Psalm 100

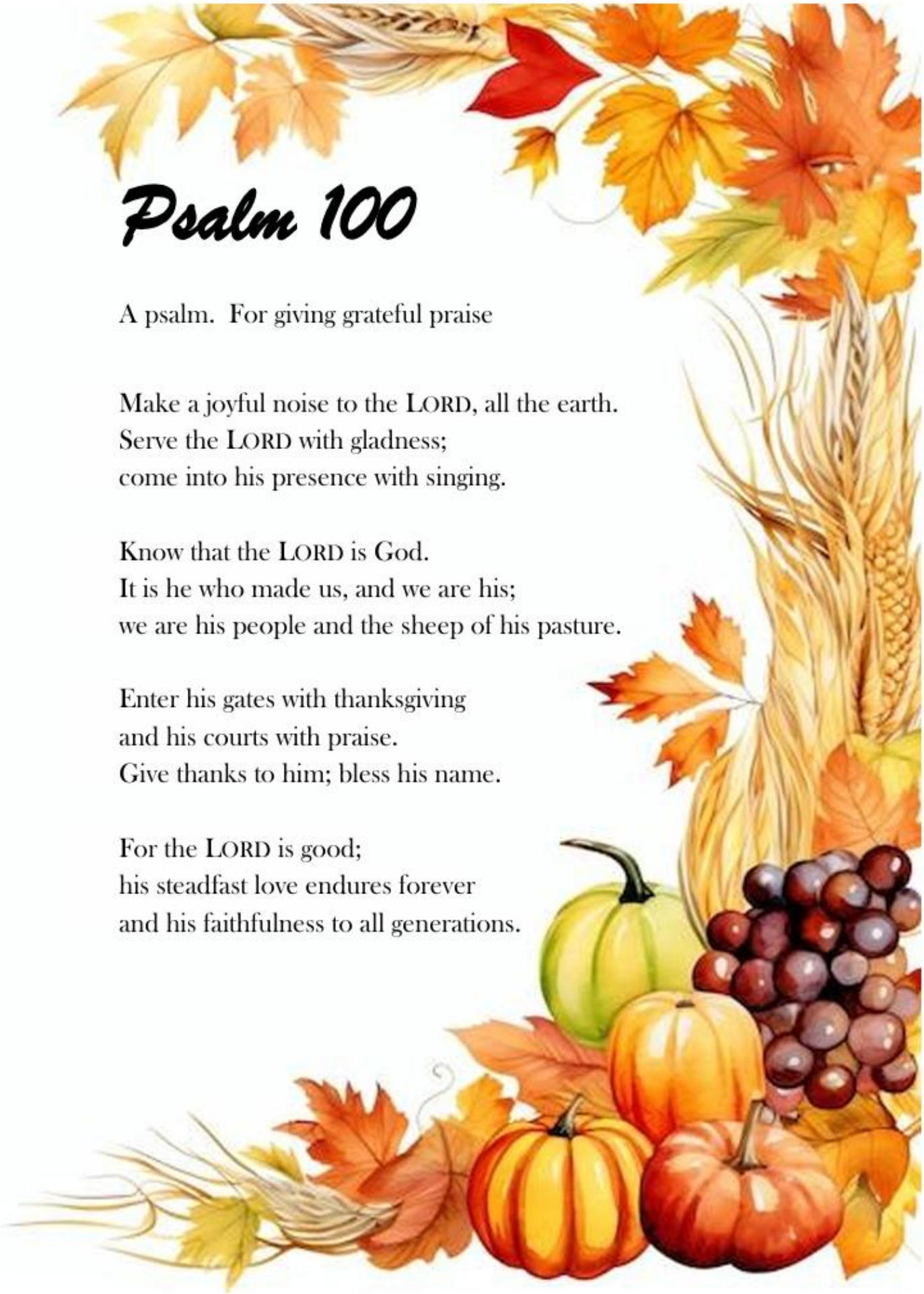
A psalm. For giving grateful praise

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.
Serve the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.

Know that the LORD is God.
It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him; bless his name.

For the LORD is good;
his steadfast love endures forever
and his faithfulness to all generations.



November 2026 Newsletter

"On Wings Like Eagles"

…but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength
They shall mount up with *wings like eagles,*
They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.
Isaiah 40:31

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
PO Box 2, 772 St. Johns Road
Saint Johns, PA 18247

Church Office Phone Number: 570-788-2685
Email: stjohns@epix.net
Facebook: SJELC.StJohnsPA
Website: www.sjlutheran.org

Pastor Designate: Reverend Michele Kaufman
Organist: David Cunfer
Church Secretary: Rose Fox
Phone: 570-788-2685
Office Hours: M-W 9 am to 1 pm, F - 9 am to 12 pm

Our Purpose

(Our sense of what God is calling us to be and do in the mission of the Church)
God's purpose for our congregation is to be a Christ-centered community, glorifying God and sharing the gospel and blessings with our neighbors.

Sunday Mornings

Youth Sunday School is held at 10 am.

Catechism Classes

Catechism Classes for youth in grades 7th and 8th grades is available.
Parents and P. Kaufman agree to a schedule that is compatible for all.

All are invited to join us for our worship/fellowship opportunities.

Contact Information

Pastor Michele Kaufman – Pastor Designate
Phone Number: 570-881-2371

If you have a pastoral need such as a request for a hospital visit, pastoral care need, or spiritual counseling, please contact Pastor Kaufman.

For other requests such as a baptism, funeral, or wedding, please contact the church office @ 570-788-2685. If necessary, please leave a message including your full name, phone number, the reason for your call, and the best time to contact you.

2026 Church Council Officers/Members

Don Wenner, Jr. - President
Vice-President – Vacant
June Diller - Secretary
TBD - Assistant Secretary
Jennifer Cipriani - Treasurer
Sherry Grenzberg - Assistant Treasurer (not on Council)
Janet Brady
Jan Jacobus
Beverly Janso
Patty Phile
Betty Wenner
Donald Wenner, Sr.

Church Ministries – See Calendar for Scheduled Meetings/Events

Finance Team – Don Wenner Jr., Chairperson
Lay Eucharistic Ministry Team: Melody Hinderer, Judy Mundie
Learning Ministry Team: Donna Cassarella, Chairperson
Prayer Circle Ministry: Kim Deliman, Chairperson
Prayer Shawl Ministry: Janet Brady, Chairperson
Property Team: Jim Cassarella, Chairperson
S.E.R.V.E. Ministry: Melody Hinderer, Chairperson
Worship and Music Ministry Team: Janet Brady, Chairperson

We offer many opportunities for ministry. If interested, please contact the church office, a council member, or the chairperson(s) listed above.

"In the cross of Christ I glory, tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time, all the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime."

"Upon the cross of Jesus my eye at times can see, the very dying form of one who suffered there for me. And from my contrite heart with tears, two wonders I confess, the wonder of his glorious love and my unworthiness."

What do you see when you look upon the cross?

The cross holds immense significance for Christians, symbolizing their faith and beliefs in profound ways. This emblematic representation is not merely a reminder of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ but encompasses deeper meanings that influence the lives of believers.

At the very heart of our faith, the cross serves as a foundational symbol of God's love and sacrifice. It represents the idea of redemption, illustrating how Christ's death paved the way for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life for those who believe in Him. This transformative message influences the everyday lives of Christians everywhere, guiding their moral values and actions.

More importantly, the cross is a powerful symbol of hope. For many believers, it signifies Christ's triumph over suffering and death. The resurrection of Jesus is a central theme in Christianity, with the cross as the point of transition from the sorrow of crucifixion to the joy of resurrection. This concept reassures Christians that despite life's challenges and difficulties, there is always the promise of renewal and hope.

Beyond theological implications, the cross serves as a communal symbol for Christians around the world. It fosters a sense of belonging and unity within the faith. The cross is frequently displayed in churches, homes, and personal adornments, acting as a constant reminder of Christ's teachings and the values they uphold as a community. The significance of the cross for believers is multifaceted. It embodies the essence of Christ's sacrifice, promises hope, and cultivates a shared identity among Christian.

Pastor Michele Kaufman

President's Corner:

Hi St. John's and Friends.

Hope everyone enjoyed the fall colors.

The Nov 8th service we will be honoring our Veterans. Please tell a veteran thank you on Nov 11th.

Leilani Chesonis will be back for another concert on Nov 8th 2-3 pm.

Christmas party will be at Four Blooms Dec 6th noon till two.

6261 updates; By the time you read this we will have had the reveal meeting as to how are bundle will look like. Stay tuned for more information.

Property had:

- Napoliello Masonry repaired the sidewalk and steps going to the Sunday School door.
- PLD Assoc. came out and did complete cleaning, inspection, and operational checks on our boilers. There were no issues.

Thanks to everyone you who helped with the: committees, Sunday School, sausage supper, and the many different functions!

Next meeting is Nov 12, 2026 @ 6:30 pm.

Gods speed.

Don Wenner Jr.,
Council President

November Supply Pastor Schedule

1 All Saints Day – Rev. Chip Fairchild
8 – Rev. Virginia Heimer
15 – Rev. Chip Fairchild
22 Christ the King – Rev. Chip Fairchild
29 Advent 1 – Rev. Paul Schoffstall

Altar Flower Sponsors

In Loving Memory of Sister Janet Stump by The Mundie Family
In Loving Memory of Donnie Wenner III by Family
In Loving Memory of Rocky Russo's 100th Birthday
In Loving Memory of Priscilla I. Mundie by her children
In Loving Memory of Mary Wrazen by Joe and Kim Washko

November Bulletin Sponsor: Anonymous Sponsor

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November Birthdays and Baptism Celebrations

We publish these celebrations with permission and information given by our members. If your celebration is missing from our list, please call the church secretary with the information, and your information will be updated. Thank you!

November 8 – Savanah Heckman
November 9 – David Cunfer
November 15 – Jared Crawford
November 19 – Melody Hinderer
November 21 – Luke Thomas
November 23 – Dawn Wagner
November 23 – Steven Janso

November 7 – Gene Steinman
November 7 – Lucas Leitner
November 10 – Mary Ellen Sims
November 10 – Korri Cipriani
November 18 – Janet Brady
November 19 – Monroe Mumie
November 21 – Madison Mumie
November 26 - Jacob Bennett

****

Monthly Coffee Hour

The next coffee hour is on **November 1st** (after Service) to celebrate the November birthdays, sponsored by the Mundie Family. If you would like to sponsor any Coffee Hour in 2027, please sign up in the St. Stephen's Room.

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Prayer Circle

Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love endures forever! 1 Chronicles 16:34

Do you have a prayer request for yourself or someone else? Please contact Kim Deliman at 570-788-4459. Tell me if you would like the prayer request to be included in the bulletin and placed on the prayer circle list. Do you want to be contacted by Pastor Michele Kaufman? You may also call the Church office or sign the Prayer Request list located on the table in the St. Stephen's Room.

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Prayer Shawl Ministry

Do you knit or crochet? We meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month for about 2 hours. If interested, call the church office at 570-788-2685.

Valley Food Pantry

As we do every year, our churches, together with the Valley Food Pantry, distribute special "Holiday" food boxes. This Thanksgiving, our church will sponsor **"boxes of stuffing"**. Donations must be in by **November 15th.** Besides the "Holiday" food boxes, the food pantry is in need of diced tomatoes, cereal, Jell-O, brownie mix, cake mix, coffee, and dish or laundry detergent. **Please make sure the items are within the expiration date.** No medications/vitamins, etc., are accepted.
THANK YOU in advance for your generosity.

****

Church Women United - November 6th

Black Creek United Methodist Church (158 Sugarloaf Golf Course Rd., Sugarloaf) will be hosting **World Community Day.** CWU Celebrations 2026 - The theme is: "Peace Begins with Me – John 14:27). The service will be held at 1 pm on November 6th, with refreshments following. Contact Patty Phile at 570-956-2948 or Arlene Stagg at 570-788-3643 for more information.

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Honoring Our Veterans

As followers of Christ, we are called to give "honor to whom honor is due" (Romans 13:7). Veterans have served our nation with courage and sacrifice, often at great personal cost. **On Sunday, November 8th**, we will take a few moments during the worship service to recognize the veterans in attendance, remember those who have passed, and offer a special prayer of blessing. Their service reflects the heart of Christ, who said, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13). If you wish, you can bring a photograph and/or their framed military burial flag for display.

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Hanging of the Greens

Please join us on **Sunday, December 13th, after our Service** to decorate our church and our tree. All are welcome to join us; no one is too young or old to enjoy this annual event.

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Request from Deacon Kat Tigerman

St. John's has approved a request from Deacon Kat Tigerman and Jean (NEPS Ministry Administrator), both are with the NEPA Synod staff, to hold their quarterly Synod 6261 Bundle days at our church.

The meeting will be on Wednesday, April 14, 2027 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm (approximately).

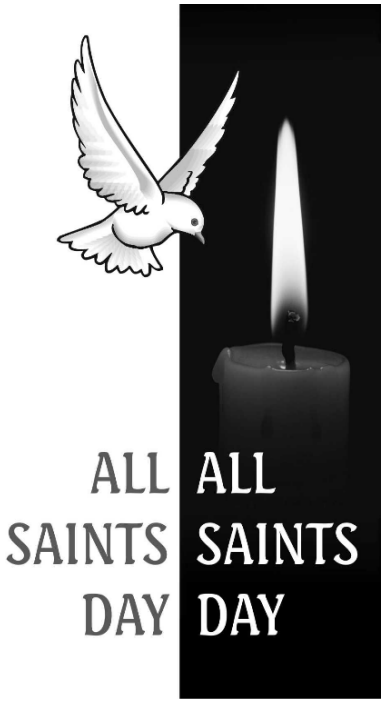
They are requesting a space that will accommodate 15 – 25 people, and the use of a projector screen.

They will provide lunch for this meeting (they will not be using our stove for cooking), and they will clean up after the meeting is over.

****

Holy Joe's Cafe

For the month of November, there will be a jar in the St. Stephen's Room to collect donations for Holy Joe's Café. Wherever the military goes, Holy Joe's Café goes to provide a little bit of home to those who serve our country. Help the S.E.R.V.E. Committee support this mission.



As you hold me close in memory
even though we are apart,
my spirit will live on there,
deep within your heart...
I am with you always.

When you lean on trusted friends
and their caring hugs enfold you,
within their loving arms,
I'll be there to hold you...
I am with you always.

And beyond the far horizon
when we'll finally be together,
where love will be eternal,
and life will last forever...
I am with you always.

Joshua 1:9
"Do not fear nor be dismayed,
for the Lord, your God,
is with you wherever you go."

November 1st - All Saints' Sunday

All Saints' Sunday is a day to celebrate baptism – incorporating new members into the mystical body of Christ. Today we celebrate the baptisms of:

Zachary Joseph Barbush
Brady James Winder
Paxton Ryder Hillard
Theodore Bryant Barbush

All Saints' Day celebration has a long history in the worship life of the Christian Church. It began as a commemoration of the martyrs who had died for the faith, and it has since become a day when we honor and remember those who, in death, have joined the Church Triumphant, as well as the faithful saints of the present who serve Jesus Christ. We remember with gratitude those members of St. John's who died in the past year, and others who received pastoral care through this congregation as they finished their earthly journey:

Arlene Poltrock
Linda (Libby) Wenner
Joyce Janet Ray
Ian David Mundie
Larry Sims
Mark A. Berger

**Following worship, the families of those remembered may take the candle lit in memory of their loved one, and the families of those baptized may take home a white flower from the vase.*

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Advent Season Begins November 29th

Below is the list of our Advent Giving. Monetary donations are accepted. Make checks payable to St. John's Lutheran Church. In the memo section, state which organization you are giving a donation to. **Do not wrap** the donations.

November 29th – Shine Women's Center (Nonprofit free women's center in W. Hazleton serving all of Luzerne County. They are committed to providing information to make an informed pregnancy decision): General baby items.

December 6th – VA Hospital (Donations are given to Veterans being treated at the VA that need personal hygiene items): Shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, shaving cream, body wash, toothpaste, toothbrushes, denture cream, large print deck of cards, large puzzle with no staples or wire binding

December 13th – Divine Providence (Faith-based emergency shelter serving homeless men and women in Southern Luzerne County located in Hazleton. Shelter, meals, and services are provided to those in need): New gloves, hats, and scarves for men, women, and children

December 20th – Fritzingertown Senior Living Community (Local nursing home in Drums. Items are for residents): Tissues, white socks for men or women, slipper socks with non-slip bottoms, hairbrushes, large print puzzle books, coloring books, colored pencils.

Please join us as we prepare ourselves for Jesus's birth by attending our event called:

Stations of the Manger

Saturday November 28th, 2026 from 1 pm – 3 pm at
St. John's Lutheran Church, 772 Saint John's Road, Saint Johns

This event is for adults as well as children. **Registration is required**.

This event is open to the public; if attending, please call our church office 570.788.2685 by Sunday November 15th. For church members, please sign up in the St. Stephen's Room. Light refreshments will be served.

Please note that there is no talking during this time of devotion and reflection.

What are Stations of the Manger?

Advent is a season of expectation. It is a season of waiting and watching in preparation for the One who came as a baby in a manger to be the Savior of the world. Christians all over the world celebrate Advent in different ways.

"Stations of the Manger" invites us to take time to pause and reflect on all the components of our Christmas story. As Christians, we have many different prayer practices and ways to practice spiritual disciplines.

"Stations of the Manger" invites us to experience some of those practices and disciplines as a way to prepare our hearts for Christ.

Invitation

Please join us as we pause during the Advent Season to reflect on the Christmas story of our Savior's birth. There will be 5 stations for you to attend. You will visit each station in the order of the instruction sheets you will be given. This is a self-guided tour and you can spend as much time as you need at each station. Each station will include a scripture passage, a devotion, along with an activity.

The children will meet in our Nursery Room for their time as they learn about Jesus's birth.

We hope that you can find peace, comfort, and spiritual renewal as you reflect on what you will experience.

God's grace be with you and your loved ones.

Join us for our Annual Christmas Party on
Sunday, December 6th from Noon – 2 pm at Four Blooms
Reservations will be taken on
October 25th – November 22nd in the St. Stephen's Room
Costs: $ 18/Adult, $12/Children – Ages 4-12
Children under 4 – Free
We ask that you pay when reservations are made. You may pay with cash or a check payable to St. John's Lutheran Church.

Menu

Tossed Salad, Sliced Beef with Gravy, Stuffed Chicken Breast with Gravy, Sausage and Peppers, Mashed Potatoes, Sauteed Green Beans, Strawberry Shortcake,
Coffee, Tea, Water, Selection of Soft Drinks

Entertainment

We will be playing games.
For prizes: We are asking those who wish to play the games to bring a wrapped gift costing no more than $10.00.
If you cannot afford to bring a gift, please participate in the games anyway as we want everyone to have a fun time and enjoy the fellowship.

Christmas Cookie Exchange – Sunday : January 3rd

It's been quite a few years since we have had a Christmas cookie exchange.

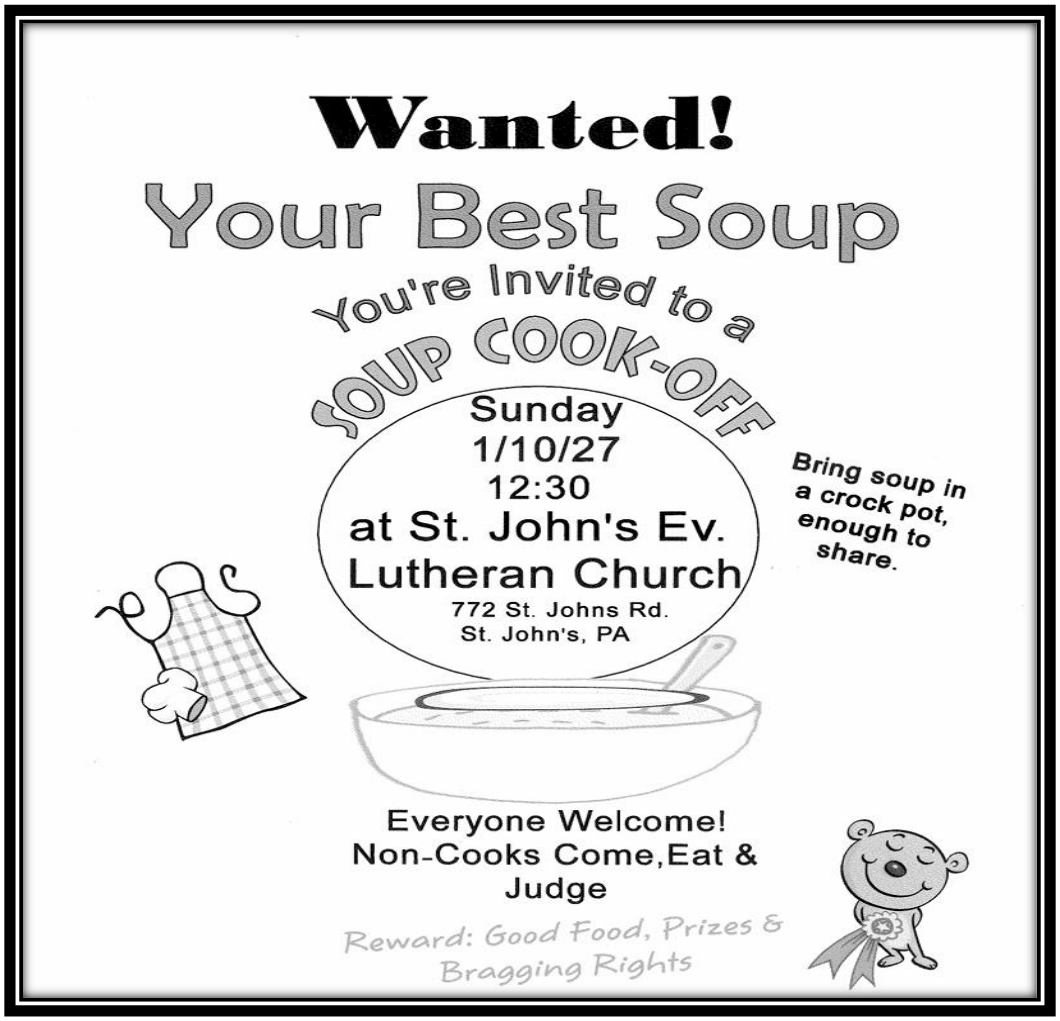
The SERVE Team will be hosting the coffee hour on January 3rd, 2027.

We will be having a normal coffee hour along with the cookie exchange which will occur after we have finished eating.

To participate in the cookie exchange you will bring cookies in a plastic storage bag; 6 cookies per bag (this may vary depending on the size of the cookie).

Put the name of your cookies, along with your name on a card, and include copies of your recipe, because , someone will ask you for the recipe for sure.

Don't forget to bring a container to take your cookies home.



★ December 19, 2026 ★

National Wreaths Across America Day

Help Cub Scout Pack 63 and Troop 63 honor local heroes!

Sponsor a wreath today to be placed on a veteran's grave this December at St. John's Lutheran and Reformed Cemetery.

Scan the QR code to make a donation online or visit
https://wreathsacrossamerica.org/pages/167755

REMEMBER ME
WREATHS across AMERICA
Honoring 250 Years of American Heroes

#RememberMe

WREATHS *across* AMERICA

Sponsorship Order Form

Sponsored wreaths are placed on veterans' grave markers at cemeteries nationwide each December for National Wreaths Across America Day. Your donation ensures a wreath is placed to honor one or more veterans at the participating location of your choice. **Thank you for supporting our mission to REMEMBER, HONOR, and TEACH!**

All sponsored veteran wreaths are shipped directly to the location selected by the sponsor on this form. Wreaths are not shipped to individual sponsors.

CHECK #	CHECK DATE	GROUP ID	LOCATION ID(s)	DOLLAR AMOUNT
		PA0596P	PAJLRC	
		PA0596P	PAJLRC	
		PA0596P	PAJLRC	

Each sponsorship is $17. If your check is for multiple locations, list each location ID with its dollar amount.

SPONSOR NAME	
PHONE #	
EMAIL ADDRESS	
MAILING ADDRESS	

SPECIAL REQUESTS

Please note in memory/honor of requests do not place a wreath on a specific loved one's grave.

☐ **IN-HONOR OF:** Let someone know you made a sponsorship in their honor. We will email them.

➔ Provide Email Recipient Name & Email Address, along with Message (optional):

_____

_____

☐ **IN-MEMORY OF:** Post a veteran's name & message on Wreaths Across America's Remembrance Wall online.

➔ Provide Veteran Name for Memory Wall Post and Message (Optional):

_____

_____

Please complete this form and mail it with your check to our address below, or pay with a credit/debit card, PayPal, or GooglePay by sponsoring online at https://wreathsacrossamerica.org/pages/167755.

Wreaths Across America
P.O. Box 249
Columbia Falls, ME 04623

WREATHS *across* AMERICA

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

More Than a Meal: Building Community in Bangor

Submitted by Pastor Deborah Staniszewski of Trinity Lutheran Church in Bangor, PA

On August 19th, the faith community at Trinity Lutheran in Bangor came together for an evening that blended hospitality, fun, and genuine relationship-building. It was a true intergenerational effort, and even some of our youngest members rolled up their sleeves to help set up, serve, and welcome guests.

The congregation offered a free community meal featuring hot dogs with all the fixings, homemade sides, cold drinks, and a full ice-cream sundae bar. Neighbors were invited to stop by for quick pick up or to stay, sit, and enjoy conversation. Children delighted in a castle bounce house, hands-on crafts, and art projects that kept creativity flowing all evening.

The turnout was strong, the weather was beautiful, and the spirit of connection was unmistakable. Food, laughter, and shared presence were enjoyed by all.

This event was made possible through the generosity and collaboration of many: volunteers who cooked, served, and created delicious desserts; members who offered their time, talents, and creativity; a Thrivent grant shared by a member; and the support of friends who came out to join the celebration. Trinity also received a Witness and Service Grant from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, which helped defray costs and make the event accessible to the whole community. Special thanks to DEM Kat Tigerman and Jean Sandberg for their guidance and support in making the grant available.

Creative ministry moments such as this cookout remind us that church is not confined to a building but is lived out wherever God's people gather to share food, joy, and love. On August 19th, Trinity Bangor embraced Christ's call to friendship, hospitality, and service, creating a space where neighbors could connect, children could play, and the Spirit could weave community in simple, joyful ways.

Help Make Ministry Possible

Mission Support strengthens congregations, supports leaders, and helps new ministries take root across our synod and the wider church. Thank you for being part of this shared ministry. Learn more about Mission Support and how your congregation can support at **godslove.org/missionsupport**.

Complete an application 01

Grab your leadership or ministry team and complete an application! Applications can be found on the Synod website at: godslove.org/witness-service

The Grant Team reviews your application and notifies you 02

The Grant Team will review your ministry project proposal and reach out with any questions. Then you will be notified of your application's approval.

Complete your project! 03

Once you receive your grant check, you can start working on your project! Be sure to track your expenses and take pictures!

Submit your evaluation form 04

After you finish your project and have used your grant funds, please complete the grant evaluation form, submitting any pictures or stories along with it.

1 – All Saints Day; Church & Sunday School @ 10 am; Coffee Hour; Daylight Savings Time Ends
2 – Scouts @ 6 pm/Luther Hall
4 – Prayer Shawl Ministry @ 9:30 am
5 – Pastor Michele's Office Hours 10 am to 12 pm
6 – Church Women United – World Community Day at Black Creek UMC – 1 pm
8 – Church & Sunday School @ 10 am; Choir Practice after Church;
Leilani Chesonis Concert 2-3 pm with refreshments after
9 – Scouts @ 6 pm/Luther Hall
11 – Veterans Day
12– Pastor Michele's Office Hours 10 am to 12 pm; Church Council Meeting @ 6:30 pm
14 – Scouts/Scouting for food collection
15 – Church & Sunday School @ 10 am; Choir Practice after Church;
Scouts/Scouting for food collection
16 – December Newsletter Deadline; Scouts @ 6 pm/Scouting for food collection
17 – Scouts/Scouting for food collection
18 – Prayer Shawl Ministry @ 9:30 am; Fritzingertown Service @ 2:30 pm; Scouts Committee Meeting @ 7 pm
19 – Pastor Michele's Office Hours 10 am to 12 pm
22 – Christ the King; Church & SS @ 10 am; Choir Practice after Church
23 – Scouts @ 6 pm/Luther Hall
26 – Thanksgiving Day
27 – Church Office Closed
28 – Stations of the Manger from 1 pm to 3 pm
29 – First Sunday of Advent; Church & Sunday School @ 10 am
30 – Scouts @ 6 pm

Heritage Day – St. Peter's Episcopal Church (46 S. Laurel St., Hazleton) – November 1st, 10:30 am. Celebrating 161 blessed years and experience our Eucharist Service as it was conducted in 1865. A light lunch will be served following. RSVP to pal51@verizon.net or call 570-956-2061 by Oct. 30th.

75th Annual Holiday Bazaar – Conyngham UMC – November 7th, 9 am to 3 pm. Take-out food (Soup, Haluski, BBQ), Bake Sale, Basket Auction, and Vendors.

7th Annual Holiday Extravaganza – 2 locations: Butler Community Center (Drums) & CVCO (Conyngham) – November 7th, 9 am to 2 pm. Crafters/Vendors for your holiday shopping. Benefits the Valley Food Pantry.

Cozy Christmas Market – Good Shepherd Church – November 14th, 8 am to 3 pm. Gently used items for Christmas & Winter décor, toys, games, and puzzles for children. Bake Sale & kitchen serving breakfast & lunch.

NOVEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 All Saints Day Church & SS 10 am Coffee Hour Daylight Saving Time Ends	**2** Scouts @ 6 pm	**3** Election Day	**4** Prayer Shawl @ 9:30 am	**5** Pr. Michele's Office Hours 10 am -12 pm	**6**	**7**
8 Church & SS 10 am Choir Practice following Church Leilani Chesonis Concert @ 2 pm	**9** Scouts @ 6 pm	**10**	**11** Veterans Day	**12** Pr. Michele's Office hours 10 am -12 pm Church Council Meeting @ 6:30 pm	**13**	**14** Scouts Scouting for Food collection
15 Church & SS 10 am Choir Practice Following Church Scouts Scouting for Food collection	**16** Dec. Newsletter Deadline Scouts @ 6 pm Scouting for Food collection	**17** Scouts Scouting for Food collection	**18** Prayer Shawl Ministry @ 9:30 am Fritzingtown Service @ 2:30 pm Scout's Committee Meetings @ 7 pm	**19** Pr. Michele's Office Hours 10 am -12 pm	**20**	**21**
22 Church & SS 10 am Choir Practice Following Church	**23** Scouts @ 6 pm	**24**	**25**	**26** Thanksgiving Day	**27** Church Office Closed	**28** Stations of the Manger 1 pm to 3 pm
29 Church & SS 10 am	**30** Scouts @ 6 pm				Oct. 31st Before bed!	