler and seconded by Joe Kanagy . Motion carried.

Pastor's report was presented Motion to accept Pastors report Nancy Penepacker and seconded By Michele Harshbarger

Committee Reports:

- Cemetery** - Nancy -John Chester reported that we have the same group mowing and
Told to make sure it is mowed for the holidays
- Christian Ed/Youth** - Michele -Bible Study and Sunday school to restart in September
- Day Care** - Carol- Director provided a report. We're asking the Daycare employees to make sure
the elevator stays on the first floor not the basement . Passed DHS inspection
- Finance** - Jim- Nothing to report
- Long Range** - Ed - nothing to report
- Music & Worship** - Michele -Susie will be away most of the summer to visit her parents
- Mutual Ministry** - Nancy-^{KEN}~~Nancy~~ Wyland has been added to the committee
- Property- Joe- Waiting for bid to repair railing on back outside steps
Still working on mice problem in basement
- Social Ministry - Michele - Thank you to everyone who helped with the Brunch**
Good turn out and great food
- Safety** - Carol Fultz- nothing to report
- Missions** - Michele -Camp Mt Luther Building fund / will ask Barb Collins to come and talk
To the congregation about the building fund
- Website** - Ed - Nothing to report

Old Business:

- Revision of Fellowship Hall contract -Motion to approve Nancy and seconded Jim**
- Review Pastor/Church employee contracts in September
- Security camera quotes-Donation Progress chart-Daycare to share in cost
- Karen Sigler to make Chart for Narthex, Daycare unable to help but will have Prize Calender
Fund raiser. Having Daycare Families buying and selling calenders

New Business:

- Bathroom in basement and upstairs near choir room-Property looking into it
- Remove part of pew in sanctuary near elevator to provide wheelchair access to our service-
(Property) motion made to approve Nancy seconded Pastor Sigler
- No scheduled meetings in July and August
- Collect keys to side door-door being left open -Replace lock for side door-Motion
Michele and seconded by Nancy
- Trim hedges/spray weeds in stone in front of FH and mulching
- Gas stove removal? To keep an eye on it for problems
- Pastor Sigler and wife Karen to move letters to St John- Motion by Nancy and
Seconded by Jim

With there being no further discussion, the meeting was properly adjourned and closed with the Lord's
Prayer. Next meeting will be held on September 12 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Harshbarger, Secretary

St. John's Lutheran Church

OCTOBER

2024

<p>9:00am Worship</p> <p>10:15am Sunday school</p>		<p>1 11:00am Bible Study</p>	2	<p>3 9:30am Comfort Knotting</p>	4	5
<p>6 Blanket Sunday</p>	7	<p>8 11:00am Bible Study</p>	9	<p>10 6:30pm Council Meeting</p>		
<p>13 Holy Communion Bishop Miller at St. John's Social Hour before worship</p>	<p>14 </p>	<p>15 11:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Property Committee</p>	16	<p>17 9:30am Comfort Knotting</p>	18	19
20	21	<p>22 11:00am Bible Study</p>	23	24	25	26
<p>27 Reformation Holy Communion New Member Sunday</p>	28	<p>29 11:00am Bible Study</p>	30	<p>31 </p>	<p>Looking Ahead November 3 ~ All Saints Day Daylight Saving Time Ends November 29 & 30 ~ Holiday Gift Show November 24 ~ Christ the King</p>	