

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
1028 Church Street, PO Box 966
Fogelsville, PA 18051-0966



www.stjohns-fogelsville.org

The Rev. Nelson Quiñones, Pastor

Church Phone: (610) 395-5535

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December 2024

COMING IN DECEMBER:

- December 1:** Community Tree Lighting
December 6: Pines Dinner Theater Show
December 9: Christmas Party
December 15: Christmas Program
"Signs of Christmas" & Coffee Hour
December 24: Christmas Eve Services
(4:00 PM Family & 10:30 PM Candlelight)
December 29: Lessons & Carols



- 1/17 – Community Free Dinner
1/26 – Annual Congregational Meeting

Thank you to everyone who completed a “**NEWSLETTER QUESTIONNAIRE**”! If you have already selected your preference, great, if not it is not too late – simply let us know if you wish to receive your copy by email, pick up in the narthex, or continue through postal mail.

You may change your preference at any time.



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK...

Dear St. John's Members and Friends,

For Unto Us a Child Is Born

The Lehigh Mission District Newsletter November edition brought some members within the mission district disappointment because of the sentence, "Many churches in the mission district have been divided over which presidential candidate to elect- a prosecutor or a convicted felon." (Lehigh Mission District Newsletter Volume 29, Issue 10, November 2024, "Look to the LORD").

The words "convicted felon" was the disappointment that was called to my attention in the letter. I was informed that he [former President Donald Trump] was not a convicted felon and that I should not bring the church into politics.

I was under the impression that the conviction of the former US President of 34 felony charges was common knowledge. In hopes to avoid any misinformation below is an article link from the Associated Press, "Guilty: Trump becomes first former US president convicted of felony crimes" by Michael R. Sisak, Jennifer Peltz, Eric Tucker, Michele Price, and Jill Colvin. AP May 31, 2024. ¹

As to the matter of bringing the church into politics here's a link to another article where, "Donald Trump Shares Jesus Comparison While In Court" published on Newsweek, March 25, 2024, by Andrew Stanton. ²

The Newsweek article points out that "In the Truth Social post comparing himself to Jesus, Trump shared the text of the Bible." The text was Psalm 109:3-8.

It appears that the request to keep the church out of politics is not as taboo as some may lead me to believe in order to refrain from bringing the conversation to this page.

So, if not me, to whom do we leave the conversation of church and politics in the mission district?

Trump’s comparisons to Jesus is far-fetched.

As the Church begins a new year with the Advent Season this December, we are reminded of the Christ Child in the words of Isaiah,

“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

The Church allegiance is to Jesus The Christ, Lord and Savior.

¹ "Guilty: Trump becomes first former US president convicted of felony crimes" <https://apnews.com/article/trump-trial-deliberations-jury-testimony-verdict-85558c6d08efb434d05b694364470aa0>

² "Donald Trump Shares Jesus Comparison While In Court" <https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-shares-jesus-comparison-while-court-stormy-daniels-1883109>

In faithful assurance,
The Rev. Nelson Quiñones, Pastor

HOSPITALIZED OR HOMEBOUND??

Please be assured that pastoral visitation and Home Communion are always available at St. John’s. Contact us if you or a family member desires the sacrament or a visit.

OUR CHURCH HOSPITAL CODE IS: #281

Contact the church office and/or the pastor when you are hospitalized. Thank you to those who have been keeping us updated!



Join us for worship!!!

In order to remain in voting status as a member of St. John's we must have record of your communion at least once each year through the completion of a communion card (found in every pew). We ask that you please take a moment to fill out one of these cards if you have not already done so.



We email readings, prayers, and other resources each Friday so that you may reflect from home. Contact us to be added/removed from this list.

Sunday, December 1, 2024 – 1st Sunday of Advent

Jeremiah 33:14-16 A righteous branch springing up from David

Psalms 25:1-10 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 Strengthen hearts of holiness
for the coming of the Lord

Luke 21:25-36 Be alert for the coming of the Son of Man

Sunday, December 8, 2024 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

Malachi 3:1-4 My messenger is a refiner and purifier

Luke 1:68-79 In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from
on high shall break upon us.

Philippians 1:3-11 A harvest of righteousness on the
day of Jesus Christ

Luke 3:1-6 Prepare the way of the Lord

Sunday, December 15, 2024 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

Christmas Program “Signs of Christmas”

The signs of Christmas are everywhere. The important thing we must do for our children at Christmas is to make sure all these signs point to Jesus. Jesus, who came to earth a baby in a manger, to Christ who died for us on the Cross.

Sunday, December 22, 2024 – 4th Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a From Bethlehem comes a ruler

Luke 1:46b-55 You, Lord, have lifted up the lowly.

Hebrews 10:5-10 I have come to do your will

Luke 1:39-45 [46-55] Blessed are you among women

My soul magnifies the Lord

Tuesday, December 24, 2024 – Christmas Eve

4:00 Family & 10:30 PM Candlelight Services

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

Sunday, December 29, 2024 – 1st Sunday of Christmas

Lessons & Carols

In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the prince of peace is born among us.



REMINDER!!! Church cancellations will be displayed on WFMZ TV (or wfmz.com) on mornings of bad weather. You can also call the church office and listen to the answering machine, it will relay cancellations.

Council Minutes - October 14, 2024, at 7:00 pm

Present: Pastor Nelson, Kelsey Burian-Miller, Keri Ann Divers, Mike Divers, Ken Divers, Stacey Divers Neola Geschel, Cindy Graf, Lisa Herman, Mike Herman, Donna Kressin, Matthew Kressin, Carla Malantonio, Curtis White

Mike Divers called the meeting to order.

Pastor led us in prayer.

Council Meeting Minutes from September 9, 2024

Neola made a motion, seconded by Lisa, to approve the minutes from the September 9th meeting. The motion carried.

Treasurer/Finance Report (September 2024)

Stacey made a motion, seconded by Kelsey, to approve the financial reports. The motion carried.

President's Report:

- The electricity provider was changed to Better Buy Energy as it was 2 cents cheaper per KW
- Council openings begin in November. There is one open spot, 3 current members are eligible for a second term (Kelsey Herman, Cindy Graf, and Donna Kressin). Donna agreed to stay on, while Cindy and Kelsey did not.
- On a motion by Carla, seconded by Cindy, a motion was made to use the Building Fund for the \$1,000 down payment for the statue plaque. The motion carried.
- Pastor and Carla are teaching Catechetical class. They are visiting the Mosque on October 26 at 11:00 AM.

Pastor's Report:

- Richard Ludwig-Dicus will be leading worship on November 10th in the pastor's absence.

- Report included worship services, funerals, meetings, and visits.
- Facebook views of our weekly services range from 103-212 weekly.

Committee Reports:

Finance:

- On a motion by Kelsey, seconded by Stacey, the 2025 budget was approved. The motion passed. It will be presented at the Congregational Meeting November 10.
- The finance committee met and approved a CD purchase in Helga Howard Fund/Money Market for \$15,000.

Property:

- Fire inspection was completed, we passed.
- Superior Propane was contacted about the tank swap again. Estimated cost of \$3,400 for all work including new lines and shutoffs. Curtis will contact Laudenslager for another estimate as they already maintain our AC system.

Christian Education/Sunday School:

- Homebound project on October 27th
- Christmas Program is in the works. The music will be introduced during the Sunday School hour.

Youth Ministry:

Worship and Music:

- All Saints Sunday is November 3rd
- Joint Thanksgiving Eve Service on November 27th at 7:00p.m. at our church. We will host coffee hour.
- Community tree lighting on Dec. 1 at 6:00 p.m.
- Christmas Children's program being planned for December 15th

Staff Support:

- Staff reviews coming.

Evangelism:

- Halloween Hot Dog Stand- October 25th. David Neimeyer is coordinating. Berks is donating hot dogs. Goodie bags are being provided by the Capwells. Monetary donation

from Keith and Kim Snyder. A list of help and needed items is in the narthex.

Stewardship:

- Community Free Dinner on November 8th sponsored by Bob and Sharon Snyder (Turkey BBQ)

Ladies Aid:

- Basket Social was a great success.
- Boscov's Friends Helping Friends on October 22 –booklets on sale \$5
- Lehigh Mission district Christmas Ingathering: Angel tree and giving lists will be available soon.

Constitution & Bylaws report:

Other Reports:

- Choir- Thanksgiving Sides Sale in November (prep 21-22, pickup Sat. 23rd)

Old Business:

- 150th anniversary Celebration on October 27. Plaque will be added to the statue outside. Commemorative magnets have been ordered. An invitation is included in letter about the Congregational Meeting being sent out to all members.
- Pastor's health benefit selection entered on the portal (Gold+ option). He declines this as he is covered under his wife's plan.

New Business:

- Request to use the Fellowship Hall by Kelsey for a baby shower on February 1st from 12-4PM for 50-70 people. A lengthy discussion ensued about updating our Use of Facilities guidelines. Guidelines are available in the office. A motion was made by Curtis, seconded by KeriAnn, to accept the changes discussed at the meeting. The motion carried. Members will be charged a \$50 cleaning fee, (to be returned if no cleaning is required). Nonmembers will be charged a flat fee of \$400 for use of the multipurpose

room. This does not include use of the stoves or kitchen items. A Certificate of Insurance is needed for all users. This is to be given to the office administrator along with the check for the fee when the contract is signed.

- AA's fee will be \$50 month to cover heating/cooling and electricity.
- Christmas Craft Night is November 2nd. Jeff and Rich Ludwig-Dicus coordinating. Sign up in the narthex.

A motion was made by Stacey, seconded by Nelson, to close the meeting. The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by,
Donna Kressin,
Council Secretary

All minutes from past meetings are available in the church office.

***Council Updates:** Thank you to Kelsey Herman, Lisa Herman and Cindy Graf, who just completed their terms. We also thank Donna Kressin for renewing her term on Council. And, we welcome Sara Kleba and Lynn McMillen, who have agreed to serve.*



A Few Things to Keep in Mind:

✚ **Food Card Sales:** ½ of the profit from the food card sales will go towards the Restoration Fund, the other ½ will be sent to Second Harvest Food Bank. Thank you for your continued support of this fundraiser. Stop by the office during the week to make a purchase (Giant, Weis or Redner's).

✚ **2025 Address Directories will be printed soon.** Please have all changes into the church office by December 15th. Copies will be available in the narthex in early January. You may also request a PDF copy by email.

✝ **Weekly Email** - If you would like to be added, please send us a note to: stjohns.lutheran@verizon.net.

✝ **Flowers & Bulletins:** Bulletins - \$15.00; Flowers - \$48.00 for two vases. Feel free to contact the office with any questions or special requests. New charts for 2025 are now posted!

✝ **2025 Offering Envelopes** - You will again be able to pick up a box (with your assigned number) for the year. Envelopes will be located in the back pews of the church beginning 12/1/24.

✝ **Methods of giving** include offering envelopes, bank bill pay, and through our website with credit/debit card. Info about the different forms of donation is on our website.

✝ In order to remain in **voting status as a member of St. John's** we must have record of your communion at least once each year by home communion or at an in-house service. Please fill out a communion card, found in each pew.

✝ **Cookbooks** – now \$5 each, please pick one up in the narthex or Fellowship Hall. The proceeds will benefit the Restoration Fund.

✝ **Christmas ornaments are on sale again!** These gold keepsakes have a picture of St. John's Church printed on the front and come packaged in a box. See any Ladies Aid member to purchase one – only \$5 each. There are also some available in the narthex and Fellowship Hall.

✝ **Redner's Receipts** - We are still participating in the "Sav-A-Tape" program at Redner's Market. Deposit tapes in the narthex.

JUST A LITTLE
Reminder

Upcoming Events/Opportunities:

Community Tree Lighting – Sunday, December 1st at 6:00 PM at the Fogelsville Playground. Please join us.

The **Christmas Party**, sponsored by Ladies Aid, will be held on Monday, December 9th at 6:30 PM – everyone is invited! Get into the holiday spirit by sharing a covered dish dinner, singing carols and enjoying a special visit from St. Nick. Parents are responsible for gifts for their children, marked with the children’s names. We are also inviting everyone to bring a non-perishable item for the Food Bank. Join us for a fun-filled evening.



Reminder to ALL Sunday School parents to bring your children each Sunday to learn their songs for the **Christmas Program “Signs of Christmas”** on Sunday, December 15th during 10:30 AM worship. All Sunday School children will be participating. They will be practicing during SS hour and there will also be Thursday evening rehearsals on December 5th & 12th at 6:30 PM (soloists arrive at 6PM). Final SS hour rehearsal on December 8th at 9 AM. If you have questions, email Beth at musiclab1@yahoo.com.



We would like to invite everyone to bring their favorite Christmas cookies to share for the **coffee hour** after worship on December 15th.

Christmas Eve Services (Tuesday, December 24th):

This year we are planning on having 2 in-house services (as well as Facebook Live). Join us at 4:00 PM for the Family Service or 10:30 PM for the Candlelight Service. ***Your help is needed at our Christmas Eve services! Please consider volunteering by using SignUp Genius.***







Annual Reports - ALL CHURCH COMMITTEES/GROUPS:

Annual Reports will be out before you know it! Please have all information to the administrative assistant no later than January 5th.



Please plan to attend the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 26, 2025. Your thoughts and views are important!

Thank You...

-  To everyone who donated gifts, items and monetary contributions towards the Lehigh Mission District Christmas Ingathering. Special thanks to Carla Malantonio for coordinating and to Karen Smith for help with the Angel Tree.
-  To everyone who helped with the Thanksgiving Sides fundraiser, and to all who supported it!
-  A collective “thank you” to everyone who has made the Community Free Dinner so successful this year, we could not do it without you! Bob & Becky Neumoyer and Dave Neimeyer continue to do a wonderful job coordinating the growing dinners. Check the narthex for the 2025 schedule.
-  To Jeff & Rich Ludwig-Dicus for running our Craft Night. It was a fun evening, enjoyed by all.
-  To everyone who helped with this year’s Halloween Hot Dog Stand. Special thanks to Dave Neimeyer for coordinating; and to Keith & Kim Snyder, Keller Funeral Home, Berks Meats, Strohl’s Automotive, UMT and Wayne & Debbie Capwell for their support.
-  To all our volunteers who continue to help during Sunday in-house services acolyting, welcoming visitors, reading, etc.

- ☞ To everyone who continues to support St. John's by donating online, through Simply Giving, or with your checks/envelopes!
- ☞ To everyone who is supporting the Restoration Fund and the Food Bank through the purchase of food cards.
- ☞ To all who have designated their Thrivent Choice Dollars to St. John's Church.



Youth Update

- ✝ We are still looking for any youth that may be interested in serving as **bell ringers, acolytes, or crucifers**. You can use SignUp Genius to choose a date to serve. Speak with Pastor Nelson if you are interested or contact the office for more info.
- ✝ **Join us for Sunday School!** Everyone is welcome to join us on Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM. We have classes for toddlers through adults. Please speak with Pastor Nelson if you need information about the Catechetical Class (7th & 8th grade students).
- ✝ Mark your calendars now for the **Christmas Program "Signs of Christmas"** on Sunday, December 15th during 10:30 AM worship. All Sunday School children will be participating. They will be practicing during SS hour and there will also be Thursday evening rehearsals on December 5th & 12th at 6:30 PM (soloists arrive at 6PM). Final SS hour rehearsal on December 8th at 9 AM. If you have questions, email Beth at musiclab1@yahoo.com.

REMINDER – No Sunday School on December 29th!



COMMUNITY FREE DINNER 2025 SCHEDULE

January 17, 2025

March 21, 2025

May 16, 2025

July 18, 2025

September 19, 2025

November 14, 2025

Free dinners are held on Fridays, beginning at 5 PM.

CURBSIDE PICKUP – while supplies last

They will continue on the 3rd Friday, every other month (except November-2nd Friday).

All are welcome...bring your families and your neighbors!!

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Sponsors are needed – sign up in the narthex!!!

God's Global Barnyard

An animal can make a world of difference for a family in need. Animals provide food to eat, fertilizer to grow crops and offspring to sell at the market. With one gift, you can help a family escape the cycle of hunger and poverty for good.



Cow

A cow's milk, meat, fertilizer and calves can quickly strengthen a family's financial security.

\$500



Chicks

Chicks begin laying eggs at just a few months old, offering nutritious, protein-rich meals for families who are hungry.

\$10



Goat

Fresh milk from a goat is very nutritious and can be used to make products like yogurt and cheese to sell at the market.

\$50



Honeybees

Bees pollinate plants and boost crop growth — helping the wider community. Soaps and candles can be made from their wax and sold at the local market.

\$20



Pig

Within months after birth, piglets grow to weigh over 200 pounds — bringing a big payoff at the market.

\$30



Fish Farm

A fish farm and training in good business economics can provide a lifetime of meals for a community.

\$250

Give through your congregation by visiting ELCA.org/goodgifts or by sending a check to ELCA Good Gifts, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009. Please indicate your gift in the memo line of your check.

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