

THE GOOD NEWS

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lancaster

December 2023



Mission Statement



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church provides an inviting environment for spreading God's Word through worship, teaching and fellowship to address the spiritual needs of our congregation and community.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person--questions, complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

The Rev. Jamie Retallack
jamesretallack@gmail.com

716-848-9683

WORSHIP TIMES

SAT. 5:30PM

SUN. 10:00AM

IN PERSON/ONLINE WORSHIP

OFFICE HOURS & CONTACT

MONDAY-THURSDAY

10:00AM-3:00PM

716-683-8972

STJOHNSLANCASTER55@GMAIL.COM

STJOHNSLANC.ORG

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Pastor's Message

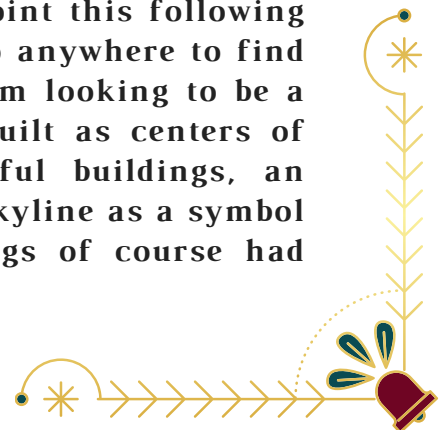
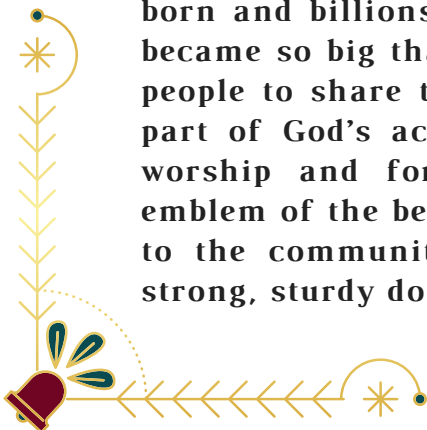


My earliest Christmas memory is from 1984, I was 3. After opening all the presents there was one remaining, the infamous “to the family” present. What we opened was an Atari, I loved it and spent a lot of time during my childhood playing video games. I was pretty good at figuring out what I needed to do next. I would usually be able to get to the end of games and found it to be rewarding. Of course there are always hiccups along the way. Every person who ever played a video game knows that moment when you fall in a pit or the turtle monster eats you. The screen gives you a game over message and you have to try again. But perhaps even more frustrating is the dead end, when you just aren’t sure what to do next. This is where my greatest enemy in all of video game playing time as a child comes in... the door. Yes, the mighty door. When I would get to a door, certain that my next task was behind it, there were few words more terrifying than “Key is required”. Nothing was more heartbreaking than those moments where you need a key and have no clue where it is and you know the only option is to backtrack endlessly until you find it. It was so confusing to me, I could be a giant mountain of a man able to break rocks in two but a flimsy wooden door which my character could kick down in their sleep blocked my path like a great colossus. There was no easy way past that mighty door: Luke had Darth Vader, Sherlock had Moriarty, and I have a simple flimsy wooden door.

The Church seems to be in the midst of a similar feud with doors.

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
Matthew 28:16-20

Jesus gave an instruction to his followers. They were to spread his message and to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They listened well, spreading this community of people following Christ across the globe. From these humble beginnings Christianity was born and billions of people followed Jesus. At some point this following became so big that the followers didn’t even have to go anywhere to find people to share this message with, people came to them looking to be a part of God’s activity in the world. Buildings were built as centers of worship and for centuries they were filled. Beautiful buildings, an emblem of the beauty of God standing high above the skyline as a symbol to the community of the power of God. The buildings of course had strong, sturdy doors.





Things changed, it seemed sudden, many people stopped coming to those churches. For a bunch of reasons this model of a huge building to draw people in like a lighthouse stopped working. The solution seems simple, go out and engage people again like the first followers did all those years ago. But there is a problem, those doors. It can be so hard to take what we've known and carry it outside those doors. On the other side of those church doors, in the community, in the world, there are people who need to hear the message of hope in Christ. They may think they know who Jesus is and what Jesus stands for, but so often the picture they see is distorted, or missing pieces. The world needs the message we have to share. They need the whole picture.

The Gift I was given as a child, a video game, required me to backtrack when a door stopped my path forward. This Christmas we have been given a gift, the gift of God. Perhaps we should backtrack when the door seems too imposing; remind ourselves of those early followers of Christ who boldly stepped out in the world to share the good news. We as followers of Christ need to look back at our early Church leaders see how they engaged those around them. We need to continue living the mission that Jesus laid out for us. We need to cross the boundary, enter the community and share the word.

Peace,
Pastor Jamie





Book Club



Please join us in the Memorial Lounge on Thursday, January 18th at 7:00 PM to discuss Ruth Hogan's novel, *THE KEEPER OF LOST THINGS*.

Lime green plastic flower-shaped hair bobbles—Found, on the playing field, Derrywood Park, 2nd September.

Bone china cup and saucer—Found, on a bench in Riveria Public Gardens, 31st October.

DAnthony Peardew is the keeper of lost things. Forty years ago, he carelessly lost a keepsake from his beloved fiancée, Therese. That very same day, she died unexpectedly. Brokenhearted, Anthony sought consolation in rescuing lost objects—the things others have dropped, misplaced, or accidentally left behind—and writing stories about them. Now, in the twilight of his life, Anthony worries that he has not fully discharged his duty to reconcile all the lost things with their owners. As the end nears, he bequeaths his secret life's mission to his unsuspecting assistant, Laura, leaving her his house and all its lost treasures, including an irritable ghost.

Recovering from a bad divorce, Laura, in some ways, is one of Anthony's lost things. But when the lonely woman moves into his mansion, her life begins to change. She finds a new friend in the neighbor's quirky daughter, Sunshine, and a welcome distraction in Freddy, the rugged gardener. As the dark cloud engulfing her lifts, Laura, accompanied by her new companions, sets out to realize Anthony's last wish: reuniting his cherished lost objects with their owners.

Long ago, Eunice found a trinket on the London pavement and kept it through the years. Now, with her own end drawing near, she has lost something precious—a tragic twist of fate that forces her to break a promise she once made.

As the Keeper of Lost Objects, Laura holds the key to Anthony and Eunice's redemption. But can she unlock the past and make the connections that will lay their spirits to rest?

A charming, clever, and quietly moving novel of endless possibilities and joyful discoveries that explores the promises we make and break, losing and finding ourselves, the objects that hold magic and meaning for our lives, and the surprising connections that bind us.

Read this heartwarming tale, then, come (as your schedule permits) and share your thoughts and ideas. Friends and guests are always welcome!

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-keeper-of-lost-things-ruth-hogan/1123892539?ean=9780062473554>



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 9:00am Bible Study 9:30am Joysingers 10:00am In Person/ Online Service 10:00am Sunday School 11:00am Hanging of the Greens 11:00am Worship & Music Committee Mtg 4:00pm - 7:00pm Youth -Friendsgiving	27 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 4:30pm Guiding Eyes Mtg 7:30pm Chordsmen Mtg	28 9:30am Quilters 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 7:00pm Council Meeting 7:00pm NA Meeting	29 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours	30 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 1:00pm Bible Study 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:30pm Choir Practice	1 7:30pm NA Meeting	2 5:30pm In Person Service
3 Advent 9:00am Bible Study 9:30am Joysingers 10:00am In Person/ Online Service 10:00am Sunday School	4 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 4:30pm Guiding Eyes Mtg 7:30pm Chordsmen Mtg	5 9:30am Quilters 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 7:00pm NA Meeting	6 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 6:30pm Women's Fellowship & Gift Exchange	7 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 1:00pm Bible Study 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:00pm - 8:30pm Girl Scouts 7:30pm Choir Practice	8 7:30pm NA Meeting	9 5:30pm In Person Service
10 Angel Tree Deadline 9:00am Bible Study 9:30am Joysingers 10:00am In Person/ Online Service 10:00am Sunday School 11:30am Property & Grounds 4:00pm - 7:00pm Youth - Gift Exchange	11 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 4:30pm Guiding Eyes Mtg 7:30pm Chordsmen Mtg	12 9:30am Quilters 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 7:00pm NA Meeting	13 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 6:00pm LYMA Christmas Party	14 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 1:00pm Bible Study 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:30pm Choir Practice	15 Good News Articles Due 7:30pm NA Meeting	16 5:30pm In Person Service
17 Christmas Pageant 9:00am Bible Study 9:30am Joysingers 10:00am In Person/ Online Service 10:00am Sunday School	18 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 4:30pm Guiding Eyes Mtg 7:30pm Chordsmen Mtg	19 9:30am Quilters 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 7:00pm NA Meeting	20 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours	21 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 1:00pm Bible Study 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:30pm Choir Practice	22 7:30pm NA Meeting	23 5:30pm In Person Service
24 7:00pm Christmas Eve Worship 10:30pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 Christmas Day	26 9:30am Quilters 7:00pm Council Meeting 7:00pm NA Meeting	27	28 1:00pm Bible Study 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:30pm Choir Practice	29 7:30pm NA Meeting	30 5:30pm In Person Service
31 9:00am Bible Study 9:30am Joysingers 10:00am In Person/ Online Service 10:00am Sunday School 11:00am Worship & Music Committee Mtg	1 4:30pm Guiding Eyes Mtg 7:30pm Chordsmen Mtg	2 9:30am Quilters 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 7:00pm NA Meeting	3 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours	4 10:00am - 3:00pm Church Office Hours 1:00pm Bible Study 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:30pm Choir Practice	5 7:30pm NA Meeting	6 5:30pm In Person Service

<https://www.stjohnslanc.org/calendar>

Upcoming Schedules

ALTAR GUILD

12/03/2023
Timmy Gierlinger
RaeAnn Jakubowski

12/10/2023
Sharon Walker
Carol Graham

12/17/2023
Kelly Sieracki

12/24/2023
Cheryl Helwig
Kathy Snyder

12/31/2023
Amy & John
Petrunyak

DEACONS

12/3/2023
Kathy Konstabel

12/10/2023
RaeAnn Jakubowski

12/17/2023
Kathy Snyder

12/24/2023 7pm
Sam Miller

12/24/2023 1030pm
Kathy Konstabel

12/31/2023
Kathy Snyder

USHERS

12/3/2023
Bev Hess
Rick Tomaszewski

12/10/2023
Rich Rice
Linda Costa

12/17/2023
Sam Miller
Rick Tomaszewski

12/24/2023
TBD

12/31/2023
Linda Costa
Kathy Burr

Upcoming Youth Activities

Gift Exchange

Sunday, December 10th from 4-7pm
Bring a \$5-\$10, wrapped, unisex gift
Bring a side to share
Snacks and beverages provided

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 17th @ 10am
Youth to assist/participate in pageant



Upcoming Activities

FELLOWSHIP & GIFT EXCHANGE

St. John's Women Fellowship & Christmas Gift Exchange will be held on Wednesday 12/06/2023 @ 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. All women are welcome to join us for some fellowship, fun and Christmas cheer.

We ask you bring a \$10 wrapped/bagged gift for the exchange, which involves lots of laughs as ladies either select an unopened gift or choose to "steal" one already open.

Punch will be provided and if anyone would like to bring a small plate of cookies or treats to go with that, it would be appreciated BUT not required. We want you to come with your gift.

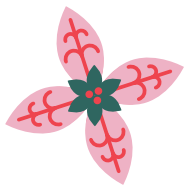
Sign-up sheet will be available at different places throughout the church; please indicate you will be coming & add if you will be bringing cookies/treat. This way we can have the fellowship hall set up. Deadline to sign up is Sunday 12/03/2023; but if you forget, please come anyway, we will make it work.

Any questions please contact Kathy Snyder @ 716-583-1061

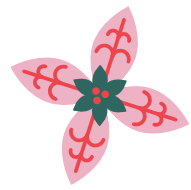
SALVATION ARMY ANGEL TREE

We are once again participating in The Salvation Army Angel Tree program. Let's bring some joy to children in our area during this Christmas season! Tags will be available starting November 11th. Please take a tag from one of the trees and replace it with a star. You can purchase the gift listed (or something similar) and then place unwrapped presents in a gift bag with the tag securely attached to the outside. Additional gifts can be purchased, if desired. Gifts should be returned to church by Sunday, Dec. 10th. There are also envelopes hanging on the trees to donate cash or check (made payable to Salvation Army). Please place your envelope in the offering plate or turn in to the church office. Thank you for your generosity!

If you have questions, call Carol Schwertz at 716-861-1619.



Altar Flower Update



Arrangements for the altar are \$30 (for 2). You may request specific colors or flowers if desired, however there may be an additional charge if you would like larger arrangements or more expensive varieties of flowers. To dedicate flowers, please continue to use the envelopes provided at the church, Contact the church office by phone 716-683-8972 or by email at stjohnslancaster55@gmail.com. All dedications must be submitted and paid for by the Monday before the dedication date in order to provide time to notify the florist.

AVAILABLE ALTAR FLOWER DATES:



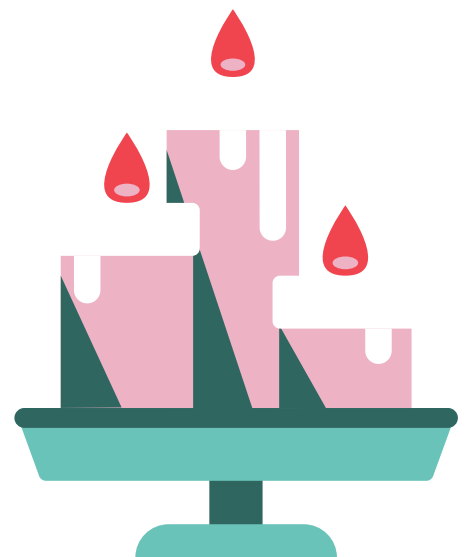
December 3, 31
January 7, 14, 21, 28



Prayer List

We lift up:

Beatrice Gill, Brianna Wood,
Edna Mann, George Stubblebein,
Sarah Hermsmeyer, Ron Bennett,
Roger Stapleton Jr, Patricia
Kostecky, Tom & Ruth Morse,
and Baby Henry and the family and
friends of Robin Simpson.





Happy Birthday!

ALEXANDER ORBAN, DEC 1

MIRANDA HARDY, DEC 2

SHIRLEY KLOC, DEC 2

JOSHUA HOFFMAN, DEC 2

CECELIA STRANC, DEC 2

CAYLEIGH SCIA, DEC 3

MARIAH KERWIN, DEC 3

THOMAS FROST, DEC 4

ALAN SCHRUTT, DEC 4

ELIZABETH ANDREWS, DEC 4

CAROL GRAHAM, DEC 5

BREANNA ALDINGER, DEC 5

JAIME NANTKA, DEC 5

JONATHAN VANNORTWICK, DEC 6

ELLA FECHER, DEC 6

JACOB DEWALD, DEC 7

SARAH BECKMAN, DEC 7

GABRIELLA FRONCZAK, DEC 8

CRAIG LINDAUER, DEC 8

CAROL SCHWERTZ, DEC 8

BRYAN HAUSER, DEC 9

ARIANNA GREINER, DEC 10

ADRIAN WOJTUSIAK, DEC 11

STEVEN KEMNA, DEC 11

ANNA MAKI, DEC 12

JOHN SCARAFIA, DEC 12

JOY LEE, DEC 14

ARLENE ARTH, DEC 15

KENNADIE PRESS, DEC 15

SHARRON KRYMAN, DEC 16

KATRINA GUARINO, DEC 16

LINH THI YARRINGTON, DEC 17

HOLLY VOLINO, DEC 18

LUCILLE KRUPA, DEC 19

STACEY FRIEND, DEC 20

TIFFANY SUAREZ, DEC 20

LONDON BUSH, DEC 20

ANTHONY CERVI, DEC 21

BEVERLY HESS, DEC 21

ARDEN KRUGER, DEC 21

AMY PETRUNYAK, DEC 21

MASON KRUGER, DEC 21

GERALD LANDAHL, DEC 23

GREGORY WILDRIDGE, DEC 24

MARY JO DONHAUSER, DEC 25

THERESA CRISP, DEC 26

ALICE SHARPE, DEC 27

PATRICIA KOSTECKY, DEC 28

KEVIN JACOBS, DEC 28

DIANE THORNTON, DEC 29

MARK ANDREWS, DEC 29

RYAN MCHALE, DEC 29

OLIVIA FRITZEN, DEC 30

KARRIANNE HELWIG, DEC 31

DAVID NESTER, DEC 31





Holiday Schedule

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

December 17th @ 10am

BLUE CHRISTMAS

December 21st @ 7pm

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

December 23rd @ 5:30pm


December 24th @ 5pm (Elma)

December 24th @ 7pm

December 24th @ 10:30pm



St. John's 411



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
55 Pleasant Avenue, Lancaster, NY 14086
Office 683-8972 (Mon.—Thurs. 10am-3pm)
www.stjohnslanc.org
stjohnslancaster55@gmail.com



Rev. Jamie Retallack, Pastor 716-848-9683

Rev. John Swanson, Pastor Emeritus

Rev. John Scarafia, Pastor Emeritus

Dr. Vicky Chang, Director of Music

Cindy Jo Speth, Housekeeping

Michael Walker, Sexton

Donna McGrew, Financial Secretary

Melissa Dwyer, Church Secretary



Congregation Council

Janet Sincebaugh (President)

Carol Graham (Vice-President)

Karen McClintock (Secretary)

Kathryn Snyder (Treasurer)

Linda Dean

Sam Gierlinger

RaeAnn Jakubowski

Jamie Kloc

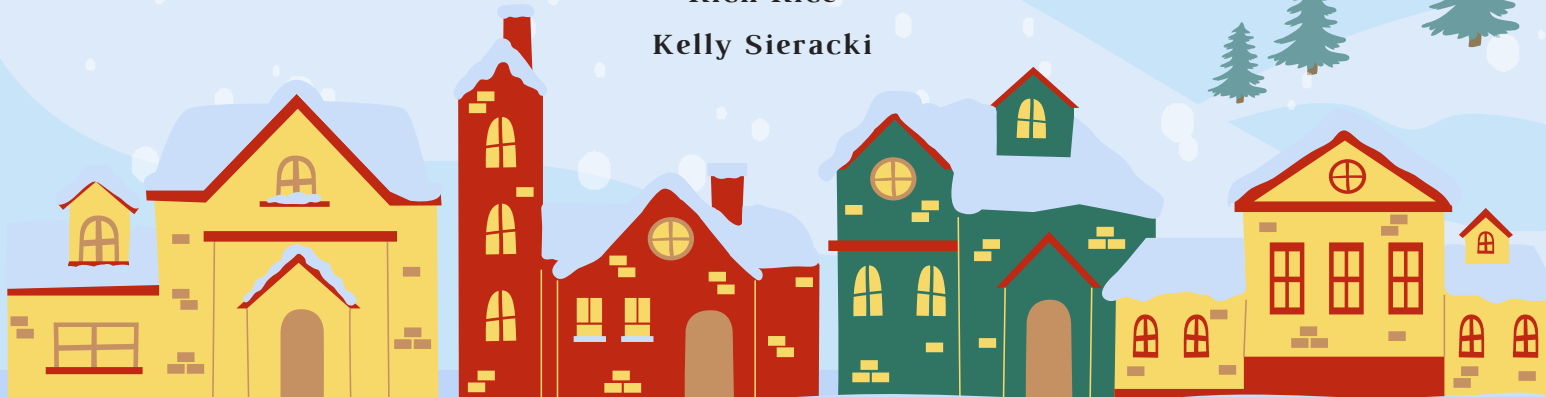
Jeff Miller

Samuel Miller

David Nester

Rich Rice

Kelly Sieracki





ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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MAY THE
SPIRIT OF
Christmas
BE WITH YOU