

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

JANUARY 2026

The star, sent by God was more than just a celestial phenomenon; it was a divine invitation, guiding the wise men to Jesus and declaring, that His birth was for all nations.



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
10:45am Sunday School
September through May

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

Pastor's Page

St. John Chrysostom, one of the great fathers of the early church who lived in the Fourth Century after the birth of Christ, was called the "Golden Mouthed" preacher of the ancient church in Antioch. Antioch was of the great centers of early Christianity. In one of his sermons he wrote this about the full humanity and the full divinity of Christ:

"I do not think of Christ as God alone, or man alone, but both together. For I know he was hungry, and I know that with five loaves he fed the five thousand. I know he was thirsty, and I know that he turned water into wine. I know he was carried in a ship, and I know that he walked on the sea. I know that he died, and I know that he was raised from the dead. I know that he was set before Pontius Pilate and I know that he sits with the Father on his throne in heaven. I know that he was worshipped by angels and I know that he was crucified and mocked by those who hated him. And truly some of these I ascribe to the human, and others to the divine nature. For by reason of this he is said to have been both God and man."

One of the favorite hymns of the church is the hymn BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR, of which one verse goes like this:

Beautiful Savior! Lord of the Nations!

Son of God and Son of Man

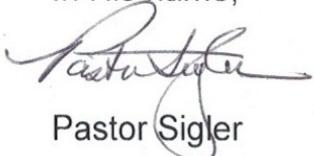
Glory and honor, praise, adoration

Now and forevermore be Thine.

The child born to us at Christmas which the prophet Isaiah promised from of us is both fully God and fully human. Christ is not half and half as if split down the middle, 50-50. This is one of the great mysteries of the Christian faith and is also one of the most basic convictions of our Christian faith.

Christ is both Son of God and Son of our humanity...like us in every human way except sin and therefore he can speak to God on our behalf out of his humanity which he shares with us. It is because he knows us fully and completely that he can in God's name and with God's authority bless us with his merciful presence and bestow upon us the forgiveness of our sins.

In His name,



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 or 717-310-4444
Organist – Rick Cole
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

Term Expires

Steve Cleck	end of 2028
Jim Buchanan	end of 2028
Carol Fultz	end of 2026
Joe Kanagy	end of 2028
Sue Lynch	end of 2027
Nancy Penepacker	end of 2027

Meetings are held at 6:30pm the second Thursday of each month, with the exception of July and August.

St. John's Financial Report

Checking account balance 12/30/2025
\$ 7,366.44

January 1 through December 30, 2025

Income \$ 187,567.11 Expense \$ 185,086.38
Net Income \$ 2,480.73

Daycare Financial Report

Checking account balance 12/30/2025
\$ 9,589.52

January 1 through December 30, 2025

Income \$ 349,344.29 Expense \$ 341,025.19
Net Income \$ 8,319.10

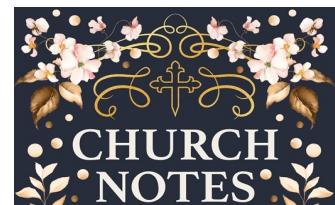
St. John's has lost three members in the last month. It is always difficult losing someone in our small church family, and even harder when it is in such a short period of time.

Bonnie Bigelow died on November 29 and a graveside service was held for her on Tuesday, December 9.

Ed "Bucky" Buchanan died December 26. His family is planning a celebration of life at a later date.

Reba Harmon died on December 29. The family is holding a Memorial service on Saturday, January 17 at 11:00am with visitation from 10:00am until the start of the service.

Each one, in their own way served this church through the years, and were more than just members. Living in a small town, our lives were intertwined with each of them and their families. We thank God for their presence in our lives and the life of this church.



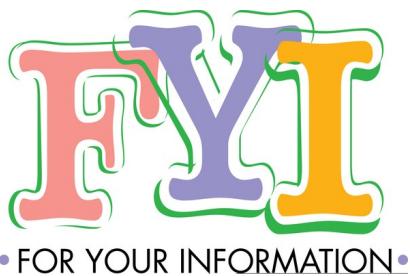
Michele Harshbarger's council term expired the end of 2025. We thank her for her willingness to serve our Lord and congregation. Steve Cleck was approved as the new council representative at the December meeting. Council installation is being held during worship on January 4.

They will meet following the service to reorganize and elect officers.

Council members for 2026 are ~ Jim Buchanan, Steve Cleck, Carol Fultz, Joe Kanagy, Sue Lynch and Nancy Penepacker.

Our congregational meeting will be held next month. Any committees who met this past year, **please** have your reports to the church office no later than Sunday, January 25.

IN OUR CHURCH and COMMUNITY



There are still several 2026 birthday calendars available in the narthex. Please feel free to take one or more.

The 2026 Offering envelopes can be found in member mailboxes. If you did not receive one/or are unable to pick your up, please contact the church office.

The 2025 contribution statements can be found in member mailboxes. Any remaining after Sunday, January 25 will be mailed out.

At the congregational meeting, an inquiry was made as to the current number of daycare employees. There are currently eleven total. Pre-K Counts has two teachers and two classroom aides. The daycare has five full-time employees and two part-time.

For future reference, this information is always included with the council minutes in each newsletter, including this one. The daycare provides a written report to the council for each meeting, which always contains the current number of staff, number of enrolled children along with other pertinent information.

Advent ended a few short weeks ago, but during these winter months, we will be looking toward this year's season. Even though preparing for the devotional begins in September, it has become challenging to have it completed in time for the first Sunday in Advent. So, why not work on it when most of us are indoors and "hopefully" have the extra time to devote to writing a meditation.

The theme for this year is *My Journey with Jesus*. A sign-up will be placed in the narthex by Sunday, January 18. Please prayerfully consider writing one. The deadline is Palm Sunday, March 29.

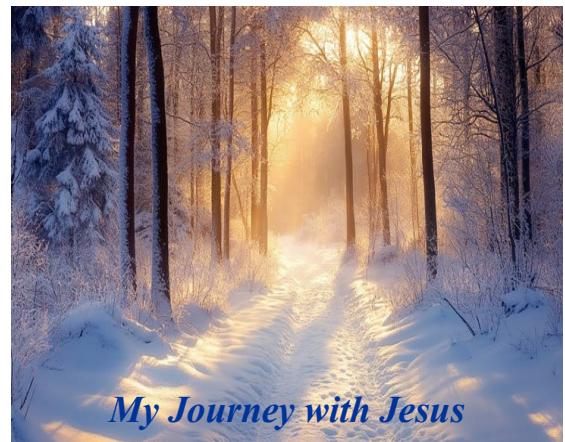
Planning to do any cleaning out during the winter months...we will gladly take anything you may have to donate for the yard sale. While summer may seem far off, it will be here before we know it. Please make sure your items are in good, clean and usable condition. **No clothing or televisions PLEASE!** Donations can be placed on the stage. Thank you!!



Thank you to everyone who donated Mitten Tree items add non-perishables. Recently delivered to the Shelter Service were ~

4 large boxes of non perishable food items
1 large pack of paper towels
21 hats
37 gloves/mittens
7 scarves
1 headband
10 pair of socks

Donations of non-perishable and other items can be placed in the coat room area beside the narthex. Hats, gloves, etc. can be placed on the Mitten Tree. Stores are already having sales to make room for spring merchandise, so many of the items can be purchased for a fraction of their original cost.



Central Pennsylvania World Hunger Association

PO BOX 76
BELLEVILLE, PA.

“Together we can”

The Central Pa World Hunger Association will be having their 51st Annual Meat Canning Project at the Chief Logan Fire Company in Lewistown, Pa. (formally East Derry Fire Company) on February 9-13, 2026.

We will be canning but at this time we are not sure of the amount of meat. It will depend on the meat prices; we wait until January to check the prices and order. The price of chicken and pork are both around \$1.75/pound at this time, all our monies come from your donations. Last year's project ran about \$90,000.00, and it was the first year we were unable to pay the voluntary shipping costs. We expect the cost to be around \$90,000.00 again this year. We work with MCC and use their canner, but we receive no monies from them. Your contribution to the canning should be sent to our association.

We would like to thank each person, group, church and business who has helped to support our project here in Mifflin County for the last 50 years. With your help this 51st year will be a blessing to God's people.

If you or your group are willing to can meat, and / or help label cans this year, you must contact Jesse Diem, 717-348-9577, Sylvanus Peachey (coordinator), 717-935-2511 or Jonathan Coldren (President), 717-250-6840, as soon as possible. We need to set an accurate schedule for those taking part in the project, a lot of our groups come quite a distance to help. Walk-ins are welcome.

If you, your church, or business would be willing to supply food or snacks to feed the workers, we need you to call our contact people, Laura Litwiller 717-543-3419, Sylvia Diem 717-543-8784(text please), Elizabeth Peachey 717-935-7413. We appreciate your help to accomplish this important part of the project.

You can help by supporting the project financially. This year there is still a great need for this meat, both locally and worldwide. Please take this opportunity to help in God's work to feed the needy.

Thank you again for your contributions and prayers.

Donations can be sent to:

Central Pennsylvania World Hunger Association

P.O. Box 76
Belleville, Pa 17004

“Together we can”

Rick Esh

Canning Secretary

717-667-2643

rickesh@embarqmail.com

JANUARY SERVICE SCHEDULE

January 4

Elevator: Mike Harshbarger
Greeters: Mike and Michele Harshbarger
Lay Reader: Mike Harshbarger
Money Counters: John and Denise Chester
Sound System: Ed Bilich
Ushers: Mike and Michele Harshbarger

January 11

Elevator: Randy Harshbarger
Greeters: John and Brenda Boring
Lay Reader: Jami Zook
Money Counters: Carol Fultz and Sue Lynch
Sound System: Joe Kanagy
Ushers: Sue Lynch and Joe Kanagy

January 18

Elevator: Jim Buchanan
Greeters: Jim and Georgianna Buchanan
Lay Reader: Jim Buchanan
Money Counters: Jay and Joy Byler
Sound System: Calvin Byler
Ushers: Carol Fultz and Nancy Penepacker

January 25

Elevator: Joe Kanagy
Greeter: Lucy Magda
Lay Reader: Deb French
Money Counters: Randy Harshbarger and Joe Kanagy
Sound System: Jay Byler
Ushers: Jay and Joy Byler

Altar Care ~ Brenda Boring

Altar Flower Delivery ~ Brenda Boring

Bulletin Delivery ~ Randy Harshbarger

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 between the offices.

St. John's Lutheran Church
Minutes of the November 13, 2025 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 November 13 at 6:30 pm in the blue room.

Present: Pastor Mike Sigler, President Carol Fultz, Sue Lynch, Michele Harshbarger, Joe Kanagy and Nancy Penepacker, Jim Buchanan

The meeting was called to order by Carol Fultz

Devotions: Joe Kanagy led devotions.

The devotion schedule for 2025 is:

February –Sue Lynch

March –Jim Buchanan

April –Joe Kanagy

May –Nancy Penepacker

June – Michele Harshbarger

July & August – no meetings

September –Jim Buchanan

October –Sue Lynch

November – Joe Kanagy

December – Nancy Penepacker

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the 10/9/25 meeting were presented. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Nancy Penepacker, seconded by Joe Kanagy. Motion carried.

Pastor report submitted by Pastor Sigler

Financial Reports:

The financial reports were presented by Jim Buchanan

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 and seconded by Nancy Penepacker. Motion carried.

Ed Bilch presented the proposed Budget for 2026 for the Church and Daycare and reviewed 2025

Committee Reports:

Cemetery -Nancy- nothing to report

Christian Ed -Michele- nothing to report

Day Care —Carol- Director provided a printed report

Finance —Jim- NTR

Music & Worship —Pastor -Choir doing well,12 people for Bell Choir this Christmas

Mutual Ministry – Nancy-NTR

Property – Joe Kanagy —Permit to start the bathroom this month

Windows are being made for the offices

Social Ministry – Sue - Thanksgiving meal Nov.23

Missions – Michele – great response to the children Christmas Boxes

Nancy proposed to join local parishes to collect food and clothing for the needy of our community and apply for a grant thru the Synod for funds

Old Business: Church phone tree-OOMA approved by motion of Sue Lynch and seconded

By Nancy, motion approved

Council member terms ending- Michele Jim and Joe will stay on council

New Business- Daycare Christmas party in FH Thursday Dec.4

Church and Daycare proposed budgets

With there being no further discussion, the meeting was properly adjourned and closed with the Lord's Prayer. Next meeting will be held on December 11,2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Michele Harshbarger, Secretary

Daycare November Council Meeting Report

Enrollment ~ 48

Staff ~ 11 staff Will be interviewing for another part-time staff person.

Fundraisers ~ The Gift Show is scheduled for Friday, November 28 and Saturday, November 29. We were blessed with a few new vendors and all of our spots are filled! Sign-ups are out for daycare families and church members to order wreaths and/or donate soup and baked goods.

Keystone STARS ~ Passed our STARS designation and remain at a level 3 out of 4. A STAR 3 program means we have met all the state's necessary standards to be considered top quality. For a center our size being a STAR 3 is quite an accomplishment.

Pre-K Counts ~ PA has finally passed a budget! We should be receiving our Pre-K Counts funding soon.

St. John's Lutheran Church

JANUARY

2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
9:00am Worship	Looking Ahead			1	2	3
10:15am Sunday school	February 18 ~ 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service February Congregational Meeting ~ Date to be determined			Happy New Year!		
4 Holy Communion	5	6	7 10:30am Bible Study NO Hand bells or Choir rehearsal	8 6:30pm Council Meeting	9	10 
11 Baptism of Our Lord 	12	13	14 10:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Hand bells 7:00pm Choir reh.	15 9:30am Comfort Knotting (weather Permitting)	16	17 11:00am Memorial Service for Reba Harmon w/visitation 10:00–11:00
18 Holy Communion	19 <i>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</i>	20 6:30pm Property Committee	21 10:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Hand bells 7:00pm Choir reh.	22	23	24
25 2025 Committee Reports Due	26	27	28 10:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Hand bells 7:00pm Choir reh.	29	30	31 