

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

Information as of
January 2021

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**"Making Christ Known"
during the
Global Pandemic**

**Volume 2,
Number 1**

email
sjlutheran@verizon.net

phone
412-364-1606

Saturday Worship 5:30 p.m.

Sunday Morning Livestreamed
Worship Services:
10:00 a.m.

www.stjohnslutheranchurch.com

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ZOOM CONNECTION 9:00 a.m.

Pastor Kari Smail

JANUARY
2021



Through God All Things Are Possible

"Making Christ Known" during the Global Pandemic

6TH EDITION

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Due to the dynamics of our ever-changing environment during this Global Pandemic and the level of our region's COVID cases, information stated in our monthly updates can change suddenly. Please check our website for the most current status of our Worship and Ministry activities

If you would like to receive our Saturday Announcements Email which includes links to our weekend bulletins, pew reservations and other current events visit us at

<https://www.stjohnslutheranchurch.com>



A NOTE FROM PASTOR KARI

Happy New Year everyone! We made it to 2021 – thanks be to God! I am so grateful to be partnering in ministry with all of you, and I look forward in faith to this new year and all that is to come for our community of faith. Thank you for all the ways that you supported our ministry this past year. Your continued partnership truly meant so much, especially as we navigated the pandemic, and our normal ministry routines had to be altered. Who you are makes a difference! Thank you!

Some highlights from this month's newsletter:

We will be resuming in-person worship with limited attendance and mask and social distance requirements this month on the weekend of January 16th and 17th. Please visit our Book a Pew site at <https://bookapew.com/app/pa/stjohns/> for more information and to reserve a seat!

We will also be holding an annual meeting on Sunday, January 31st. It will be a hybrid meeting, so that those who are present for worship that morning can attend in-person, while those at home can attend via zoom. More information will be announced about the meeting as well as shared via email for those who will be attending through zoom so that those folks know how to participate. The annual reports will also be shared through email, as well as an updated draft of our vision statement, or hard copies can be picked up in our vestibule beginning on January 16th.

We are blessed with a wonderful church family, and I am hopeful that this year will bring us back in-person more fully. I also look forward to adopting a vision statement for our congregation, starting the call process for an associate pastor, getting closer to completing our building loan, as well as all the ways that we can continue to grow in our mission of "Making Christ Known" in the year ahead!

Soli Deo Gloria!

(To God Alone be the Glory!)

Pastor Kari Smail

ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual meeting will take place on Sunday, January 31st around 11:15 am, following our worship stream/in-person worship service. It will be a hybrid event, meaning that you can either attend in-person or through zoom virtually. Space for in-person attendance is limited due to current guidelines, and wearing a mask and social distancing will be required. If you would like to attend in-person, please visit our bookapew site to sign up at <https://bookapew.com/app/pa/stjohns/> Please note that this sign up for in-person attendance at the annual meeting is separate from the in-person worship service sign up for that day, as there may be some that want to attend one or the other.

If you would like to attend the annual meeting virtually via zoom, the link is as follows:

Annual Meeting for St. John's of Highland Sunday, JANUARY 31ST AT 11:15 AM Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81594415561?pwd=ZTBDbTRYRWxYmpyN3EyTnBhdHZtQT09>

Meeting ID: 815 9441 5561

Passcode: 306280

Cathy Coudriet has volunteered to help folks who are unfamiliar with zoom to get on to the meeting. You can contact her at cathyfc1@gmail.com or on her cell at 412-580-5708. We will have microphones set up to help aid in communication between the in-person and at-home groups. A polling option for zoom will be used for voting for those who are attending from home so that they can participate in voting.

While we are doing everything that we can to prepare for a smooth hybrid meeting, we ask for your patience and understanding that day if things don't go according to plan. We want to make sure that folks are heard and can vote from no matter where they are attending in this unusual year. Thank you as always for your support and partnership in ministry, and know that we look forward to the day when we can get back to our regular routines once again.



WORSHIP

Council has determined that we will **resume limited indoor worship** beginning the weekend of **JANUARY 16TH AND 17TH** in light of the state guidelines changing to once again allow for 20% capacity socially distanced to gather indoors. As a result, we can accommodate up to 40 people in the sanctuary.

- There will be one service on Saturday at 5:30 pm, and another on Sunday during our stream at 10:00 am. Since the space will be very limited, please use the Book-a-Pew site at 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.
- 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, while also showing love for our neighbor.
- Council has also discerned to also **resume communion** at our services. 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. 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.

While our council has prioritized worship in its discernment of next best steps, it has decided to continue the suspension of in-person gathering for ministry meetings at this time, and will discuss this again at its zoom in February. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Kari Smail at 412-613-8393 or kbsmail1@verizon.net.

SOME MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

WELCA
WOMEN OF THE
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF AMERICA

We are a ministry group of St John's continues to do reach out to those in need during the Pandemic! We continue to meet monthly via zoom on the third Tuesday of each month. We begin our meetings with prayer and devotion and then we discuss some of the local ministries we are supporting:

[Blessed Bundles](#) (a ministry that collects and distributes baby items to families in need) is very thankful for all of the donations that continue to be dropped off in the bin located in our main entrance vestibule. Those of us that have delivered items from our congregation commented on how well run it is and how valuable the baby supplies are for many who are in need.

We also voted to send \$300 to the Honduras Medical Mission as we continue to support this important local ministry that provides ongoing global relief to care for the underserved and vulnerable people of the community.

Continued support for NHCO with snack bag items which have been support 100 children each week during these hard times.

Some of us write to those who are not able to get out during this Pandemic. Reaching out to others helps keep our St John's Family strong and cared for. If you are interested in supporting some of our shut ins by mailing a card or calling text or call Carole Helvig at 845-216-2952 for names.

During the meeting we reflected on an article from “Gather Magazine” Treasure of Our Hearts. Julie Kanarr the author says “The treasures of our heart connect us with our past , reminding us of places we have been, hardships we have faced, significant events in our lives and people who have been important to us”..... “Likewise all that we treasure reveals what we hold most dear. The treasures of our hearts hold our memories and dreams, and invite us to ponder the hope that is ours in Christ.” (Page 34). We heard from many of our members about their Christmas treasures. The stories were all very precious and meaningful.

All are welcome to join through the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86407792005?pwd=QjdWRGtDOVdKRERMUKRGhHhPTjVtUT09>

Meeting ID: 864 0779 2005 Passcode: 371762



Some Ministry Highlights @ St. John’s

SAINTLY SEWERS

The Saintly Sewers met on zoom on January 5. We discussed supporting the Belize mission. Jean Martz sister Dee spoke to us about the mission.

Dee has worked at the school in Beliz as a teacher and shared some stories of the good that is happening there. Our Sewers are making a **\$500 donation to sponsor a child and pay for tuition, supplies and some funds for extra needs for this year.** We hope to get the name and age of our sponsored child that we will share with the St John’s family.

We also heard from Janice Bukumbo about the two girls we have been supporting in Tanzania. During her recent trip to Tanzania **Janice was able to meet with both girls (Anita and Joyce) and bring gifts from our group.** Each girl got a beautiful quilt and some supplies.

Hearing from both of these ladies gave us good information of where our focus needs to be. We once again began dreaming about thing we can do to use our gifts to Make Christ Known. We are currently working on quilts and backpacks while we cannot meet as a group. We will continue to have a meeting on **zoom at 10:00AM on the first Tuesday of the month.**

The group is also thinking about making some hand sewn nativity sets. You can join Saintly Sewers. All are welcome and encouraged to join us. Donations of cotton fabric and thread are always appreciated!

Carole Helvig

PLEASANT VALLEY MEN’S SHELTER

During this time of corona virus pandemic, members of our congregation have still been providing meals through this ministry. If you would like to be involved with this outreach please contact

Dianne Barbin (412-364-3045) or **Janet Schmitt** (412-931-4913)

Financially Speaking

GENERAL FUND INCOME

~ December 2020 ~

December Actual	\$ 81,973.95
December Budget	\$ 57,659.25
Gain (Short Fall)	\$ 24,314.70
YTD Actual	\$ 677,958.38
YTD Budget	\$ 691,911.00
Gain (Short Fall)	(\$ 13,952.62)
YTD Income	\$ 677,958.38
YTD Expenses	\$ 569,727.59
Income (Loss)	\$ 108,230.79



BUILDING FUND:

YTD Actual	\$ 63,256.00
YTD Budget	\$ 70,090.00
Gain (Short Fall)	(\$ 6,834.00)

BUILDING LOAN Currently our mortgage has a balance of \$106,064.50 (as of January 7, 2021) with a monthly payment of \$7,039.00.

There are 3 ways to contribute to the building fund.

1. Use the **BUILDING FUND** envelope from your monthly envelope packet
2. Use the pledge card **“KEEPING THE FAITH”** (for 2021)
3. Email the church office, sjlutheran@verizon.net Attention: Laura Coombs and set up an electronic donation.

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 **January 7, 2021**: 135 members made a pledge of \$626,640.24. We have collected and sent to Mission Investment a total \$639,683.17 to paydown the Principal so far (we have collected \$24,092.93 more then was pledged). This still leaves \$11,050.00 in pledges to be collected. The Mortgage balance is down to \$106,064.50. 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 mail a check to St. John’s.