No tricks just

S'MORE OF JESUS

GRAHAM CRACKER

"Foundation"

Jesus is Our Firm Foundation.

"Everyone who hears and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."
Matthew 7:24

CHOCOLATE

"Sweetness"

God's Love is the Sweetest Gift.

"For God so Loved the world that He gave His one and only son..."
John 3:16

MARSHMALLOW

"Filling"

The Holy Spirit Fills Us and Makes Us Whole.

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit... Will teach you all things."
John 14:26

THE FIRE

"Refining"

God Uses Challenges To Grow Our Faith.

"I will refine them as silver is refined... they will call on My name, and I will answer them."
Zechariah 13:9

Just like a s'more comes together with every piece, our lives are complete when we have Jesus as our foundation, God's Love as our sweetness, and the Spirit filling us, and the refining fire shaping us.

And the best part? There's always room for s'more of Him!

October 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.

"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.' Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. Besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'"He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'"'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.' Luke 16:19-31

Charles Dickens had a complex relationship with religion. He was a member of the Church of England and believed deeply in Jesus as his savior and his moral teachings. However, he often criticized established religion, reflecting a sensitivity toward the social principles of Christianity in his works, such as in "A Christmas Carol". Charles Dickens was said to have used the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man as the basis for his story, A Christmas Carol. In fact, Dickens uses the name Lazarus in disguise, as Lazarus is etymologically related to Eliezer or as we know him, Ebenezer! Dickens uses the name to describe the raising of the "dead" of Scrooge's soul, when he goes through his dramatic change at the end of the story! Of course, the one raised in Jesus' life is Lazarus. The one raised in Dicken's tale is Scrooge!

Dickens loved the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man, but he provides an alternative ending. In Jesus' story, the haunted rich man begs Abraham to send the dead back as ghosts to convince his five "brothers" to change their ways. But Abraham refuses, saying if they didn't believe the prophets, they won't believe in the raising of the dead either! But in Dicken's story the dead return to haunt Scrooge. Scrooge sees his former business colleague in chains and in pain. He warns him of his own fate, should he continue to follow the path of selfishness and heartlessness. At the end of the Dickens' story, Scrooge is a changed man.

Ultimately the message is the same: the way you treat your family, your brothers and sisters in Christ will determine your own future in God's kingdom. How we live our lives matters. We have been taught that God so loved us that he gave his only begotten Son that we might have eternal life. We are called to love him back with our hearts, minds, and souls, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We are all responsible for the lives and actions of one another. When our sister or brother sins, we all are tarnished by that sin. When a sister or brother lives out her or his faith in a way that many see the love of God, all of us have reason to rejoice. In a world all too often filled with people concerned about themselves first, characterized with an impersonal "what's in it for me" attitude, we are called to witness to something more important -- love that gives of itself for others; love that cares about others; love that makes our lives meaningful and significant in giving to others.

President's Corner:

Hi St. John's and Friends.

Enjoy the weather as God paints the trees in his fall colors.

6261 updates: please see further in the newsletter.

Sunday School started last weekend. Thank you to all who helped or donated items to improve our school rooms. Those who have not seen them, please take a minute and check them out.

Worship and Music decided to use "Setting 5" from September 13 to October 18, 2026. The bulletin will outline the service.

David Cunfer requested that the piano in the music room be tuned. It will be tuned in the coming week or two.

Worship & Music Meeting is on Monday, October 19, 2026, at 10:30 am.

Please see the sign-up sheets as you walk into the Saint Stevens room. You do not have to be a member to participate in the service.

Please plan on attending the next Council President's Meeting scheduled for: SUNDAY, SEPT 27th, 2:30 - 4:30 at ST. MATTHEW'S, WEISSPORT. Everyone in our congregation are invited.

Sadly, Donna Cassarella resigned from council due to health reasons. Council President asked for a resignation letter. Donna stated she does not want to write a letter.

Next meeting is Ot 5, 2026 @ 6:30 pm.

Gods speed.

Don Wenner Jr.,

Council President

Prayer For The Church

Almighty God,
My parish family is composed of people like me.
I help make it what it is.
It will be friendly, if I am.
Its pews will be filled, if I help fill them.
It will do great work, if I work.
It will make generous gifts to many causes, if I am a generous giver.
It will bring other people into its worship and fellowship, if I invite and bring them.
It will be a parish family of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, and a parish with a noble spirit, if I, who make it what it is, and filled with these same qualities.
Therefore, with the help of God, I will dedicate myself to the task of being all the things that I want my parish family to be.
Bless my journey, Lord God, that I might build the Church through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN

****

October Supply Pastor Schedule

4 – Rev. Melvin Mundie
11 – Rev. Virginia Heimer
18 – Rev. Chip Fairchild
25 Reformation Sunday – Rev. Chip Fairchild

Altar Flower Sponsors

In Loving Memory of David and Ian by the Mundie Family
In Loving Memory of James Phile by the Phile Family
In Loving Memory of Loved Ones by Janet Brady
In Loving Memory of Edward Jacobus by Jan Jacobus

October Bulletin Sponsor: By Clara Barrho

****

Monthly Coffee Hour

The next coffee hour is on **October 4th** (after Service) to celebrate the October Birthdays, sponsored by Jan Jacobus. If you are interested in sponsoring the November coffee hour, please sign up in the St. Stephen's Room; otherwise, it will be cancelled.

****

Prayer Circle

"But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,' declares the LORD." Jeremiah 30:17

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.

****

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.

October Birthdays, Baptisms, and Anniversary 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!

3 – Mary Ann Rooney
7 – Jan Jacobus
23 – Matthew Buchman

3 – Darren Sims
24 – Stephanie Bennett
31 – Clara Rossi

30 – Jennifer and Dave Cipriani

****

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.

****

6-2-6-1 Exploration

Several years ago, Deacon Kat Tigerman attended St. John's with the specific purpose of introducing the 6-2-6-1 concept to the congregation. More recently, we were approached again, this time at the invitation of the local Episcopalian congregations who are seriously contemplating a 6-2-6-1 configuration in our area. On July 23rd, about 50 people attended the first gathering of interested congregations at St. Paul's in Mountaintop. They represented 8 Lutheran/Episcopal congregations within a 15-mile radius of the Mountaintop area. Meetings were also held on August 6th at St. Martin's in the Field/Mt. Top; August 20th at St. Clement/ St. Peter's Episcopal Church; September 10th at Trinity Lutheran, Hazleton; and September 24 at St. James Episcopal Church, Drifton. The purpose of these gatherings is to get to know one another, share our concerns, and discuss matters of faith and mission. St. John's was represented, and we received positive feedback from those in attendance.

The last gathering is set for **St. Andrews Episcopal, Alden Church** on **Thursday, October 8th at 6:00 p.m.** These gatherings were open to all members, so if you couldn't attend any others, there's no reason barring you from attending this last one. But I believe it's important to take this opportunity to learn more and get to know these folks, their churches, and their ministries. Are there things we could be doing together? Can we share resources, primarily staff, and support each other's ministries?

Why are we revisiting this topic? We heard about the program in its early stages. There is a genuine interest amongst these congregations in bringing this idea to fruition. If we don't explore the possibility, we may not have another opportunity presented. Isn't it better to act carefully and wisely so that you don't miss out on opportunities, rather than take risks that could leave you behind? If you want to learn more about this program and what this could mean for St. John's. Pastor is more than happy to meet and discuss this further.

Harvest Home Sunday

In thanksgiving to God for the fruits of the earth and for the promise of the "final harvest" when all the saints will be gathered at the banquet of our Lord, we celebrated "Harvest Home" on September 20th. Our offerings will be given to the Valley Food Pantry as a way of sharing God's bountiful provision with our neighbors in need.

****

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

772 St. Johns Rd., Saint Johns (Drums), PA

SAUSAGE SUPPER

DRIVE-THRU "TAKE OUT" ONLY!

Saturday, October 31, 2026

Pick-up times: 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Dinner - $15.00

Menu: sausage, pancakes, baked potato, green beans, coleslaw, applesauce, and dessert

For tickets:

570-956-6308 Don & Betty
570-582-7193 Jim
570-436-2168 Donna
570-788-2685 Church Office

Leilani Chesonis Concert

St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church

772 St. Johns Rd, Saint Johns, PA

Sunday, November 8, 2026

2 pm to 3 pm

Leilani, a Vocalist and Entertainer, will perform uplifting, lively renditions of Beloved Country Classics, including Dolly, Spirited Traditional, Southern, and Contemporary Gospel and Praise, and Multi-Genre Musical Treasures of the Decades, including Patriotic selections honoring Veterans Day. Something for everyone, of all ages, to enjoy in this energetic, engaging, unique concert!

Please join us! Everyone Invited & Welcome!

Light refreshments following the concert.

A goodwill offering will be taken.

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Mission Support at Work:
Bringing People Together

Ministry across the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod is made possible through mission support, staff and volunteer leadership, ministry teams, congregational participation, and partnerships. This month's newsletter highlights several upcoming opportunities to worship, learn, serve, and connect.

OCT 14

Racial Justice Team Meeting
Wednesday, October 14, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.
Location: Zoom
Prayer, conversation, learning, resource sharing, and action centered on justice, equity, and reconciliation.
Learn more: godslove.org/racial-justice-team

OCT 17

Lutheran World Relief Ingathering
Saturday, October 17, 2026, from 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Location: The Lutheran Center, 2354 Grove Road, Allentown
Accepted items: Baby Care Kits, School Kits, Personal Care Kits, and quilts
Additional collection: Items may be brought to Christ Lutheran Church in Reading on Fridays in October from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. The Berks County collection is scheduled for Tuesday, October 20, at 9:30 a.m.
Learn more: godslove.org/26LWR-ingathering

OCT 17

Handling Conflict in the Congregation
Saturday, October 17, 2026, from 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
Location: Trinity Lutheran Church, 175 S. Third Street, Lehighton
Continuing education for current licensed lay ministers focused on handling conflict within congregations.
Learn more: godslove.org/handling-conflict

OCT 31

The Installation of Bishop Jennifer Dee

Saturday October 31, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.
Location: First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem, 2344 Center St, Bethlehem, PA 18017
Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry will participate in the service, with hors d'oeuvres served following the installation.
Learn more: **godslove.org/bishop-installation**

NOV 9-10

2026 Bishop's Conference – "Navigating Differences in a Polarized World"

November 9–10, 2026
Location: Shawnee Inn and Resort, 100 Shawnee Inn Drive, Shawnee on Delaware
Presenter: Dr. Shirley Mullen
Registration deadline: October 8
A conference for pastors, deacons, and licensed lay ministers helping engage disagreement with courage, compassion, attentive listening, and hope.
Learn more: godslove.org/BC2026

NOV 13-15

Come Away: Young Adult Retreat

November 13–15, 2026
Time: Friday at 6:00 p.m. through Sunday at 11:00 a.m.
Location: Bear Creek Camp, 3601 Bear Creek Boulevard, Wilkes-Barre
Registration deadline: October 15
Organized by Gather Lehigh Valley for young adults ages 18–35. Full and partial scholarships are available.
Learn more: godslove.org/come-away

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2027

MAY 15 2027

Imagine More as a Synod

Saturday May 15, 2027
Location: Union Evangelical Lutheran Church, 5500 Route 873 Schnecksville, PA 18078
An event for youth and adult leaders attending the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering to help NEPA participants meet one another, build relationships, learn what to expect, and prepare through worship, activities, and conversation.
More details to come at godslove.org/imagine-more-as-synod

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**.

4 – Church & Sunday School @ 10 am; Coffee Hour
5 – Scouts @ 6 pm/Luther Hall; Church Council Meeting @ 6:30 pm
7 – Prayer Shawl Ministry @ 9:30 am
8 – 6261 Meeting/St. Andrew's Episcopal in Alden from 6 – 8 pm
11 – Church & Sunday School @ 10 am
12 – Columbus Day; Scouts @ 6 pm/Luther Hall
15 – October Newsletter Deadline
16 – Set up for Mundie Party/Luther Hall
17 – Mundie Party/Luther Hall
18 – Church & Sunday School @ 10 am
19 – Worship & Music Meeting @ 10:30 am; Scouts @ 6 pm
21– Prayer Shawl Ministry @ 9:30 am; Fritzingertown Service @ 2:30 pm; Scouts Committee Meeting @ 7 pm
22 – Pastor Michele's Office Hours 10 am to 12 pm
25 – Church & SS @ 10 am; Reformation Sunday
26 – Scouts @ 6 pm/Luther Hall
29 – Pastor Michele's Office Hours 10 am - 12 pm; S.E.R.V.E. Meeting @ 6:30 pm
31 – Sausage Supper Take-out 1 to 5 pick-up; Halloween

Annual Fall Festival – The Historic Brainerd Church – October 4th, 10 am to 4 pm. Craft vendors, food, attic treasures, tricky trans, music, Corvette show. Blessing of pets from 12 pm to 2 pm.

Hoagie Sale – St. John's UCC – Order by October 14th. Call Gale at 570-788-5606. Pick-up on October 21st, 9:30 am to 10:30 am

Apple Fest – Conyngham Lutheran – October 17th, 8 am to 3 pm. Tricky trays, craft vendors, flea market, and bake sale. The kitchen will have breakfast & lunch.

Edgar Allan Poe – The Historic Brainerd Church – October 18th, 2 pm live performance. Painting class at 1 pm.

Gift & Basket Raffle – St. John's UCC – October 24th, doors open at 12 pm with drawing at 2 pm. All new items and food will be available.

Painting Classes – The Historic Brainerd Church – October 23rd & 24th, 8 pm to 10 pm.

Party Time Crystal Sale – Conyngham UCC – Special orders for large quantities – bridal showers, baby showers, weddings, etc. Call Barb at 570-788-3246 for more information.

OCTOBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4 Church & SS 10 am Coffee Hour	5 Scouts @ 6 pm Church Council Meeting @ 6:30 pm	6	7 Prayer Shawl @ 9:30 am	8 6261 Meeting – St. Andrew's Episcopal/Alden 6-8 pm	9	10
11 Church & SS 10 am	12 Columbus Day Scouts @ 6 pm	13	14	15 Nov. Newsletter Deadline	16 Mundie Party Set-up	17 Mundie Party (Judy Mundie)
18 Church & SS 10 am	19 Worship & Music Meeting @ 10:30 am Scouts @ 6 pm	20	21 Prayer Shawl Ministry @ 9:30 am Fritzingtown Service @ 2:30 pm Scouts Committee Meetings @ 7 pm	22 Pr. Michele's Office hours 10 am -12 pm	23	24
25 Reformation Sunday Church & SS 10 am	26 Scouts @ 6 pm	27	28	29 Pr. Michele's Office hours 10 am -12 pm S.E.R.V.E. Meeting @ 6:30 pm	30	31 Sausage Supper 1 to 5 pm pick-up Halloween