

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



ELCA

www.stjohns-fogelsville.org

The Rev. Nelson Quiñones, Pastor

Church Phone: (610) 395-5535

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March 2025

COMING IN MARCH:

March 5: Ash Wednesday

March 15: Council Retreat

March 21: Community Free Dinner

March 28 & 30: Pizza kit pick-up



LOOKING AHEAD...

4/8 – Egg-Filling Night

4/12 – Upper Macungie Township Bunny Hop

4/13 – Coffee Hour

4/17 – Maundy Thursday (First Communion)

4/20 – Easter Sunday

4/27-29 – Cinnamon Bun Bake Sale

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,

A Stuffed Cloud of Witnesses

Ash

We are skidding off the map.

We make a hole in the air

as we fall.

The air is stuffed with ash

each time an F-16 drops

its bombs on cemeteries.¹

“Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.”² We hear these words at funeral services in the cemetery. Sand is poured on the casket by the presiding minister to symbolize ashes and shaped in the form of a cross.

As we approach Ash Wednesday, another Christian ritual is the imposition of ashes on our foreheads. We are reminded by these words in that ritual: “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”³

Ashes are smeared on the foreheads of believers with the sign of the cross. We are reminded by the impositions of ashes that we are dust and as dust we shall return to the ground.

Now take the words from the poem above, “The air is stuffed with ash.”⁴ These ashes are not placed on a casket or smeared on someone's forehead.

These ashes are inhaled because they are in the air. These ashes irritate the eyes because they are flying in the air. These ashes cover the protagonist and their companion's entire bodies because they are stuffed in the air.

The pilot’s F-16 bombs show an indifference to beliefs, faiths, and confessions. The bombs aim to desecrate the cemeteries of the dead. In the process, bombs target to maim the human spirit from the living.

Who is really “skidding off the map”?⁵

Regardless of our ecumenical or inter-religious traditions, cemeteries hold the faithful departed. Cemeteries are filled with the living hope of their testimonies from every faith.

Amidst the bombs’ desecration of cemeteries, we see a “great cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1) come to life - as if God breathed life into the ashes while dangling through the air. The ashes imposition to cover the living body of those seeking refuge. The ashes inhaled by the breath of life. Each particle of ash dancing as testimonies to life.

The ashes have settled back to the ground.

As the ritual of ashes are smeared on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday, let us join our voices marked with the great cloud of witnesses and to proclaim life for today and mañana.

Have a blessed Lenten journey,
The Rev. Nelson Quiñones, Pastor

¹ Abu Toha, Mosab (2024). *Forest of Noise: Poems*. Knopf.

² Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Pastoral Care Occasional Services, Readings, and Prayers (2008). Augsburg Fortress.

³ Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006). Augsburg Fortress.

⁴ Abu Toha, Mosab.

⁵ Abu Toha, Mosab.





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, March 2, 2025 – Transfiguration of Our Lord

Exodus 34:29-35 Coming down from Mount Sinai,
Moses' face shone

Psalms 99 Proclaim the greatness of the Lord;
worship upon God's holy hill.

2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2 With unveiled faces we see the Lord's glory as
we are transformed

Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a] Jesus is transfigured on the mountain

Sunday, March 9, 2025 – 1st Sunday in Lent

Deuteronomy 26:1-11 The Lord brought us out of Egypt
with a mighty hand

Psalms 91:1-2, 9-16 God will give the angels charge over you,
to guard you in all your ways.

Romans 10:8b-13 If you confess that Jesus is Lord, you will be saved

Luke 4:1-13 The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness for forty days

Sunday, March 16, 2025 – 2nd Sunday in Lent

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18 The covenant with Abram and his descendants

Psalm 27 In the day of trouble, God will give me shelter.

Philippians 3:17-4:1 Our citizenship is in heaven
from where we expect a Savior

Luke 13:31-35 I have desired to gather Jerusalem
as a hen gathers her brood

Sunday, March 23, 2025 – 3rd Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 55:1-9 Everyone who thirsts, come to the water; seek the Lord

Psalm 63:1-8 O God, eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you.

1 Corinthians 10:1-13 Israel, baptized in cloud and seas, ate the same
spiritual food as Christians

Luke 13:1-9 Unless you repent, you will perish: parable of the fig tree

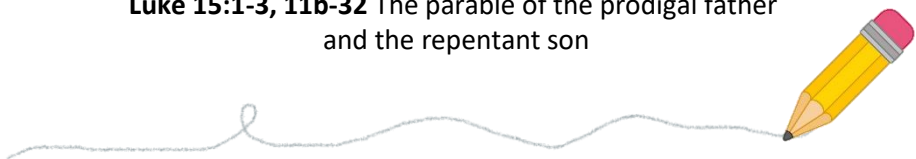
Sunday, March 30, 2025 – 4th Sunday in Lent

Joshua 5:9-12 Israel eats bread and grain, the produce of the land

Psalm 32 Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 The mystery and ministry of reconciliation

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 The parable of the prodigal father
and the repentant son



Council Minutes January 13, 2025, at 7:00 pm

Present: Pastor Nelson, Keri Ann Divers, Mike Divers, Ken Divers, Stacey Divers, Neola Geschel, Mike Herman, Sara Kleba, Donna Kressin, Matthew Kressin, Carla Malantonio, and Curtis White.

Absent: Lynn McMillen

Mike Divers called the meeting to order.

Council Meeting Minutes from November 11, 2024

Carla made a motion, seconded by Neola, to approve the minutes of the November 11th meeting. The motion carried. Reviewed the minutes from the congregational meeting on November 10th. Will add thank you to the departing members.

Treasurer/Finance Report (November and December 2024)

Carla made a motion, seconded by Donna, to approve the financial reports. The motion carried.

President's Report:

- Council elections were held. Ken made a motion, seconded by Carla, to reelect the slate of candidates from last year. President: Mike Divers, Vice President- Mike Herman, Secretary- Donna Kressin, Treasurer- KeriAnn Divers. The motion carried.
- Usher schedules and Council contact lists were updated.

Pastor's Report:

- Report included worship services, funerals, meetings, and visits.
- Facebook views of our weekly services range from 120-230 weekly.
- Catechetical class participated in some Christmas service projects.

Committee Reports:

Finance:

- ERTC update: we have received 5 out of the 6 ERTC checks. \$31,148.93 was deposited into the money market account on 12/26/24. From that, we transferred \$7,900 back to the restoration fund, which is where we initially borrowed the funds to cover the processing fees. This leaves a remaining balance of \$23,248.93 in the money market, The Finance Committee will meet to make a recommendation in February.

Property:

- Weather strip at bottom of multipurpose room door needs to be replaced.

Christian Education/Sunday School:

- Sunday School teachers are hoping for better attendance.
- We will be participating in the UMT Bunny Hop again this year on April 12th.
- Looking ahead to VBS this summer. Want to try a one-day Bible school as last year's was a success. Date to follow.

Youth Ministry:

Worship and Music:

- Ash Wednesday- March 5th at 7:00

Staff Support:

Evangelism:

Stewardship:

- Community Free Dinner on January 17th sponsored by the Furman family. Chili will be served.

Ladies Aid:

- Ladies Aid meeting will be held Tuesday, January 26th at 7:00 PM

Constitution & Bylaws report:

Other Reports:

Endowment Fund:

The Endowment Committee, in their mission to preserve and protect the donations made to St. John Endowment Fund and prudently invest to generate income to help support the mission of the church, have made the following recommendations to church council:

- The full \$2,531.23 in net endowment fund earnings from the non-managed account be transferred into the church account after approval from the congregation at the annual meeting in January.
- As a result of the net change in value in the Managed account the committee recommends that \$4,274.36 of the net Endowment Fund earnings for 2024 from the managed account remain re-invested within the Managed account in order to make us “whole again” and the remaining \$1,399.30 in net endowment fund earnings for 2024 from the managed account be transferred into the church account after approval from the congregation at the annual meeting in January.
- The above two recommendations would result in the transfer of \$3,960.53 to the church general account.

A motion was made by Sara Kleba, seconded by Stacey Geschel to accept the recommendations of the Endowment Committee to transfer \$3,930.53 to the General Fund. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Discussion of need for some new tables for the multipurpose room. Action tabled until after the Ladies Aid meeting.

New Business:

- Council Retreat- a date was chosen to brainstorm ideas. March 15th from 8-11 at Starlite.
- Annual congregational meeting to be held on January 26th after worship. Letters went out to members.
- Souper Bowl of Caring by the confirmands on February 9th

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

Next council meeting: Monday, February 10 at 7 pm

Respectfully submitted by,
Donna Kressin, Council Secretary



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 are available in the narthex.** You may also request a PDF copy by calling the church office.

✝ **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. Charts for 2025 are posted in the narthex!

✝ **2025 Offering Envelopes** are still available for pick-up. You may pick up a box (with your assigned number) for the year. Please feel free to take them to friends and family. Envelopes have been moved to the church office.

✝ **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.

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

Upcoming Events/Opportunities:

Ladies Aid Pizza Kit Fundraiser: Place your orders March 2nd thru March 14th for your pizza kit from Charlie K's Pizza (at the Allentown Fairgrounds)! Each kit costs \$20.00 and includes: 3 pizza crusts, 1 pt. sauce, and cheese packets. Please contact Carol Moyer to place your orders. Pick up will be Friday, 3/28 from 3-6 PM or after worship on 3/30.



Lent begins with **Ash Wednesday** on March 5, 2025. Join us for worship with communion and imposition of ashes at 7:00 PM.



Community Free Dinners – Dinners will continue on the 3rd Friday, every other month (except November- 2nd Friday). The next dinner will be held on March 21st, sponsored by Bob & Becky Neumoyer. We are in need of dinner sponsors and volunteers. Anyone interested in volunteering please call the church or contact Bob Neumoyer (570-386-3045 or nrch14@ptd.net). *Cash donations or purchased items will be gladly accepted from donors and members who possibly would like to help but are unavailable to attend for preparation and serving.*

First Communion will be held on Maundy Thursday, April 17, 2025. At St. John's, children who are/will be six years of age or older during 2025 will be considered for admission-letter with details will be mailed out to eligible families soon. Please contact Pr. Nelson if you would like to discuss and determine the readiness of your child. There will be a parent meeting on Sunday, March 23rd.



Flowers may now be ordered for Easter Sunday, April 20th. Please see the sign-up sheet in the narthex for flowers, colors, and prices. The deadline for orders is April 6th.

On Saturday, April 12th we will again be participating in the **UMT Bunny Hop** at Grange Park from 1-4 PM. We are looking for donations of plastic eggs and small goodies to place inside. Cash donations may be handed to Cindy Graf. Speak with Cindy if you are interested in helping hand out items at the event on the 12th. We could also use volunteers to help us stuff the eggs on Tuesday, April 8th at 7 PM!



Mother/Daughter Banquet – will be held on Wednesday, May 7th at 6:30 PM here at St. John's. Enjoy a fun filled evening for women and their guests. Family and friends are welcome. Dinner will be served family style, all you can eat. We can seat approx. 90 people so please make reservations early - see Jeanette Holtzhafer by March 30th to save your seats. Check the weekly bulletin for pricing details.



You are all invited to the **Lehigh Valley Phantoms Faith Night** scheduled for Sunday, March 16th at 3:05 PM as the Phantoms take on the Wilkes-Barre Scranton Penguins.

Tickets are \$20 upper level and \$25 lower level.
PPL Center (701 Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA 18101)

Please contact Pastor Nelson for more details.

Thank You...

- ☞ To everyone who contributed towards the \$197.92 and various non-perishable items collected for Souper Bowl Sunday. Special thanks to the youth who helped with the collection.
- ☞ 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 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 chose a date to serve. Speak with Pastor Nelson if you are interested or contact the office for more info.
- ✝ **Sunday School is lots of fun!!** It is never too late to join us - we have classes for toddlers through adult. Please speak with Pastor Nelson if you need information about the Catechetical Class.
- ✝ On Saturday, April 12th we will again be participating in the **UMT Bunny Hop** at Grange Park from 1-4 PM. Sign-up for needed items ins in the narthex. We could also use volunteers to help us stuff the eggs on Tuesday, April 8th at 7 PM!
- ✝ **First Communion** will be held on Maundy Thursday, April 17, 2025. Please contact Pr. Nelson if you would like to discuss and determine the readiness of your child.

Also, check out the "Youth Page" on our website!!!

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