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

Information as of
APRIL 2025

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"Making Christ Known"

Volume 6, Number 4

Email - sjlutheran@verizon.net

phone - 412-364-1606

Saturday Worship:
5:30 p.m. - *Traditional*

Sunday Morning Worship:
8:15 a.m. - *Traditional*
with Livestream
9:30 - 10:30 - *Christian Education*
10:45 a.m. - *Contemporary*
with Livestream

www.stjohnslutheranchurch.com

Pastor Kari Smail
Pastor Beth Clementson

APRIL 2025

ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HIGHLAND

Through God All Things Are Possible

"Making Christ Known"

APRIL 2025 EDITION

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Current Church Council Members

PRESIDENT - CHRISTIAN ED.	STEVE GOTTSCHALK
VICE PRESIDENT - CEMETERY	SAM SESTI
TREASURER - FINANCE	JESSICA GAMACHÉ
SECRETARY - EVANGELISM	WENDY WEST HICKEY
SENIOR PASTOR	PASTOR SMAIL
ASSOCIATE PASTOR	PASTOR CLEMENTSON
MUTUAL MINISTRY	MATTHEW GALBRAITH
YOUTH MINISTRY	JAY CAULKINS
STEWARDSHIP	MARCIE EMORY
SOCIAL MINISTRY	TONY GOOD
WORSHIP & MUSIC	MARSHA LOGAN
PRESCHOOL	JODY REMOVCHIK
FELLOWSHIP	SANDY ALLEN
PROPERTY	LLOYD WHITE

St. John's Current Staff

SENIOR PASTOR	KARI SMAIL
ASSOCIATE PASTOR	BETH CLEMENTSON
DIR. OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC	RON BALING
ORGANIST & DIR. OF CHOIRS	JOSEPH TUTTLE
OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	MARY LYNNE MARTIN
OFFICE ASSISTANT	ANDREA MILLER
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CLERK	RICH VOLPE
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	LAURA COOMBS
DIR. OF ST. JOHN'S PRESCHOOL	JENNIFER BOLINDA
YOUTH MINISTRY COORDINATOR	LINDA MEYERDIERKS
BUILDING USAGE COORDINATOR	MIKE SHELEHEDA
CUSTODIAN	GEORGE TUNNEY

St. John's Lutheran Church
"Making Christ Known"

Current Information as of April 2025
Vol. 6 Issue 4

A Note from Pastor Beth

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we make our way through the season of Lent and quickly find our way to Easter, I've been reflecting on what it means to be Easter people, to live out resurrection lives each day. In that reflection, I was reminded of a song that I was introduced to during a Lenten season several years ago. The song is called "You Brought Me Back to Life" by the band Citizens. In the song, the band sings: "*You're the Lord of light shining in the dark, You're the source of life beating in my heart, You're the living hope, You're the risen Christ, You restored my soul, Oh, You brought me back to life.*" These words remind us that through the resurrected Christ, who conquered death, we have hope and new life. And because of that hope and new life, we are called to move through the world carrying on the mission and message of our risen Savior. In the midst of all the grief, pain, and brokenness of this world, we are called to carry on the hope of the resurrection.

As we remind ourselves of what it means to be Easter people in our daily lives, I thought it might be helpful to share a prompt that I read in my Lenten devotional, "The Hardest Part" by Kate Bowler (I confess, I looked ahead to Easter Sunday J). Though this prompt is for Easter Sunday, it could easily be a helpful daily activity year-round. I leave you with this prompt: "*Easter eggs, baby chicks, babies, bunnies, warm fresh yeast bread or spring flowers – all these speak to life springing up anew. Pick the Easter symbol that speaks the most to you of the aroma, the color, the shape of life conquering death. Savor it, enjoy it today.*"

Blessings to you in the remainder of the Lenten season and as we celebrate the joy of the resurrection.

Peace, Pastor Beth

Our Worship Opportunities

Saturdays
5:30p.m. ~ Traditional service

Sundays
8:15a.m. ~ Traditional service
10:45a.m. ~ Contemporary service
All Sunday services are now Livestreamed

www.stjohnswww.stjohnslutheranchurch.com

Christian Education
We offer Sunday School options for the entire family on Sunday mornings from
9:30a.m. - 10:30a.m.
There is no Christian Education on Sunday, April 20th
Please join us for an Easter Brunch between worship services

~Communion~
We offer a hybrid style of receiving our Lord's Supper. Those attending services in person may choose to come up to the Altar to receive bread and wine, or remain in their seat and participate with our current no touch method.

For those who are more comfortable still worshiping at home, consecrated cups are available for pickup in the vestibule at the main entrance of the church office area 9a.m. Friday – Sunday morning to be used while participating with the Sunday Livestream worship.

Holy Week Worship Services

Palm/Passion Services:
Saturday, April 12th at **5:30 p.m**. and
Sunday, April 13th at **8:15 a.m.** and **10:45a.m.**

Maundy Thursday Services: April 17th at **noon** and **7:00 p.m.**

Good Friday Services: April 18th at **noon** and **7:00 p.m.**

Good Friday Youth Program: at **9:30 a.m.**

Easter Vigil: Saturday, April 19th at **5:30 p.m.**

Easter Sunday Services: April 20th at **8:15 a.m.** and **10:45 a.m.**

Easter Breakfast buffet served from **9:15 a.m. - 10:30a.m.** A variety of egg casseroles, pastries, fruit, and beverages will be served. There will be some gluten free options available. Contributions to a free will offering are greatly appreciated. (Please note: There is no Sunday School on Easter due to the breakfast.)

We hope that you can journey with us this year during our Holy Week worship as we remember
ALL CHRIST HAS DONE FOR US.

Our **Lenten midweek gatherings** continue on Wednesdays until April 9th.
We offer two times each week to gather.
There is a service at **11:00 am** followed by a lunch in Highland Hall.
There is also a supper offered at 6:00 pm followed by a study at **6:45** pm by Matt Rawle entitled, "The Final Days: A Lenten Journey Through the Gospels," and concluding with a Taizé worship service at **7:30 pm**.

We hope you can join us for any or all of these gatherings!

Christian Education News

Undie Sunday - The Christian Education Committee is bringing back two Lenten benevolence opportunities. We are asking that you bring **NEW** Underwear to donate to the North Hills Community Outreach. Underwear is desperately needed and least donated item. Men's, women's and kid's underwear are all needed. Please don't forget the little ones, as diapers in all sizes are also need. We will place a well labeled box in Highland Hall for your donations.

Knock your Socks Off - We are asking that you bring **NEW** socks to donate to the Northside Common Ministries. Socks are also needed and infrequently donated. Warm, thick socks are best. Men's, women's and kid's socks are needed. We will place a well labeled box for socks in Highland Hall for your donations as well.

Donation Boxes will be in Highland Hall until Easter Sunday, April 20th

Better Together Reflections — April: To Love Means To Do Something

It is another reminder of how we are **"Better Together."**
1 John 3:17-18 states, *"[17]How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?*
[18]Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action."

Hopefully all of us can say that we have people that we love and we have people that love us. This brings us such comfort and support on the journey of life. We all know that love is expressed not only in words but also in deeds. Both are important.

We not only hear in John 3 about how God so loved the world, but we also see how much God loves the world in the Gospels as Jesus dies on the cross so that we might have eternal life. As Christians, we are reminded all the time that we are to love God and love our neighbors. This command to love is not only for those we have claimed in love or who have claimed us, but for all of our neighbors near and far. There are so many in need, and we are called to help in love, as we hear in First John 3.

While none of us can take care of the needs of everyone, each of us can do something, and together we can accomplish great things. Whether that is donating to one of our many outreach programs, or providing a meal to someone who is struggling or ill, or sending a card to brighten someone's day, or giving a call to someone who is homebound, or giving a ride to someone who needs transportation, there are so many opportunities to help one another and show God's love to our neighbors in concrete ways.

As we journey with Christ to the cross this Lenten season, may we not only remember what Jesus did in love for us, but may we also respond to that great love in acts of love for one another.

Please return the tear-off to the office with a separate check.

EASTER FLOWERS

Your Name :_____

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

Amount Enclosed $_____ ***(please return by Friday, April 11th)***

ACTIVITIES

Easter Blessings!

St. John's Stampers will be getting together on Saturday, April 12th from 9am-noon in Fellowship Hall. (Big room downstairs!) We will have Easter projects to do along with some additional cards appropriate for other spring events i.e. graduation, weddings. All are welcome. There is a $5/person fee to help defray the cost of materials and we ask that you bring your own basic adhesive (tape runners, glue, etc.) any specialty adhesives will be provided. If you plan to join us please contact

Betsy Fackler by end of day, TUESDAY, April 8th

pdfeaf@zoominternet.net or text (412) 427-2045

Children's Good Friday Program

April 18, 2025 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran Church of Highland

Hear the Story of the Passion

Make a Craft

Have a Snack

Finish with an Easter egg hunt

Ages 3 through 3rd grade, Parents are welcome to stay.

Registration is required

****

Child's Name _____ **Age** _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Parents Name _____ **Cell Phone #** _____

Allergies/Special Needs:

_____

_____

_____

Register by April 13, 2025 - Contact the church office for directions or questions (412)364-1606.

Having Fun Staying Young! is an exercise group that meets on

Mondays and Thursdays at 10:00a.m.

Friends gather at 9:30am to talk, visit and have a cup of coffee together before class. We end by sharing each others names and any prayer concerns that we might have. It is a wonderful group and they are friendly and supportive. Our class has men and women of all ability levels.

Come and join our group of active friends!

Ministry Highlights

PLEASANT VALLEY MEN'S SHELTER

On the 4th Wednesday of each month members of our congregation provide a dinner to those men staying at the Pleasant Valley Shelter. Thank you to **our Confirmation class** for providing the February shelter meal. If you'd like to be involved in this Ministry outreach project please contact **Emily Bovan** 724-757-7815 or **Jean Martz** 412-364-2894.

Women of the ELCA

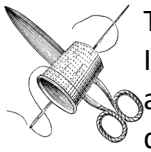
St. John's WELCA

will not meet in April because of Holy Week. We will meet again in May.

All women of St. John's are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Saintly Sewers

You can find the Saintly Sewers busy at work on Tuesdays at 12:30 in Highland Hall. Kathy Kofmehl was lucky to receive a grant from Thrivent to pay for a large bolt of quilt batting this month. This is one of our biggest expenses. We are fortunate to get many fabric donations and they are so appreciated. So far, we have constructed about 20 quilts this year!



This is a fun group of people who enjoy our weekly meetings together. If you would rather sew at home, we can provide you with quilt squares all cut and designed to be sewn together. You can return the completed quilt top and we will assemble the rest of it.

Come join our lively group!

St. John's Community Pantry

Our **FREE** Community Pantry in the rear parking lot provides personal care items to those in need. It has been a blessing to many in our community however, the shelves empty quickly. Please help us restock!

Useful items that are always needed:

toilet paper	paper towels	soaps/shampoos
toothpaste	toothbrushes	dental floss
deodorants	feminine products	General cleaning products

First Aid items (*band-aides, ointments, disinfectant wipes, tissues, etc*)

You may also make a monetary donation to our ***Family Emergency Fund.***

The only **RESTRICTIONS** to our pantry are *food* items, medicines, used and/or open packaged items or things that can melt or freeze in outdoor weather conditions.

A Note from the St. John's Cemetery Committee:

Spring is here! Well, at least it's on it's way and everything starts to grow again. Some of our committee members have already braved the cold rain to remove weathered wreaths, flowers, and off season decorations, in a effort to help the cemetery continue to be a place of peace and beauty for those who visit loved one's burial spaces. Anyone can walk the area and if you see a weed, a tattered flag or an object that has simply outlived it's time, please feel free to remove it. If you have any questions, please call the church office or email our Church Council.

Youth News

Cumberland Kids

Thanks to the many adults and teens who volunteered this year at Cumberland Kids! This after school program will resume in the fall. We hope our students have a great rest of the school year and a relaxing summer break!

MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH SUNDAY GATHERINGS

Calling all Middle and High School Students! We are started a new youth program **just for you**!

We will be gathering the evenings of April 13th and 27th from 6:30-8:30. Put it on your calendar and stay tuned for more details!

Looks like a leprechaun was at the gathering in March?!

MOVIE & POPCORN!

April 6th from 11:45a.m.—1:45 p.m.

All Youth (1st - 8th grade) & Friends are invited!

Any questions or concerns please contact Linda Meyerdierks

Email: lmmeyers@zoominternet.net or

Call/text: 724-612-7745

Come watch a movie and have some popcorn!

We will meet in Highland Hall following the 10:45a.m service.

Please bring a bag lunch.

Drinks and Popcorn will be provided

Hope to see you there!

Bring a friend or four!

Mark your calendar:

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!

July 7th - July 11th

True North Trusting Jesus in a Wild World

Please contact Linda Meyerdierks at lmmeyers@zoominternet.net if you have any questions.

Volunteers Are Needed for Vacation Bible School!

VBS July 7th – 11th (5:15pm - 8:15pm)

V.B.S VOLUNTEER FORM

Name:_____

Address:_____

Telephone #:_____ Email Address:_____

Positions you are interested in:

Choice One:_____ Choice Two:_____

Choice Three:_____

Volunteers are needed in the following areas:

- **Wild Bible Adventures** (act out the day's Bible story & help with props)
- **Tundra Treats** (snack time prep and clean-up)
- **Crew Leader** (take up to 8 kids to their stations - no prep work - lots of fun)
- Help with running the **computer** for **video/music** during opening & closing program
- **Imagination Station**/Crafts
- **Glacier Games**

Questions? Email: lmmeyers@zoominternet.net or call/text: 724-612-7745.

2025 Operating Budget

2025 Operating Budget

YTD Income vs. Budget – February 2025	
YTD Income Budgeted	$ 119,416.67
YTD Income Received	$ 105,730.99
Over (Under) Budgeted	**($ 13,685.68)**

YTD Expenses vs Budget – February 2025	
YTD Expenses Budgeted	$ 119,416.67
YTD Expenses Incurred	$ 118,795.31
Over (Under) Budgeted	**($ 621.36)**

YTD Income Received	$ 105,730.99
YTD Expenses Incurred	$ 118,795.31
YTD Surplus (Deficit)	**($ 13,064.32)***

We accept credit payments for a variety of missions. **Scan the QR code,** indicate the amount you would like to donate then click the dropdown arrow and choose the specific fund you would like to direct your contribution to.

If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

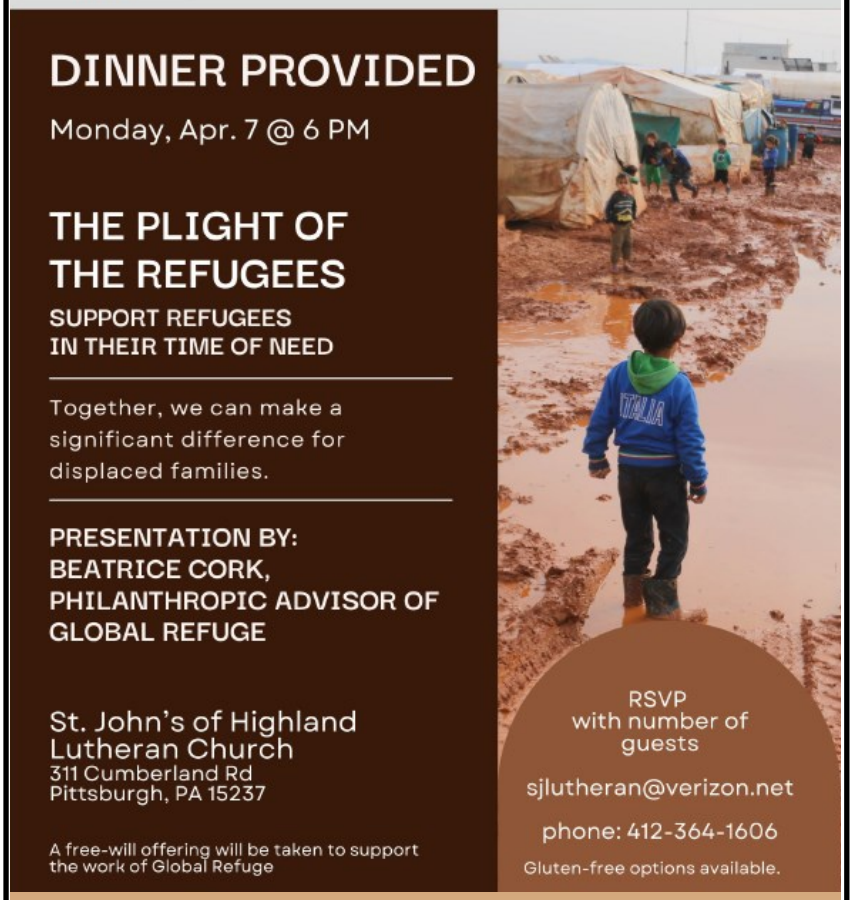
Please note: If you currently choose to have your monthly contribution automatically withdrawn from your checking account, this method of contributing does not replace the ACH-Auto Debit

* Includes $1,130 for computer to control the zone heating and $2,223 for new Wi-Fi extenders for a total of $3,353 out of the surplus fund for 2025.

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE CONGREGATION FOR THEIR SUPPORT BECAUSE WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER!

Partners in Ministry

Refugees Near and Far: Serving Together



Come and meet Beatrice Cork from Global Refuge at our dinner in support of refugee neighbors near and far. By now you know the NHRM has received word that our grant from the Ethyl L. Verney Endowment Fund was renewed for 2025 by the SWPA Synod. In addition to hearing Beatrice, you will learn more about the NHRM and what has been accomplished in the community. Ryan Eberly from the ELCA will join us as well to speak to anyone who is interested in gift giving to the ELCA. You will meet people from other congregations as well.

Come and bring a friend or two!

Backyard Angels

Rich Volpe and Eric Kofmehl delivered a truck full of clothing to St Mark's in Brookline from the generous donations you all have made this past month.

Now as the temperatures are rising, we are starting to think SPRING! Backyard Angels will be needing donations of spring and summer clothing. As you peruse your warmer weather attire, please remember that your no longer needed items in good condition would be much appreciated!

Please place your donations on the tables in Highland Hall marked BACKYARD ANGELS.

Thanks so much!

A Need for Joy

Thanks again to Judith Bukambu for sharing photos and the stories of the students in Tanzania that St John's sponsors.
It is amazing that for a relatively small amount of money the lives of 7 students have been transformed. They would probably not be able to afford this education if it was not for our support.

Please consider making a donation towards our fund to support these students.
At present we are far from our goal of $6,000 for the year.

You can make a huge difference in a student's life!

ST.JOHN'S LISTENS!

St. John's Congregation Council members are available to hear your feedback and concerns.

Please share your thoughts with:

Sandy Allen	Jody Removchik	Steve Gottschalk	Pastor Kari
Jay Caulkins	Matthew Galbraith	Sam Sesti	& Pastor Beth
Marcy Emory	Jessica Gamache	Lloyd White	
Marsha Logan	Tony Good	Wendy West Hickey	

You can email the Congregation Council at
listeningconcerns@stjohnslutheranchurch.com.

SPRING FLING

April 5, 2025 IN HIGHLAND HALL

A POTLUCK DINNER & CHORAL CONCERT WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA FEATURING

SinG BOLDLY BEACON ON THE HILL PRODUCTIONS AND St. John's Bell Choir

TICKETS ARE FREE