



Dear Friends,

Ten-word answers. What's a ten-word answer? The simplistic answers to complex questions reduced to 10 words or less. It seems like all you must do if you're looking for a brief, albeit inadequate answer to a complex question is go online or turn on the TV. You'll find them there. Ten-word answers will kill you every time. They are the tip of the sword. And still, we're all looking for them. They give us the illusion of understanding and they release us from the obligation of learning through study and discussion, which is much harder work. Who has the energy these days to think for themselves?

It's Lent. A season for contemplation. So as a congregation, let's contemplate what matters to Jesus. Give me your ten words on the Great Commission and on loving God and loving our neighbor. Give me your ten words, then, give me your next ten words of how you will get it done. Clarity of purpose is the only way forward. Many of our members seem to be clear about our purpose. They've participated in Small Groups, where they have studied scripture, prayed, and have had holy conversations. They've nurtured a group of volunteers totaling over 100 people (over 25% of our voting membership). They've found a way to be a united congregation at St. John's. I thank God for their openness to what God is up to **right here and right now**.

Even so, I sense that I am the pastor of two congregations. Two congregations you say? Yes. One, struggling at times, yet excited to be reaching for the stars and a future filled with hope. That vision is born out of the magnificent opportunities to grow into maturity by being an ongoing intergenerational learning community. I also sense I serve a congregation that seems to be unable to move beyond the days of perceived glory. To offer a little relief, know that we are not alone; my ministerial colleagues have expressed that they too encounter the same challenges.

Please accept for your consideration the opportunity to remember St. John's mostly for its best moments without forgetting its less than glowing moments. In doing so, you will be set free to experience God in this place **right here and right now**. You will also be setting free and opening the doors for those who regretfully remember a hurtful and cold place. How? You are already doing this **right here and right now** through your intentional transformation of St. John's into a welcoming community where "the least of these among us" can find acceptance and opportunities for discipleship.

Which congregation do you see yourself a member? Friends, can we be a singular, united congregation clear about our purpose which is connected always and only to God's mission to reconcile all people to God-self? Give me your ten words, and then, give me your next ten words of how we will get it done **together**.

Be blessed!

Pastor Bob



WHAT'S INSIDE?

Lent & Holy Week

PAGE 2

Bread Bowl & Bible

PAGE 3

Coffee & Conversation

PAGE 5

Welcoming All Reflections

PAGE 6-7

Unfailing Light

LENTEN MIDWEEK WORSHIP

WEDNESDAYS IN MARCH @ 7:00 PM

Together, in this season of Lent, let us focus on growing in Christ through living out our Baptismal Promises. Let us **Live** among God's faithful people, **Hear** the word of God, **Share** the Lord's supper, **Proclaim** the good news of God in Christ, **Serve** all people as Christ taught us, and **Strive** for justice and peace in all the earth. These Baptismal Promises are just what our 5 Midweek Lenten worship service messages will focus on. Each Wednesday in March you're invited to participate in a prayer service of 'Unfailing Light', a much different experience than our typical Sunday worship. Each week will feature a message given by a traveler from the Wellspring Karitas trip to Mexico. Attend in-person or watch live on YouTube - St. John's ELC Boyertown!



HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday

Sunday, April 2 @ 9:30 am

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 6 @ 7:00 pm

Good Friday

Friday, April 7 @ 7:00 pm

Easter Day

Sunday, April 9 @ 9:30 am

FIRST COMMUNION TRAINING

- As a parent, do you believe your child is capable of understanding why we receive Holy Communion?
- Are you interested in learning more about why we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion?
- Would you like a refresher on the principles behind Holy Communion?

If you answered yes to any of these questions - even if you've been receiving the sacrament of Holy Communion for many years - this class is for you!

On **Sunday, April 2 immediately following worship** in the sanctuary, join Pastor Bob for instruction on the lessons of Holy Communion. First Communion will be celebrated by the participants of this class on **Maundy Thursday, April 6 at 7:00 pm**.

If you are interested in participating, please contact the church office to register at 610-369-1024 or parishadmin@stjohnsboyertown.org.



Sunday, March 12 & 19

3:00-6:00 pm

**HOSTED BY ST. JOHN'S IN THE
SANCTUARY & FELLOWSHIP HALL**

A meal of soup and bread provided
by congregations of Oley Cluster.

*Immerse yourself in the ancient
religious practices of lament and hope.*

BREAD BOWL & BIBLE

'HOPE – THROUGH LAMENT TO RESILIENCE'

March 12

President Rev. Dr. Guy Erwin of United Lutheran Seminary – with a Native American perspective

March 19

Rabbi Brian Michelson of Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom with a Jewish perspective

THE SANHEDRIN, JESUS, AND THE ROMANS

By: Cathy Krause

Throughout Lent we hear about how the men who comprised the Sanhedrin tried to catch Jesus in a twist of truth to arrest him. Only when Judas Iscariot contacted them were they able to accomplish the deed. Understanding the purposes of the Sanhedrin will give us the reason why the Romans crucified Jesus.

The Sanhedrin was a civil council while Palestine was under Roman rule. The body consisted of 71 sages who met daily except for the Sabbath and festivals or festival eves. Only chief priests, elders and scribes were eligible to be part of the 71. Each man was required to possess scholarship, modesty, strength, courage and popularity. Nicodemus was part of the Sanhedrin – see John 3:1-2, John 7:45-52, and John 19:38-39. Also a member of the Sanhedrin was Joseph of Arimathea – see Luke 23:50-53 and John 19:38.

The three main responsibilities of the Sanhedrin were religious, political and judicial. The high priest was appointed under the auspices of the political function of the body. They could also appoint a king (although not a Roman king), declare war and expand the territory of Jerusalem and the Temple. The religious function was a legislative one. They supervised certain rituals, such as that for Yom Kippur. The judicial function included trying a high priest, a false prophet, a rebellious elder or tribe. See Matthew 26:57-68. It is all three of these responsibilities that Jesus thwarts. Examples are when Jesus healed on the Sabbath (religious), forgiving the woman caught in adultery (judicial), and calling himself the Son of Man (political) as well as other examples.

However, under Roman rule, the Sanhedrin could pass a death sentence but could not execute a person. That was the privilege of the Roman government, which also had veto power. See Matthew 27:1-2, 24; Luke 23:1-25; and John 18:2-14, 19-24 and 18:29 – 19:16. Roman jurisdiction over Judea is why Jesus was passed between Pilate and Herod before he was sent to Golgotha. In this case, despite using Barabbas as a substitute, Rome did not exercise its veto power. See Luke 23:1-25. Consequently, it was the Roman soldiers, not the Jewish leaders, who actually nailed Jesus to the cross.

Sources consulted:

Bible Study. 6 February 2023. <biblestudy.org/beginner/new-testament-groups/Sanhedrin.html>

Britanica. 6 February 2023. <britannica.com/sanhedrin.html>

The New Bible Dictionary. Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1974. 1142-1144.

Olson, Marc. The World Jesus Knew. Minneapolis: The Sparkhouse Family. 2017. 42-43.

Schoenberg, Shira. The Jewish Virtual Library. 6 February 2023. <jewishvirtuallibrary.org/thesanhedrin.>

**TO RECEIVE A PRINTED COPY OF THE
ANNUAL CONGREGATION REPORT
PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE.
610.369.1024**

WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS

Our 'Inclement Weather' policy at St John's states that when the Boyertown Area School District is closed, we follow their lead and cancel all meetings and events.

For weather related closings, check Channel 69 News or www.wfmz.com.



BAPTISMAL PROMISE

GIFTS OF DISCIPLESHIP



LIVE

among God's faithful people



HEAR

the word of God



SHARE

in the Lord's Supper



PROCLAIM

the good news of God in Christ
through word and deed



SERVE

all people, following the example of Jesus



STRIVE

for justice and peace in all the earth



FOOD DRIVE



for kids in need in the Boyertown and surrounding school districts to receive weekend meals

Refer to approved shopping list

Feb 19 - March 6

Bring your donation to worship or to the Parish House lobby during office hours (please call ahead)

Pre-Approved Shopping List

Item	Product Example
Tuna To-Go	StarKist Lunch To Go
Compleats Meals	Hormel
Mac & Cheese	Chef Boyardee Mac & Cheese (7.5 oz. or 14.25 oz.)
Spaghettios/Ravioli	Chef Boyardee Beef Ravioli (7.5 oz. or 14.25 oz.)
Chicken & Beef Soups	Campbells To Go Chicken & Beef Noodle Soups
Fruit Cups/Applesauce	Dole Fruit in Juice & Motts Applesauce
Granola Bars/Fruit Bars	Quaker Chewy Bars (chocolate), NutriGrain Bars
Pop-Tarts	Kellogg's Pop-Tarts
Cereal (single serve)	Kellogg's, General Mills
Non-refrigerated Milk	Hershey's, Horizon, Giant (8 oz. boxes with straw)
Variety Snack Packs	Gold Fish, Cheez-Its, Animal Cookies, Crackers
Fruit Snacks	Welch's Kellogg's
Water	Store Brand Bottled Water (12 packs/16 oz. bottles)
Juice Boxes	CapriSun, HiC, Juicy Juice, Apple & Eve
Pudding	Jello Pudding Snacks

SWBP does not endorse any of the items or brands listed. All items should be sized for a single individual and ready to eat with no cooking required. Items should be easy to open without a can opener. Products containing peanuts will not be distributed.

visit **operation143.org** to volunteer & contribute

A PROGRAM OF OPERATION 143

238 High Street, Suite 103 & 104, Pottstown, PA 19464

Contact: Lisa Heverly 484.300.4937 | lisah@operationbp.org



Coffee & Conversation

hosted by Joyful Sisters of Service

Beginning March 12 @ 9:00am
(happening the 2nd Sunday of each month)

Lower Level

Before and after Sunday worship

A time to enjoy holy conversation
with each other!



Eagle Messenger Article Deadlines

Monday, March 13 for April issue

Monday, April 10 for May issue

Monday, May 8 for June issue

WELCOMING ALL RETREAT AND LUNCH & LEARN

By: Cathy Krause

It was a meeting of minds and hearts: members of Congregation Council, members of the Worship team and members of Welcoming All met with Jaime and Karen Fivecoat to further our journey into truly welcoming all people into St. John's. This was an overnight retreat held February 17-18, 2023.

Friday evening's discussion centered around privilege, marginalization, and the many forms they take. We learned that polarity informs our interactions, how "the other" is perceived – good, bad; apple, orange; positive, negative; black, white; summer, winter; etc. Furthermore, our curiosity is not to put at risk someone else's privacy.

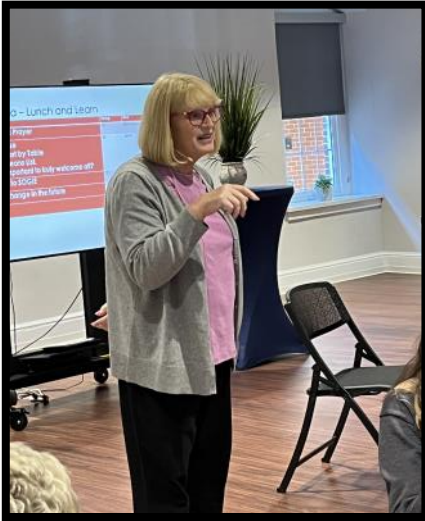
Karen shared her touching story of her personal journey with Jaime's transformation. Jaime explained many concepts to the group so that we grasped the nuances of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. The last exercise involved looking at various bulletins from Trinity Lutheran in Greenville, SC to identify wording that could be adopted at St. John's.

Saturday morning the group worked to craft a welcoming statement. With much discussion and prayer, the group developed a short and a long version for consideration. (This statement will go before Council for final approval once it is further massaged by the Welcoming All team.) The second task involved developing a timeline for our next steps.

On Sunday, the discussion continued as the Welcoming All team hosted a Lunch & Learn with Jaime facilitating. This part of the weekend was open to anyone wanting to learn more about what it means 'to be reconciled in Christ'. More than 40 people were in attendance, learning from Jaime's experience working as an advocate for the LGBTQ+ community. Discussion was structured around the questions, "What does All mean and why is it important?", "What changes might we see in the future?" and concluded with time for Q & A.

This was a truly uplifting time, with heartfelt discussion, prayer and much work. The group asks for your prayerful support as St. John's continues on this path. The goal is to be an inclusive congregation in a very homogeneous community. This is what Jesus did – he welcomed all: the sinners, the downtrodden, people of other cultures, those whose illnesses made them pariahs, the lost, etc. – how can we do otherwise?





Thank you to the
41 volunteers
that submitted
writings for our
Lenten Devotional.



Devotionals
are available
to download
on our
website!



PRESCHOOL NEWS

By: Kelly Ochranek, Preschool Staff

I can't believe it is already March! While it continues to be cold outside, by the end of the month we will begin to shift our focus towards spring. However, there is much to learn first! We start the month by celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday and Read Across America Week. As a preschool teacher, I love to use this time to really show our students how much fun reading is! There is no shortage of silly stories with wonderful lessons to be learned. Many of us use this time to invite guest readers into our classrooms. The children are so excited when their special someone arrives unannounced to share a story. This was always one of my favorite things to do when my kids were young, and I now love sharing this experience with our families as a teacher. We also have many fun theme days such as crazy sock day, hat day, green eggs and ham, and my favorite...dress like your favorite book character! The children have such creative costumes.

After Dr. Seuss's celebration is over, we move on to St. Patrick's Day. There are always some leprechauns on the loose, and much fun is had. St. Patrick's Day turns to rainbows and springtime. Before the month is over, we will be celebrating Easter in the classroom as spring break begins the first week of April.

It is hard to believe we are approaching the last leg of the school year! Every day spent with the children is a blessing and the school years always go by in a blink. Wishing everyone a happy and healthy springtime!

CONNECT

support for parents of special needs children

Wednesday, March 8 & 22
9:30-11:00 am
St. John's Lower Level

Register on our website

GUIDED DISCUSSIONS AND
TAKE-HOME DEVOTIONS

COFFEE
SUPPORT
ENCOURAGEMENT
LOVE



FACILITATED BY ROSALIE ELLIS
WRITER & INTEGRATIVE LIFE COACH

2023-24 PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION NOW OPEN



ST. JOHN'S PRESCHOOL
Growing and Learning in God's Love

DOWNLOAD AN
APPLICATION
ON OUR WEBSITE
stjohnsboyertown.org



WORSHIP MINISTRY

Date	Day	Time	Liturgical Day	Special Service	Lector	Media	Prayers	Sound	Ushers	Video
3/1/2023	Wednesday	7:00 PM		Midweek Lenten	Ashley Gheer, John Gheer	Shannon Omlor	NA	Chase Sennott	Mary Kay & Donnie Heimbach	Jason Eidle
3/5/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Lent 2		Tom Engle	Olivia Alderfer	Molly Byrne	Ashley Gheer	Joanne Dykie, Scott Scheiry, Susan & Andy Varzally	Scott Scheiry
3/8/2023	Wednesday	7:00 PM		Midweek Lenten	Jen Friz	Shannon Omlor	NA	Chase Sennott	Bev & Joe Blake	Abbe Grofe
3/12/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Lent 3	Girl Scout Sunday	Girl Scouts	Olivia Alderfer	Jean Machamer	Brianna Rohrbach	Martha Bentley, Barbara Houpp, Girl Scouts	Shannon Omlor
3/15/2023	Wednesday	7:00 PM		Midweek Lenten	Linda Stevenson	Shannon Omlor	NA	Ashley Gheer	Sandy & Terry Wade	Jason Eidle
3/19/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Lent 4		Sarah Eidle	Shannon Omlor	Susan & Andy Varzally	Myles Omlor	Becky & Barry Erb, Bunny & Ron Riffle	Scott Scheiry
3/22/2023	Wednesday	7:00 PM		Midweek Lenten	Camryn Friz	Sarah Eidle	NA	Brianna Rohrbach	Ashley Gheer, John Gheer	Abbe Grofe
3/26/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Lent 5		Nancy Graver	Olivia Alderfer	Lauren Frey	Myles Omlor	Charles Haddad, Phil Haddad, Carol Sematis, Terry Wadsworth	Sarah Eidle
3/29/2023	Wednesday	7:00 PM		Midweek Lenten	Scott Scheiry	Shannon Omlor	NA	Chase Sennott	Jay Herbert, Scott Scheiry	Jason Eidle
4/2/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Passion/Palm Sunday	First Communion Training 10:45	TBD	Shannon Omlor	Martha Bentley	Ashley Gheer	Bently Rick, RJ Rick, Mike Gilbert, Ed Schaeffer	Scott Scheiry
4/6/2023	Thursday	7:00 PM	Maundy Thursday	First Communion	Ben Rohrbach	Sarah Eidle	Bonnie Moatz	Brianna Rohrbach	Martha Bentley, Ros Moatz	Shannon Omlor
4/7/2023	Friday	7:00 PM	Good Friday		Cathy Krause	Olivia Alderfer	Tom Engle	Myles Omlor	Bev & Joe Blake	Shannon Omlor
4/9/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Easter Day		Jean Machamer	Shannon Omlor	Friz Family	Ashley Gheer	Becky & Barry Erb, Mary Kay & Donnie Heimbach, Bunny & Ron Riffle	Abbe Grofe
4/16/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Second Sunday of Easter		Karen Pollock	Olivia Alderfer	Sue Grofe	Brianna Rohrbach	Joanne Dykie, Scott Scheiry, Carol Sematis, Terry Wadsworth	Scott Scheiry
4/23/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Third Sunday of Easter	Preschool Family Service	Missy Endy, Alishia Toub	Sarah Eidle	Rachel Murphy, Hannah Scheiry	Myles Omlor	Preschool Staff	Shannon Omlor
4/30/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Fourth Sunday of Easter		Becky Scheiry	Shannon Omlor	Karen Pollock	Ashley Gheer	Lauren Frey, Jay Herbert, Jerry Krause, Bill Rohrbach	Sarah Eidle

MARCH 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9:30a Preschool Chapel Time 12:45p Preschool Chapel Time 7:00p Midweek Service	2 Operation 143 Delivery 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 8:00p Worship Broadcast	3 Preschool Gym Class 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study	4 4:30p Come to the Table
5 Lent 2 9:30a Sunday School 9:30a Worship Celebration	6 Operation 143 Food Drive Ends 6:30p Girl Scouts 7:00p Joint Parking Lot Committee	7	8 9:30a Connect 7:00p Midweek Service	9 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 8:00p Worship Broadcast	10 Preschool Music Class 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study	11 4:30p Come to the Table
12 Lent 3 9:00a Coffee & Conversation 9:30a Sunday School 9:30a Worship Celebration 'Girl Scout Sunday' 3:00p Bread Bowl & Bible	13 5:00p Newsletter Submission 6:30p Girl Scouts 7:30p Optimist Club of Boyertown	14	15 9:30a Pottstown Soup Kitchen 7:00p Midweek Service 7:30p Congregation Council	16 Operation 143 Delivery 9:30a Community Leaders 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 8:00p Worship Broadcast	17 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study	18 8:30a Altar Guild 4:30p Come to the Table
19 Lent 4 9:30a Sunday School 9:30a Worship Celebration 3:00p Bread Bowl & Bible	20 6:30p Girl Scouts	21 6:30p Finance Team	22 9:30a Connect 11:30a Preschool Staff 7:00p Midweek Service	23 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service w/Holy Communion 6:00p Admin Staff CEU 8:00p Worship Broadcast	24 Preschool Music Class 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study	25 8:30a PCP Easter Correspondence 4:30p Come to the Table
26 Lent 5 9:30a Sunday School 9:30a Worship Celebration	27 6:30p Girl Scouts 7:30p Optimist Club of Boyertown	28 1:00p Joyful Sisters of Service 6:30p Building a Better Boyertown	29 7:00p Midweek Service	30 Operation 143 Delivery 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 8:00p Worship Broadcast	31 Preschool Gym Class 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study	

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Sam Kulp	2 Jerry Krause Robert Stoudt	3 Perry Guinther	4
5	6 Linda Rohrbach	7 Janet Erb Jeffrey Graham Luka McAuley Robert Strunk	8 David Richard	9	10 Rob Brile George Hill	11
12 Myles Omlor	13 Barbara Houp	14 Philip Haddad Gracie Martin Chris Miller	15 Molly Byrne	16 Ralph McElwee	17 Jessica Brunner	18
19 Walter Breitreutz Sarah White	20 Melanie Conrad Rodney Henry	21	22 Kenneth Billger Richard Brown, Sr. Ronald Houck	23 Vicky Henry William Herb	24	25 Douglas Stout
26 David Pollock, Jr. Donald Weil I	27	28 Brian Christman Paula Kriebel	29 Karen Pollock	30 Joseph Cremi Ronald Davidheiser	31 Andrew Huber	



EAGLE MESSENGER

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | 45 North Reading Avenue | Boyertown, PA 19512
610-369-1024 | 610-369-1463 Fax | www.stjohnsboyertown.org

Non-profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Boyertown, PA
Permit No. 10020

We believe God's purpose for the people of
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is to develop
joy-filled children of God who love the Lord
and share God's Word.

We do this by:

- Maintaining a trusting and welcoming environment.
- Praying daily.
- Reading scripture regularly.
- Sharing our faith through action-based service.
- Encouraging holy conversations.
- Feeding our faith with music.

With a focus on:

- Activities that build relationships.
- Worship that is relevant.
- Meeting the needs of the vulnerable in our community.

Return Service Request - Dated Material
Mailed February 27, 2023

WORSHIP

SUNDAY 9:30 AM

IN-PERSON & LIVESTREAM ON YOUTUBE

Office Hours (open by appointment)

Monday-Thursday 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Friday 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

Pastor Bob Machamer

Kay Christman, Finance Team

Amanda Ehst, Worship Coordinator

Sue Grofe, Finance Team

Donnie Heimbach, Property

Bonnie Moatz, Finance Team

Shannon Omlor, Communications Coordinator

Linda Rohrbach, Treasurer

Becky Scheiry, Parish Administrator

Amy Willson, Preschool Director

bmachamer@stjohnsboyertown.org

financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org

aehst@stjohnsboyertown.org

financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org

financialsecretary@stjohnsboyertown.org

somlor@stjohnsboyertown.org

treasurer@stjohnsboyertown.org

parishadmin@stjohnsboyertown.org

awillson@stjohnsboyertown.org



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.