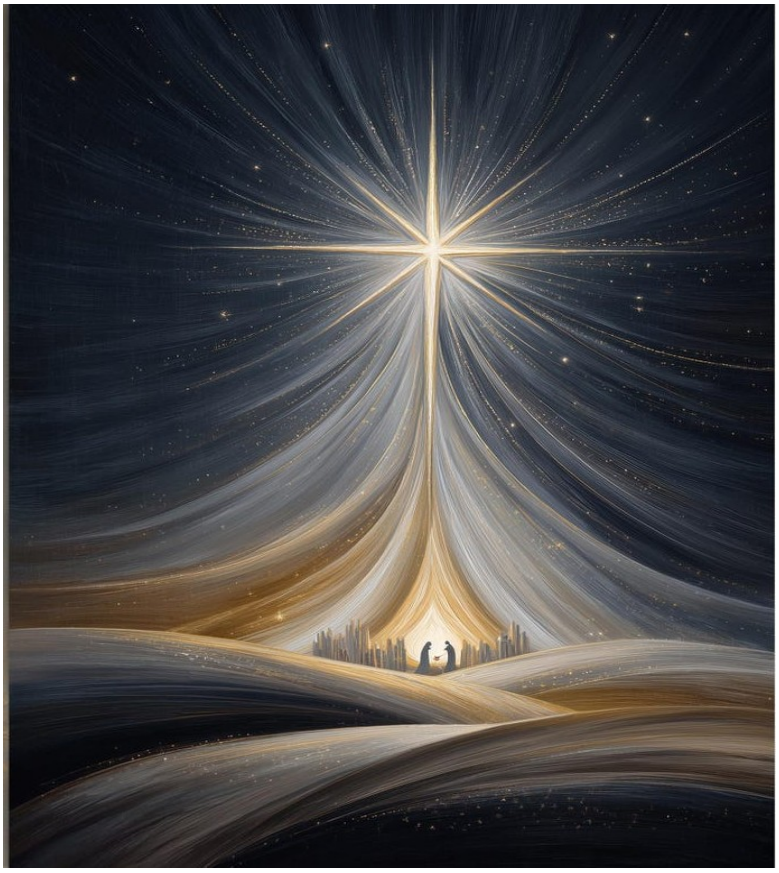
ST JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
3597 WEST MAIN STREET
PO BOX 5716
BELLEVILLE PA 17004

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Parish Messenger

St. John's Lutheran Church, Belleville, Pennsylvania

DECEMBER 2026



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**

Find us on Facebook

Pastor's Page

On my desk in my library is a picture of my son, Jonathan, taken but a few hours after his birth. He is now 39 years old and by most indications is a healthy middle-aged man. It was not always so. His mother's pregnancy with him was a very difficult one. Several times she nearly miscarried. Moreover, he was prematurely born and the birthing process itself was fraught with difficulties. I have, over the years, repeatedly referred to him as our miracle baby.

I remember well the year of his birth. There was such a sense of great expectancy, the thrill of yet another new life to be added to our family, all the preparations that needed to be made prior to his arrival, the worries over his safe deliverance, and the knowledge of the pain which his mother would endure in giving him birth.

The picture on my desk of my son is a constant reminder to me of a frail little boy whose arms and legs were so thin and whose body was so tiny, you had to marvel that anything that small and frail could grow up to become an adult. His picture will always serve as a reminder to me of just how vulnerable life can be. I cannot help but be astounded over the miracle of his birth; how God brings forth new life from life. I am in awe that God fashions us down to the most intricate detail.

As I prepare for Christmas, St. Luke's terse description of the birth of Christ has a poignant meaning for me. Luke says, "And Mary brought forth her first both son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a feeding trough, because there was no room for him in the inn."

The name of this baby Jesus is to be above every other name. In him God was pleased to dwell among us, to be born as we are both and to take upon Himself our humanity. There was nothing idyllic about Jesus' birth. He was born into poverty under the most difficult circumstances, in a cold barn among animals because there was no warm, comfortable room for him anywhere else. God's gift of His only begotten Son came with an extraordinary risk.

Yet all of this ought to be of great comfort to us, especially in these days when so many feel the scarcity of necessities and feelings of despair, fear and loneliness. Christmas is God's assurance that He comes to His people to cast wide the mantle of His love and warmth over a world that experiences so much coldness. He comes to dwell among us to bless and keep us mercifully by His grace.

May the birth of the Christ child this year fill you with much hope and may His presence be given birth in your hearts.

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
Jim Buchanan ~ Treasurer	end of 2025
Carol Fultz ~ President	end of 2026
Michele Harshbarger ~ Secretary	end of 2025
Joe Kanagy	end of 2025
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 11/24/2025
$ 8,025.12

January 1 through November 24, 2025

Income $ 208,399.82 Expense $ 208,198.32
Net Income $ 201.50

Does not include offering for November 29 and end of month expenses.

Daycare Financial Report

Checking account balance 11/24/2025
$ 9,393.42

January 1 through November 24, 2025

Income $ 368,055.73 Expense $ 369,124.50
Net Income $ -1,068.77

Does not include end of month income and expense.



FYI ~ New Phone Feature

We are subscribing to a "phone tree" system which will allow text and phone messages to be sent out to our members. It will mainly be used for any worship service cancellations due to inclement weather, prayer concerns and meeting reminders. A form requesting the phone number(s) you would like to be notified on, has been included in the mailing for the upcoming congregational meeting. Please fill it out, and return to the church by December 20.

And, if any of your other information has changed since February of 2025, please include those for the upcoming directory update.



Our congregational meeting is scheduled for December 13 in the sanctuary, following the worship service. Information will be available in member mailboxes on Sunday, November 29. Any remaining envelopes will be mailed out on November 30.

Please contact the church office if you did not receive yours.

Due to the Christmas/New Year's holiday Bible study, will only be held on Wednesday, December 2nd , 9th, and 16th. It will resume again on January 5th.

Bell practice and choir rehearsal will be held on Wednesday, December 2, 9, 16 and 23.

IN OUR CHURCH and COMMUNITY

The Christmas dinner hosted by members of the Stroup family has been **moved to Saturday, December 26 at 1pm**, instead of Christmas day. A traditional meal is being prepared and provided at no charge. Feel free to bring a dessert (cookies, cake, etc.) to share if you wish.

Please sign-up in the narthex or contact the church office if you would to attend.



Christmas Dinner

Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service begins at 7:00pm on Thursday, December 24, with special music before. We are in need of volunteers for the following ~

Elevator Operator
Sound System

Please contact the church office if you can help in this way.

Shining Light Through the Darkness annual Christmas light display at Derry Community Park (former Kish Park) begins Friday, December 5 and runs through January 8.

Featured are thousands of lights and displays for young and old to enjoy. There is no cost, free entertainment, carriage rides, food and more.

The park is open (most) evenings 5:00-9:00pm and Saturdays from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

More information can be found on their facebook page or website www.kishparkshininglight.org.



Council approved the purchase and installation of two Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) for use during medical emergencies. A brief 15- to 20-minute training session will be held in the Blue Room immediately following the church service on **Sunday, December 6**. If you are able and willing to learn how an AED can help save a life, please plan to attend.

~ *In the Narthex* ~

Advent begins on Sunday, November 29. Thank you to those who signed up to write the meditations.

The devotionals are available in the narthex. If you know of others who would enjoy having one to use as part of their daily devotions, please feel free to take for them.

Sign-up sheets for anyone who would like to place Altar flowers next year.

Please remember to notate whether you would like to keep the flowers or have them delivered. Deihl's has recently informed us that the cost is not increasing and will remain at $40.00.

Mitten Tree

Needed are ~ Mittens, gloves, scarves, hats, socks, slipper socks and slippers for children and adults.



The 2027 church birthday calendars will be available on Sunday, December 22. **There is no cost, feel free to take one or more.**

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

The 2027 offering envelopes will be available in member mailboxes on Sunday, December 22. Please contact the church office if you did not receive or would like to have one. Feel free to deliver to a

St. John's has Meals on Wheels the last 2 weeks in December. Monetary donations are needed to purchase pies/cheesecakes. See Sue Lunch/church office if you can help in this way.



Thank you to St. John's Social Ministry committee for hosting another memorable Thanksgiving tureen. Looking at the tables, there was a lot of good food and yummy desserts to enjoy. Even though our church may be considered small, this season of thanks reminds of us how blessed we are with good leadership, many willing workers and a wonderful church family.

In the coming years, may St. John's continue to shine as a beacon of God's endless grace and glory.





Pastor Sigler (unsuccessfully) telling Carol he does not like his picture taken!








LIFETIME










EXIT
EXIT

Good afternoon,

It's a pleasure for me to write this letter expressing sincere thanks to the congregations who assembled "Christmas-at-Sea" gift sacks for the ELCA-related ministry known as Seafarers International House in New York City. Each Christmas, port chaplains on the staff of this ministry distribute these sacks (containing gifts of warm clothing and snack foods) to all the crew members of the freighters that arrive in the Port of New York (Brooklyn, Manhattan, and North Jersey) each Christmas season.

The total of seafarers bags for 2026 is: 989

Please express our deepest thanks to anyone in your congregation(s) who supported this project. Gift sacks for 2027 with complete instructions will be available at the June 6 synod assembly display tables.

For those who want a head start here is the **EXACT list** of needs to be in the seafarers bags. **PLEASE NO EXCEPTIONS AS WE WILL HAVE TO TAKE OUT ANYTHING THAT IS NOT ON THE LIST THAT WE RECEIVE FROM SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL HOUSE.** Anything that is missing the synod needs to buy to put in the bag.

1. One Sweatshirt – hooded or unhooded **(size M-L ONLY)**
2. Three Pairs of Socks – thermal or gym (**NO ANKLE SOCKS**)
3. One T- Shirt (size M-L ONLY) **LONG OR SHORT SLEEVE ONLY**
4. One Knitted Winter Cap (coordinating scarf optional; no pastels please),
5. One Can of Nuts, **OR** Large Bar of Chocolate, **OR** Healthy Snack Bar
6. A Holiday or Christmas card from YOU!
7. **PLEASE REMOVE ALL STORE TAGS FROM CLOTHES – this does not mean the tag sewn in the shirt with the size/washing instructions on it.**
8. **PLEASE DO NOT ADD ANYTHING ELSE TO THE BAGS THAT'S NOT ON THE LIST ABOVE**
9. You pick the colors, styles, and brands, but please no substitutions from the list.
10. For the safety of seafarers, please do not add fringes or pom-poms to the hats and scarves.
11. 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.

PLEASE NOTE ~
EVERYTHING THAT IS GIVEN AS A GIFT IN THE BAGS IS MUCH APPRECIATED BUT WE NEED TO **STICK TO THE ABOVE LIST SO ALL THE BAGS ARE COMPARABLE**. ANYTHING THAT IS PUT IN THE SEAFARERS BAGS THAT IS NOT ON THE ABOVE LIST **IS PULLED OUT** AND DONATED TO A PLACE THAT CAN USE CLOTHING. **THEN THE SYNOD HAS TO GO BUY REPLACEMENTS FOR THE INCORRECT ITEMS.**

Brenda Krouse, Administrative Assistant
Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA
PO Box 36
Lewisburg, PA 17837
570-524-9778

5TH ANNUAL Belleville Family Christmas CELEBRATION

Join us for an evening of Christmas fun, family activities and community fellowship!

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2026
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

UNION TOWNSHIP GROUNDS
95 Penn Street,
Belleville, PA 17004

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit Santa Claus
- Christmas Crafts
- Face Painting
- Outdoor Games and Activities
- Live Nativity
- Hayrides
- Holiday-Themed Minute to Win It Competitions
- Community Christmas Card Signing Station for Soldiers Serving Away from Home and Valley View Residents
- Make Your Own S'mores *(Weather permitting)*
- Make a Donut with GiGi

Scavenger Hunt *Prize Drawing*

FOOD & REFRESHMENTS

Enjoy:

Hot Dogs • Hot Chocolate • Coffee • Kettle Corn • Cookies

Bring your family, invite your friends, and celebrate the joy of the Christmas season with your community!

ADMISSION IS FREE!

Presented by the Belleville Lions Club

DECEMBER SERVICE SCHEDULE

December 6
Elevator: Mike Harshbarger
Greeter: Jami Zook
Lay Reader: Jami Zook
Money Counters: John and Denise Chester
Sound System: Ed Bilich
Ushers: Mike and Michele Harshbarger

December 13
Elevator: Randy Harshbarger
Greeters: Mike and Michele Harshbarger
Lay Reader: Mike Harshbarger
Money Counters: Carol Fultz and Sue Lynch
Sound System: Joe Kanagy
Ushers: Sue Lynch and Joe Kanagy

December 20
Elevator: Jim Buchanan
Greeters: Chelsea and Merritt Reed
Lay Reader: Chelsea Reed
Money Counters: Jay and Joy Byler
Sound System: Calvin Byler
Ushers: Carol Fultz and Nancy Penepacker

December 24 ~ Christmas Eve
Elevator: Volunteer Needed
Greeter: Ed Bilich
Lay Reader: Ed Bilich
Sound System: Volunteer Needed

December 27
Elevator: Joe Kanagy
Greeter: Joe Kanagy
Lay Reader: Joe Kanagy
Money Counters: Randy Harshbarger and Joe Kanagy
Sound System: Jay Byler
Ushers: Jay and Joy Byler

Altar Care ~ Carol Fultz

Altar Flower Delivery ~ Carol Fultz

Bulletin Delivery ~ Jim and Georgianna Buchanan

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 October 8, 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, October 8, 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

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 October 8 Meeting were presented. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Pastor Mike, and seconded by James Buchanan. 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 Penepacker and properly seconded by Sue Lynch. Motion carried.

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

Committee Reports:

Cemetery---Joe---Nothing

Christian Ed---Carol—Nothing

Daycare—Carol---Report Presented. Waiting to hire a couple teachers; waiting list for students; need to meet to raise tuition.

Finance—Jim—Meeting to get ready for budget; Thank you letter from CML for sponcorship

Mutual Ministry—Decorate church f/ Advent

Antiquities-- Nothing

Evangelism/Mission—Steve— Working on church brochure and card

Property—Joe—Bathroom inspected and in use, need a punch list a few things that need done there; replaced windows in blue room, Sealed parking lot

Social Ministry— Thanksgiving Terrine upcoming

Old Business:

New Church Phone Tree and prayer chain still in the works; Text messages for 75 people $23.00@ month, motion made by Sue Lynch seconded by Steve Cleck

Pastor to take Seafarer bags to Synod office

Was discussion about too many persons parking in our lot during the week

New Business

Gift show dates, Friday, November 27 and Saturday, November 28. Vendor setup Wednesday November 25

December 13 for congregational meeting

Next meeting November 8 2026

Respectfully submitted, Joseph Kanagy, Secretary

Daycare November Council Meeting Report

Enrollment: 55 We still have a waiting list, but are working on bringing in more children as we transition some to their age appropriate classroom.

Staff: 13 staff (2 seasonal college students) After a long wait, finally able to hire two staff members. Angela Weaver is the teacher for the 2 year olds. She was previously employed in another daycare located in State College. She and two other teachers were in a classroom with 16 - 2 year olds. Angie lives in Belleville with her family, and is glad to be working on this side of the mountain with a much smaller class.

Leah Kanagy lives in Belleville, and has been hired as a full-time classroom aide. She has experience working with children in a church setting, along with babysitting.

We thank God for blessing us with two excellent staff members!

Fundraisers ~ The Gift Show is scheduled for Friday, November 27 and Saturday, November 28. We are still looking for donations of homemade soup, baked goods and other homemade goodies to sell. Our daycare parents are helping to provide food items, beverages, condiments, etc. along with baked goods and soups.

Pre-K Counts ~ We only have 20 of our Pre-K Counts slots out of 22 filled, but the collaborative as a whole has filled the required 90% of our combined slots. We are still actively advertising.

St. John's Lutheran Church

DECEMBER

2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
9:00am Worship ***10:30am Sunday school***		1	2 10:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Hand bells 7:00pm Choir reh.	3 9:30am Comfort Knotting	4	5 
6 Second Sunday of Advent Holy Communion	7	8	9 10:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Hand bells 7:00pm Choir reh	10 6:30pm Council Meeting	6:00-8:00pm Belleville Christmas Celebration at Twp. Comm. Center	12
13 Third Sunday of Advent Congregational meeting following worship	14 Poinsettia Orders Due 	15 6:30pm Property Committee	16 10:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Hand bells 7:00pm Choir reh.	17	18 	19
20 Fourth Sunday of Advent Holy Communion	21 	22 St. John's has Meals on Wheels	23 6:30pm Hand bells 7:00pm Choir reh. No Bible Study	24 Office Closed 7:00pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 The Nativity of Our Lord Christmas Day	26 1:00pm Stroup Family hosting Christmas Dinner in F.H.
27 First Sunday of Christmas	28	29 St. John's has Meals on Wheels	30 No Bible study Hand bell or Choir	31 *New Year's Eve* St. John's has Meals on Wheels		

St. John's Poinsettia Order Form



There is no set price again this year.
A variety will be purchased
and placed throughout the church.

Anyone placing poinsettias,
may take theirs home following
the Christmas Eve service.

In memory of

_____

_____

In honor of

_____

_____

Given by

_____

_____

Please return this form along with your donation
to the church by <u>Sunday December 13th.</u>