

St. John's Lutheran Church
of Highland
311 Cumberland Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Information as of
October 2020

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"Making Christ Known"
during the
Global Pandemic

Volume 1,
Number 3

email
sjlutheran@verizon.net

phone
412-364-1606

Sunday Morning Livestreamed
Worship Services:
10:00 a.m.
www.stjohnslutheranchurch.com

Saturday Outdoor Worship
4:00 p.m.
www.bookapew.com/app/pa/stjohns/

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ZOOM CONNECTION 9:00 a.m.

Pastor Kari Smail

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER
2020



ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HIGHLAND

Through God All Things Are Possible



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ST. JOHN'S COUNCIL MEMBERS

Pastor Kari B. Smail <i>Senior Pastor</i>	
Erik Roth <i>President</i>	Kim Gettemy <i>Vice President (+Worship/Music)</i>
Emmett Brown <i>Treasurer</i>	Amy Kennedy <i>Secretary, Youth</i>
Ellen Skirpan <i>Evangelism</i>	Scott Celin <i>Mutual Ministries</i>
John Angel <i>Preschool</i>	Jamie Davis <i>Christian Education</i>
Joumana Driscoll <i>Social Ministry</i>	Denise Rudar <i>Property & Cemetery</i>
Abby Bauer <i>Fellowship</i>	Jim Robertson <i>Stewardship</i>

ST. JOHN'S CURRENT STAFF

Pastor Kari B. Smail	<i>Senior Pastor</i>
Ron Baling	<i>Dir. Of Contemporary Music</i>
Joseph Tuttle	<i>Organist & Dir. Of Choirs</i>
Mary Lynne Martin	<i>Office Administrator</i>
Barb Eback	<i>Office Asst. & Accounts P/R Clerk</i>
Laura Coombs	<i>Chief Financial Officer</i>
Jennifer Bolinda	<i>Dir. Of St. John's Preschool</i>
Linda Meyerdierks	<i>Youth Ministry Coordinator</i>
Gene Kesner	<i>Sexton</i>
***	<i>Assistant Custodian</i>
Mike Sheleheda	<i>Building Usage Coordinator</i>



A Note from Pastor Kari

Greetings everyone!

Fall is upon us and we are once again reminded of the beauty of God's creation as the leaves turn brilliant shades of red, orange, yellow, and brown. While we continue to adapt our ministry in light of the pandemic as a way to care for each other and our neighbors, we are reminded this month with **Reformation Sunday on October 25th** that we are a reforming church. We have always been intentional since the time of Martin Luther to look at what we are doing in order to stay grounded in God's Word, and at the same time recognizing that at times we need to reform or adapt how we share the Gospel in word and deed so that we are not only more faithful to God's Word, but also to best meet the needs of God's children at the time.

Inside this newsletter you will find new updates on worship as well as church use that have changed since the last newsletter, as council takes its call seriously to always discern best next steps. Please know that the council members of our congregation are so thankful for your grace and continued support in these times, as they realize that everyone has a different comfort level and varying opinions on how things should be handled, and at the same time knowing that most have the perspective that this is a temporary time that the leadership is doing its best to navigate through safely and faithfully, until we can fully resume our normal routines once again.

We are so grateful for your partnership in ministry with us as we work together at "Keeping the Faith." As our theme verse for this year from 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 states, "We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."

So Deo Gloria!
(To God alone be the glory!)
Pastor Kari Smail

For All The Saints

A way to honor the saints in your life... Last year our congregation celebrated the ministry of Pastor Bill Diehm at his retirement celebration in June. At that time we were happy to announce a gift to United Lutheran Seminary in his honor which would commission a local artist to create portraits of saints to be used in the two sanctuaries of the seminary on its two campuses. The saints that were chosen were a way to add some diversity to the images of saints already depicted in the windows in the Gettysburg sanctuary, hence, the title of the project, **"For ALL The Saints."** This summer an idea sprouted to inquire as to whether we might be able to obtain digital copies of the art to enhance the building at St. John's and as a teaching tool for our congregation, and we are thankful to Pastor Don Green for researching the details and logistics for us. Church council thought this was a great idea, and both the seminary as well as the artist were receptive to it as well, so we are moving forward with the project. In order to cover the cost of the prints as well as the framing, council came up with the idea to allow folks to make a donation towards the artwork project as a way to honor the saints in their lives, past or present. Then a plaque will be created to go with the 16 portraits, indicating the other saints who were honored by gifts to make the project a reality. If you would like to make a donation in honor of a saint in your life, please make a check out to St. John's of Highland, and put "For ALL The Saints" in the memo. Please include with your check a note indicating what saint you would like to honor with your gift. For more information please contact Pastor Kari Smail, or Pastor Don Green.

Worship at St. John's

Our streaming service will continue on Sunday mornings at 10:00 am through the link on our website at <https://www.stjohnslutheranchurch.com>.

Based on the decisions made by our Church Council at their October 13th meeting, we continue to move forward in safe methods of gathering. The state guidelines have changed to allow for 20% capacity socially distanced to gather indoors.





Sunday Indoor Worship



Starting on **October 25th** we can accommodate up to **40 people** in the sanctuary in addition to those participating through the stream. Since the space will be very limited, please use the Book-a-Pew site at <https://bookapew.com/app/pa/stjohns> to reserve a spot.

Those who would like to attend service in-person must wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth, and socially distance in the pews from others who are not a member of their family or pandemic pod.

Council has also discerned that it is the right time to **add communion** to our Sunday service. It will once again be a no touch system. The at-church worshipping community can pick up a pre-filled glass before the start of the service to have at their seat for when the communion liturgy takes place. Receptacles will be located at the exits to dispose of the cups at the conclusion of the service. Please note that there are cups with wine and bread, as well as other cups that are labeled with grape juice and gluten free bread.

While we will continue to refrain from singing, we have determined in consultation with medical and choral experts that **humming** with a mask is a way for the at-church worshipping community to participate in the music aspects of the liturgy. We are excited for this new way to make music to the Lord at church, all while trying to show love for our neighbor.

For those who are more comfortable still worshipping at home, consecrated cups will be available for **pickup in the vestibule** of the main entrance for the church by the office area Friday and Saturday, 9am-7pm, to be used while participating at home with the Sunday 10:00 am worship stream.

Saturday Outdoor Worship



We will continue to have our **Saturday Outdoor Worship services**, weather permitting and because the daylight hours are shifting, we will move our Saturday outdoor time to **4:00 pm**. If the temperature falls below 55 degrees or there is precipitation, the outdoor service will be moved inside. We will continue with our no touch communion at this service, and will also invite folks who feel called to participate with the music to hum.



We ask that those who are planning on participating in this service also use our book-a-pew site to reserve a spot so that we can manage our attendance. Mask wearing and social distancing will continue at this service as well.

Our Church Building

Church Council has discerned a change in our building usage. While they still want congregational committees and groups who are simply meeting for discussion or fellowship to do so on Zoom since numbers are once again on the rise, if a committee or group that is a part of the congregation needs to have space to do a ministry project, they can contact our building use coordinator, **Mike Sheleheda**, at scheduling@stjohnslutheranchurch.com to reserve a space. Those coming to the church for the project will need to wear masks and socially distance while working, as well as keep a list of who is in attendance. In addition, there will be no food at gatherings at this time. We are excited to continue the process of safely opening our building so that various ministries can continue their work.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Kari Smail at 412-613-8393 or kbsmail1@verizon.net. We give thanks for the variety of ways that we can still come together to worship God and do ministry, even as we adapt our traditions in order to live out love for our neighbor during this time of pandemic. We are grateful for your continued grace and support, as well as your partnership in ministry.

Some Ministry Highlights @ St. John's

During this time of corona virus pandemic, members of our congregation have still been providing meals for the clients of the **Pleasant Valley Men's Shelter**. Thank you to **Linda Meyerdierks** and **our youth** for providing the August meal, and **Janet Schmitt** and **the Social Ministry Committee** for providing the September meal for the men at the Pleasant Valley Shelter. **Linda Nardina** and our Fellowship Ministry will be providing the October meal. During this Corona virus time thanks to all our congregation for their support of this Social Ministry project. If you would like to be involved in this Social Ministry outreach please contact Dianne Barbin (412-364-3045) or Janet Schmitt (412-931-4913)



WOMAN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA

The WELCA group continues to meet monthly via zoom. It was so great to see many women attend last month. After our last meeting we made a \$100 donation to the Designated Outreach of the Women of the ELCA ***Blessed Bundles*** This is a ministry of The Lutheran Church of Our Savior in North Huntingdon, Pa. They provide diapers and wipes to families who are in need. You will hear more about this ministry in the coming weeks as we are hoping to receive donations from our St. John's family to support their Wish List.

Our next WELCA meeting will be on Nov. 17th at 7:00. You will find the zoom link in the Weekly Announcements. Thank you to Cathy Coudriet for helping the Sainly Sewers and WELCA zoom each month! If you have any questions, please contact Carole Helvig at carolehelvig@verizon.net.

** The items to be collected are as follows: **

- Diapers: size preemie through size 7 (most needed item)
- Gently Used Baby Equipment: infant swings, pack and play, etc
- Gently Use Toys, Activity Centers, Playmats, Books, etc.
- Target Gift Cards (where most of the diapers are purchased)
- Baby Toiletries: baby wash, baby shampoo, baby lotion, diaper cream, baby/toddler toothbrushes
- Wipes: scented, unscented, and hypoallergenic
- New Bottles, Sippy Cups, Straw Cups
- Bibs, Baby and Toddler Utensils

These items can be dropped off on Kim Gettemy's porch, just as other donations have taken place.

SAINTLY SEWERS

We have continued to use our gifts of sewing during the pandemic. Masks have been made by many. Quilt squares have been cut and sewn together. Now we will try to meet wearing masks, and socially distance, to cut batting to finish some of the quilts. We are thankful that we are able to do this ministry to continue helping those in need.

We are going to send a quilt, some school supplies and clothing to Joy and Anita in Tanzania. Please pray for our group as we try to continue our ministry safely. We continue to have a monthly zoom on the first Tuesday of the month where we raise each other's spirits, encourage one another, and discuss our quilting ministry. All are welcome to join us.



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86407792005?pwd=QjdWRGtDOVdKRERMUkRGeHhPTjVtUT09>

Meeting ID: 864 0779 2005 Passcode: 371762

Financially Speaking

~ AUGUST 2020 ~

GENERAL FUND INCOME

September Actual	\$ 47,901.62
September Budget	\$ 57,659.25
Gain (Short Fall)	(\$ 9,757.63)
YTD Actual	\$ 487,737.78
YTD Budget	\$ 518,933.25
Gain (Short Fall)	(\$ 31,195.47)
YTD Income	\$ 487,737.78
YTD Expenses	\$ 425,788.74
Income (Loss)	\$ 61,949.74

BUILDING FUND:

YTD Actual	\$ 45,505.00
YTD Budget	\$ 52,567.50
Gain (Short Fall)	(\$ 7,062.50)

BUILDING LOAN

Currently our mortgage has a balance of \$174,555.72 (as of Sept. 29, 2020) with a monthly payment of \$7,039.00.

There are three ways to contribute to the building fund.

1. Use the **BUILDING FUND** envelope from your monthly envelope packet
2. Use the **OPENING NEW DOORS** envelope found in the pews.
3. Use the pledge card **“KEEPING THE FAITH”** for 2021.



WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE CONGREGATION FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN KEEPING THEIR PLEDGES UP TO DATE IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES.

Continuing the Legacy 2019 (Miracle Sunday) Thank you to the Congregation for making this a successful event. As of Sept. 29, 2020: 135 members made a pledge of \$631,640.24. We have collected and sent to Mission Investment a total of \$602,983.17 to pay down the Principal so far (we have collected \$14,092.93 more than was pledged). This still leaves \$42,750.00 in pledges to be collected. The Mortgage balance is down to \$174,555.72. There is still time to make a Pledge or make a One Time Donation to “MIRACLE SUNDAY”. All you have to do is fill out a pledge card or drop a check into the plate or mail.

Are you in need of financial assistance? St. John's has a family emergency fund and might be able to help. Please contact Pastor Kari at kbsmail1@verizon.net or on her cell at 412-613-8393 for more details.

Our Partners in Ministry

Our SWPA ELCA Synod

Has a new home!
New Synod Offices

1014 Perry Hwy, Suite 200
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Preschool

As we continue to safely operate under the CDC guidelines, the children are enjoying the beautiful season of fall while eagerly anticipating Halloween. Thank you for your continued support of our St. John's Preschool program!

