

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

SEPTEMBER 2026

A Prayer for Labor Day

Lord on this Labor Day,
we thank You for the blessing of work.
We ask for strength to complete each day.
We ask for rest when we are weary.
We ask Your guidance
for everyone seeking employment,
and we ask that
You be with those whose faces
we might never see
but who work tirelessly each day
for the good of us all.
Amen.

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@stjohnsbelleville.org
Website ~ stjohnsbelleville.org



Pastor's Page

My favorite gospel has always been the Gospel of Mark. I love all the Gospels but I am still drawn close to Mark's Gospel. Early in Mark's Gospel we are told that Jesus withdrew with his disciples to a "deserted place." Jesus leads his disciples into the wilderness for a vacation, a time and place for rest. What so impresses me is that busy Jesus, with so much world-changing, important work to do, takes a vacation. He goes apart from his work to rest.

The Gospel of Mark is so full of frantic activity, busyness and bustle. One of Mark's favorite words is "immediately." Immediately Jesus went here, immediately he did this, immediately he did that. But Jesus also withdraws. He and his disciples get away from it all, make a retreat, take a vacation. I find it remarkable that what Jesus intends to do is to get away from it all, to go some place as empty of people and activity as possible. Jesus was big on doing, but he also withdraws from doing.

The Labor Day holiday is now upon us. It is a time to recall our work; the jobs we have had or perhaps still have, the work which we have done or still do. So much of our lives is constituted by our work, our labor. But this is my message on Labor Day: the ability to withdraw, to disengage is, I believe, an act of faith. Taking the time to get away or rest, to withdraw from activity is surely related to your conviction about the sort of God we have. A person who can never take time off from work is a person who thinks that he or she is the only one doing any work.

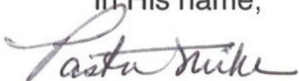
It takes faith to believe that the world is not utterly dependent upon me...or you. Faith believes that God is God and faith believes that the ultimate fate of this world is not up to me...or you. Overwork, the inability to take time off, to never have a vacation, never be able to let loose, to retreat, or to withdraw implies a lack of faith in our God who the psalmist says never slumbers nor sleeps, so that we can!

Yes, Jesus was a worker. He healed, he preached. he taught, he travelled all over the place, and he fed the multitudes. But before he did all that, he withdrew and took his disciples with him so they might learn that they needed rest as much as did Jesus. He put down what he was DOING in order to recover who he was BEING. What he did was not as important as who he was. I see a lot of people doing, being busy in this world but not taking the time for BEING who they are. And that is sad, and may I suggest, not being faithful.

I have never yet heard anyone who, in the last chapters of their lives, have ever said something like this: "You know, looking back, I should have spent more time at the office or I should have given more of my life to my job." No, what I hear from people is a lot of regret that along the way they should have spent more time with the family, insisted on times of respite and rest.

Labor Day is a time to recognize the vocations that we hold, the work we do or have done, and the achievements from those labors. However, may I lift up the necessary place for a Sabbath rest and other times when we can step back from our labors and be renewed just as Christ did this for himself.

In His name,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Mike".

Pastor Mike

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

	<u>Term Expires</u>
Steve Cleck	end of 2028
Jim Buchanan ~ Treasurer	end of 2028
Carol Fultz ~ President	end of 2026
Joe Kanagy ~ Secretary	end of 2028
Sue Lynch	end of 2027
Nancy Penepacker ~ Vice Pres.	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 08/27/2026
\$ 9,888.45

January 1 through August 27, 2026

Income \$ 155,873.11 Expense \$ 153,136.37
Net Income \$ 2,736.74

*Does not include end of month income and Sunday 8/30 deposit. Balance of bathroom expense \$23,683.67 has been paid to Sunset Construction.

Daycare Financial Report

Checking account balance 08/27/2026
\$ 6,858.89

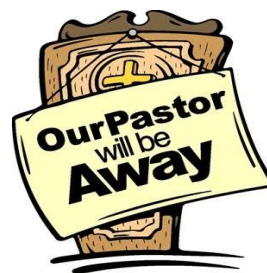
January 1 through August 27, 2026

Income \$ 288,547.07 Expense \$ 288,043.00
Net Income \$ 504.07

*Does not include end of month income.

SOME OF THE MOMENTS THAT FELT
GOOD IN THE MOMENT TURNED OUT
NOT TO BE ALL THAT IMPORTANT.
OTHERS THAT FELT DISAPPOINTING OR
DIFFICULT BECAME SOME OF THE PLACES
WHERE GOD TAUGHT ME
THE MOST ABOUT HIMSELF.

**GOD'S GOODNESS
DOESN'T DEPEND
ON MY
CIRCUMSTANCES.**



Pastor Sigler is taking vacation time next month. They are leaving Sunday afternoon, September 6 and will return home on Monday, September 28. Ed Bilich will be preaching and leading our worship on the 13th and 27th, and Pastor Kari Swigart will join us on September 20th.

Pastor Ken Longfield is covering emergencies and can be reached at 717-250-6696.

Holy Communion will be held on September 6th and again following the pastor's vacation on October 4th.

IN OUR CHURCH and COMMUNITY



After using the WOV hymnal for the summer we will return to the LBW (green hymnal) again on Sunday, September 6.

The bell choir will resume practice on Wednesday, September 9 at 6:00pm, and choir rehearsal will be held at 7:00pm. Please consider joining one or both, and help to enhance our worship experience with the blessing of music.

Bible Study

The Wednesday morning sessions will resume on September 30 at 10:30am.

Comfort Knotting

Knotters will meet again on Thursday, September 3 at 9:30am. Blanket Sunday is October 4. A selection of comforts completed this past year will be displayed throughout the church.

Envelopes will be included in the September 27 bulletin and placed in the narthex for anyone wishing to donate towards this mission.

Council

After taking a break for the summer, council will be meeting on Thursday, September 3. This is a week earlier due to the Pastor's vacation.

PLEASE NOTE ~ since council did not meet during July/August, only the May minutes are included in this newsletter. The June minutes will be reviewed/approved at the September meeting.

Sunday School

The adult class which meets in the blue room will resume sometime in September. Date will be included in the weekly bulletin.

Daycare News

Thank you to "EVERYONE" who supported the yard sale by donating items, helping in various ways and coming to look/buy. We made \$3,000.00! That did not surpass last year's record of \$3,200.00, but came close.

We thank God for blessing us once again, and our "hope" is to have another one next year.

This year's gift show is scheduled for Friday, November 27 and Saturday, November 28. If you know of anyone who makes handcrafted items and may want to participate in the show, please contact us. We are always looking for vendors who may bring in something new.

Our daycare along with others in the county and state are experiencing a staff shortage. If you know of "ANYONE" who has child care experience and would like to work part-time/full-time, please let us know. We would even welcome anyone age 17 and up without experience, who cannot be alone with the children, but still help as a classroom aide.

Social Ministry

The Social Ministry committee met recently to discuss their fall plans. A meal for our shut-ins/senior members is planned for Saturday, September 26. Please mark your calendar ~ the Thanksgiving Tureen is planned for Sunday, November 22 following the worship service.

Thank you to the committee for hosting the church picnic. The meal provided by Harshbarger's along with some of the sides/desserts made by committee members was delicious. It was a wonderful time of fellowship with church family and guests. Below and on the following page are some pictures of those who came to eat and fellowship.





On the following page are instructions on how to fill a “Seafarer Christmas Satchel”

Please note ~

- ◇ They are asking for size **Medium and Large ONLY!!!**
- ◇ **ONLY ONE** type of suggested snack should be included
- ◇ **NO** ankle socks
- ◇ **ONE** short or long sleeve T-shirt **ONLY!!**

If you wish to purchase a pack of T-shirts or socks please REMOVE ONE for your satchel, and the others can be sent to separately and used to fill other bags.

Satchels can be found on the table in the narthex, and must be turned in **by Sunday, October 18.**

Thank you!

Christmas-at-Sea

A Holiday Initiative of



Seafarers International House

Spread the Joy of Christmas amongst seafarers!

90% of global trade is transported on the world's oceans by crew members on container ships who remain invisible to most people, yet our supply chains depend on their services and sacrifice of being at sea for six to nine months. It is an exhausting and lonely job. We invite you, your business, school group or congregation to **spread holiday cheer among those who will not be with their loved ones**. Our port chaplains will deliver satchels filled with gifts from you. Mariners regardless of their faith or nationality will receive satchels filled with:

- One Sweatshirt – hooded or unhooded (size M-L)
- Three Pairs of Socks – thermal or gym (**NO ANKLE SOCKS**)
- One T- Shirt (size M-L **ONLY**) **LONG OR SHORT SLEEVE ONLY**
- One Knitted Winter Cap (coordinating scarf optional; no pastels please),
- One Can of Nuts, **OR** Large Bar of Chocolate, **OR** Healthy Snack Bar
- A Holiday or Christmas card from YOU!

PLEASE REMOVE ALL STORE TAGS FROM CLOTHES
PLEASE DO NOT ADD ANYTHING ELSE TO THE BAGS THAT'S NOT ON THE LIST ABOVE

You pick the colors, styles, and brands, but please no substitutions from the list. For the safety of seafarers, please do not add fringes or pom-poms to the hats and scarves. The Christmas-at-Sea satchels should be comparable for each member of the crew.

Please assemble each satchel with sweatshirts and T-shirts of the same size and label the satchel with a M or L on the back side.

All links including to General Instructions, Patterns, and how to participate are easily accessible on our web page: use the QR code or visit <https://www.sihnyc.org/>



If it is more convenient, you may donate and we purchase the items for you. Typically, a filled satchel costs about \$40. Or you may order items for seafarers on Amazon on the Christmas-at-Sea wish list: <https://a.co/bHHEzEZ>

If you are a Thrivent client, you may apply for \$250 in seed money for your Christmas-at-Sea team at www.thrivent.com/about-us/membership/thrivent-action-teams

**We are collecting the satchels through the year until
NOVEMBER 5, 2026**

SEPTEMBER SERVICE SCHEDULE

September 6

Elevator: Mike Harshbarger

Greeters: Jim and Georgianna Buchanan

Lay Reader: Jim Buchanan

Money Counters: John and Denise Chester

Sound System: Ed Bilich

Ushers: Mike and Michele Harshbarger

September 13

Elevator: Randy Harshbarger

Greeter: Nancy Penepacker

Lay Reader: Erica Hargenrader

Money Counters: Carol Fultz and Sue Lynch

Sound System: Joe Kanagy

Ushers: Sue Lynch and Joe Kanagy

September 20

Elevator: Jim Buchanan

Greeter: Joe Kanagy

Lay Reader: Joe Kanagy

Money Counters: Jay and Joy Byler

Sound System: Calvin Byler

Ushers: Carol Fultz and Nancy Penepacker

September 27

Elevator: Joe Kanagy

Greeters: Don and Rosalie Smith

Lay Reader: John Chester

Money Counters: Randy Harshbarger and Joe Kanagy

Sound System: Jay Byler

Ushers: Jay and Joy Byler

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.**

Altar Care and Flower Delivery ~ Georgianna Buchanan

Bulletin Delivery ~ John and Brenda Boring

St. John's Lutheran Church

Minutes of the May 14, 2026 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, March 19, 2026 at 6:30 PM in the blue room.

Present: Pastor Mike Sigler, President Carol Fultz, Jim Buchanan, Joe Kanagy, Nancy Penepacker, Steve Cleck. Sue Lynch was absent.

The meeting was called to order by President, Carol Fultz

Devotions:

Schedule for 2026

February---Sue Lynch

March--- Jim Buchanan

April---Joe Kanagy

May---Nancy Penepacker

June--- Steve Cleck

September--- Jim Buchanan

October---Sue Lynch

November---Joe Kanagy

December---Nancy Penepacker

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the April 9 Meeting were presented. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Pastor Mike, and seconded by Steve Cleck. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report was presented.

Financial Reports:

The Financial reports were presented

St. John's---A motion to accept the church financial report was made by, Nancy Pennepacker and properly seconded by Joe Kanagy. Motion carried.

St John's Daycare---A motion to accept the daycare financial report was made by Pastor Mike, and properly seconded by Nancy Pennepacker. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Cemetery---Joe---Nothing

Christian Ed---Carol---Nothing

Daycare---Carol---Report Presented

Finance---Jim---Nothing to report

Evangelism/Mission---Steve---Meeting 5/21

Music/Worship---Nancy---nothing

Mutual Ministry-NancyNeed to replace Rose Mary Property---Joe---Waiting on vanity top

Doors are fine in bathroom

Social Ministry---Sue---Meal for shutins May 17; June 14, Mother---Father Brunch; August picnic for Church and Daycare

Antiquitie Committee---Sandy Metz, Carolen Conner, Elornor Rachrau, Ruth Baker, are going through papers and old things to preserve along with an antique Bible

Old Business:

New Church Phone Tree and prayer chain still in the works

Pastor wants to get committees up and running

New Business:

A motion was made by Nancy Pennepacker and seconded by Joe Kanagy to donate \$1000 to To ECLA World Hunger.

A motion was made by Pastor Mike and Seconded by Nancy Pennepacker to donate \$200 to Samaritans Purse

There being no further discussion, the meeting was properly adjourned and closed with the Lords prayer

. Next meeting will be June11 2026

Respectfully submitted, Joseph Kanagy, Secretary

Daycare May Council Meeting Report

Enrollment ~ 50

Staff ~ 12 staff (one is a part-time college student) Our college student has returned for the summer and informed us that she will also be available to work three days a week beginning this fall due to her class schedule. Several of our families are expecting babies and with the infants being enrolled this year, we were looking at hiring another part-time staff member. God in His goodness has provided and blessed us with exactly what we needed.

Fundraisers

The annual yard sale is scheduled to be held again in August. We are already off to a good start. Donations can be placed on/behind the stage.

Pre-K Counts

Our Pre-K program was recently assessed by the PA State Office of Child Development and Learning. We scored exceptionally well and fully meet their program criteria.

Pre-K graduation is scheduled for Thursday, May 28 in the F.H.

DHS

Our annual inspection will be this month. The state does not provide a specific date, the inspector just "shows up", so we always strive to be in a state of readiness.



St. John's Lutheran Church

SEPTEMBER

2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
9:00am Worship 10:30am Sunday school		1	2	3 9:30am Comfort Knotting 6:30pm Council Note change of date	4	5
6 Holy Communion Pastor leaving for vacation after services	7 Labor Day DC/Church Office closed	8	9	10	11 	12
13 Ed Bilich preaching/ leading worship	14	15 6:30pm Property Committee	16	17 9:30am Comfort Knotting	18	19
20 Pastor Kari Swigart preaching/ leading worship	21	22 	23	24	25	26
27 Ed Bilich preaching/ leading worship	28 Pastor returns from vacation	29 Pastor back in the office	30 10:30am Bible Study resumes	Looking Ahead Sunday, October 4 ~ Blanket Sunday Sunday, October 18 ~ Last day to donate items for Seafarer bags Sunday, October 25 ~ Reformation Sunday		