

Published by St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Boyertown, PA

**NOVEMBER 2023** 

**AUTHENTIC WORSHIP** 

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SACRIFICIAL SERVICE TRADICAL GENEROSITY

Jesus spoke challenging words to those who would follow him. "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (Mark 8:34).

The cross had only one purpose in the ancient world - to kill. For only one reason would people carry a cross: they were on their way to death. When Jesus invited people to take up their cross Jesus was inviting them to die. Yet the path of following Jesus and taking up the cross, does not end with death for it is impossible to speak of the cross without speaking of the resurrection. To follow Jesus means following beyond the denial of self, beyond the cross, beyond a death with limits, to a life that waits on the other side of the empty tomb. Holding on to life results in death; surrendering one's life by following Jesus leads to life.

In the past decade, there have been numerous authors from all denominations suggesting that the church in North America needs to die so that it can be reborn. This bold suggestion takes seriously the centrality of the resurrection for the Christian faith. The church must understand that its death is possible, in fact it is inevitable. Only then can the church experience the amazing power of the resurrection. Wise congregations develop habits that help them to integrate denying self, cross-bearing, and following Jesus into their identity. These congregations understand that dying to find new life is not a one-time event; rather, it is a way of being the church.

Our Bishop, Rev. Christopher deForest, has been inviting us to focus on three vital signs - Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and From Death to Life. These three vital signs, in my opinion, are critical to our work here at St. John's. For the moment, given that this month is a time when we are to pause and give thanks with particular focus, I will offer a few thoughts on the third vital sign - From Death to Life. Thanks be to God for life beyond death - for the resurrection!

Wonder, gratitude, and humility are among the traits that grow in a congregation that has been raised from death to life. These traits renew every aspect of congregational life. Worship is changed as wonder and gratitude fill the church in its singing, praying, and listening for God's voice. Decision making is changed as humility embeds itself in the heart of the congregation. The congregation that has died and has been raised to life again is changed; it is no longer the same. Wise congregations that understand the necessity of teaching and living "death to life" thinking tend to be fearless. Most dying congregations are far too afraid to take risks. Their leaders may be hesitant to change the style of worship for fear of upsetting people. They may worry that by developing programs to reach people in need, they will be regarded as being too political. Clergy may choose not to speak clearly on issues, believing that forthright speech will alienate members. Such fears hold congregations trapped and unable to move outside safe paths. Playing it safe leads, as Jesus noted, to losing one's life. On the other hand, a congregation that has died and has been raised to life knows that there is something worse than dying and that is "not living". God does not call congregations to play it safe, but rather to take risks. There is more at stake than survival.

Responding to God's call to serve a broken world, living out the love of God "for the least of these," and speaking prophetic truth are things that trump the desire to survive. Congregations that understand their life is not their own, that know God can and will bring new life to dead churches, are congregations prepared to take risks that threaten their life.

Healthy and vibrant congregations are led by people who recognize that their obligation is not to maintain an institution, but to follow the path of responding to God's call to go beyond death and into a resurrected life.

Be blessed! Pastor Bob

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## ADVENT, A NEW CHURCH YEAR

from Sundays and Seasons

A new church year begins on Sunday, December 3 with the season of Advent: a time for waiting and preparing to remember the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ as well as to wait for his coming again.

This midweek Advent series invites us to pause, to prepare, and to ponder. First is the call to spiritual introspection, prayerful waiting, and pausing from the constant busyness of our normal lives. This is juxtaposed with Advent's clarion call to wake up, to rise in action, to prepare the way of the Lord, and to join in God's continued creative work of reconciliation, seeking justice, and peacemaking. Furthermore, we ponder the beginning and end of all things. We prepare for a baby, marveling that the creator of the universe was formed in a woman's womb, full of hope and potential, fragility, and vulnerability. We anticipate Christ's imminent arrival here among us, as well as his arrival still to come - here pain, sorrow, injustice, warfare, and death itself are no more - in a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness is at home.

We pause, we prepare, and we ponder.





**DIRECTOR'S BIG BAND CHRISTMAS CONCERT** 

December 9 | 7:00 pm | Sanctuary

**CHRISTMAS DAY MEAL** 

December 25 | 11:00 am | Fellowship Hall

**LESSONS AND CAROLS** 

December 31 | 9:30 am | Sanctuary







#### WORSHIP THIS FALL

### Sunday, November 5 @ 9:30 am All Saints Sunday

We celebrate all of God's Saints, those living as well as those who have died in Christ. We will name aloud in our prayers that day all members who have died during the past year.

#### Sunday, November 19 @ 9:30 am Praise & Thanksgiving

Boyertown High School Show Choir joins us for worship & coffee. 11:00 am Coffee in Lower Level 11:30 am - 1:00 pm Community Thanksgiving Meal in Fellowship Hall (reservation needed)

#### Sunday, November 26 @ 9:30 am Christ the King

We gather this day to celebrate the reign of Christ and his victory over death, yet we await the consummation of all things yet to come.

Acknowledging Christ as our merciful ruler, we go forth that his reign may be known in our loving words and deeds.



#### NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED ON SEPTEMBER 24

A warm welcome is extended to the Snyder family - Jason, Stephanie and Kennedy. Stephanie grew up in Boyertown and has fond memories of attending St. John's with her family. She was baptized, attended preschool, and was confirmed at St. John's. Jason is also from the Boyertown area. Stephanie and Jason dated while they were at Boyertown High School. After graduation, Stephanie worked in the family business, Herb Auto Tag while Jason attended Indiana University of Pennsylvania to obtain a degree in finance.

After their wedding, the couple lived in North Carolina for a year and in Pittsburgh for 2 years before returning to their roots in this area. Since Kennedy Jane's birth, Stephanie has enjoyed her days as a stay-at-home mom.

The Snyders annually travel to the Outer Banks with other family members for vacation, but a trip to Ireland is a dream of theirs. They enjoy life by cheering on all the Philadelphia sports teams. Jason likes to run and golf, while Stephanie journals.

The Snyders are looking forward to participating in our next small group experience. As Kennedy grows older, they hope to be involved in more of our church ministries.





We also want to welcome the Gonzalez family to St. John's. William was born and raised in Puerto Rico. He moved to the US, first to Reading, PA and then Birdsboro, and finally to Boyertown. His wife Nichole was living in Douglassville. Fun fact - William and Nicole met at Redner's Market in Douglassville! They have two children, Chasity Bella and Valentino.

William is a CNC machinist for General Electric in Allentown. Nichole works at East Penn manufacturing company.

The Gonzalez family enjoys traveling to Maine to visit family and visiting the beaches of Virginia, South Carolina, and Florida.

William realizes the need for Christ in his life and hopes to grow deeper in the knowledge of his Savior by attending St. John's.

We welcome Nathan Wanish as a member of St. John's also,

joining us after being baptized back in May. You may remember reading about him in our July newsletter. Eager to serve, Nathan has joined various St. John's ministries already. Welcome Nathan!

We are blessed to have all of these siblings in Christ become a part of our community of believers!





#### CELEBRATING THANKSGIVING AS CHRISTIANS

By Sharon Ely Pearson

buildfaith.org/thanksgiving-activities-for-church-and-families/

In the United States and Canada, Thanksgiving is celebrated by people of every religion and background - that is part of what makes it such a wonderful holiday! For those looking to integrate some Christian traditions into Thanksgiving, here are several suggestions to use at church and/or home.

#### 1. Act it Out

Read the story of the ten lepers (Luke 17:11-19). Remind your children that Jesus was pleased with the one man who returned to give thanks for being healed. Provide rags for bandages and let your children play the roles of the lepers and Jesus.

#### 2. Make Some Noise

Look up the story of the Israelites' celebration after the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt (Nehemiah 12:27-46). Talk about the instruments they used and the two great choirs that marched atop the walls to the temple; a joyous, active "thanksgiving" that could be heard "far away" (Nehemiah 12:43). Put together a home grown band using real or handmade instruments. Practice joyful praise songs and march around the "walls".

#### 3. Read a Book

Share a book that expresses gratitude and thankfulness. For example, consider Corrie ten Boom's book *The Hiding Place* teaches a great lesson in thankfulness. Share Corrie's story, pointing out her struggle to be "thankful in all things." She even thanked God for fleas in her barracks. She later learned that the fleas kept the guards away and allowed Corrie and others to study the Bible undisturbed.

#### 4. Create a Chain Reaction

Make a "God is Good" chain. Gather scissors, stickers, pencils, crayons, glue and construction paper. Cut the paper in strips and ask your kids to think about the many ways God is good. Have them write or draw these attributes on the strips, then connect them to form a chain and hang it in a place where it will remind your family of God's goodness.

#### 5. Make a Blessing Basket

Place a pretty fall basket containing a pencil and pad of paper in an easy-to-reach location. Throughout the month, encourage family members to jot down ways God has blessed them. Younger children can draw or cut out pictures from magazines. Read these together and give God thanks each day or set aside some time on Thanksgiving Day.

#### 6. Trim a Tree of Thanks

Draw and cut out a large paper tree with lots of loose leaves in autumn colors. Mount the tree in a prominent place and put the leaves nearby in a box with glue and markers. Ask your family to write things they are thankful for on the leaves, filling the tree by the end of the month. Consider the following question: "If I could keep only the gifts I've thanked God for today, what would I have?" Ask younger children: "What do you want to thank God for today?" Encourage your family to add to the tree daily.

#### 7. Create Scripture-themed Place Cards

Have the children make a place card for each place setting on the Thanksgiving table. On one side, write names of guests and family; on the other, type a Scripture verse about being thankful. Let each person read a verse before the blessing.

#### 8. Encourage Sharing

Place a paper leaf at each place with an "assignment" written on it. Each person adds to the festivities by completing their assignment. Assignments might include:

- Read Psalm 100
- Share a Thanksgiving memory (use this on several paper leaves)
- Sing a Thanksgiving song (good for preschoolers)
- Lead the group in a praise chorus (have copies of the lyrics available)
- Say the blessing for our meal

#### 9. Let your Lights Shine

Give an unlit votive candle to each person. Begin by lighting your own candle and thanking God for specific blessings. Then, continue the process around the table until all the candles are lit, making sure to keep the flames away from small children. Lead your family in a candlelight service of thanksgiving.



#### stjohnsboyertown.org

On St. John's website, you can:

- Stay up to date with announcements
- **Register** for events
- Sign up to receive our emails
- Link to worship services and messages
- Access our church calendar
- Give online





Check it out



Do you like to bake?

We could use your talents for our Thanksgiving Meal!

Donations of homemade baked goods can be dropped off in Fellowship Hall Saturday, November 18 between 3:00 - 6:00pm

Please let us know what you will bring by signing up at worship.



Every gathering for worship has elements of thanksgiving. When we are nourished with God's bounty in holy communion, when we partake of Jesus' word that gives life to the world, and even when two or three of us simply join our hearts in prayer to make our requests known to God, we do so "with thanksgiving." Let us give thanks to God, who is good and whose mercy endures forever.





## MINISTRY TO FAMILIES WITH PRESCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN - MEET THE TEACHERS!

Last month, we introduced our new Director of Preschool Ministry, Renae Walther.

Let's get to know the rest of the staff!

ST. JOHN'S PRESCHOOL

Growing and Learning in God's Love



Bethany Calderwood grew up in Pennsburg, Pennsylvania. She taught in Massachusetts and the Philadelphia and Upper Perkiomen school districts. Her teaching experience includes students from PreK through 5th grade. Bethany has two children, ages 4 and 8, and loves Scrabble, swimming, reading, gardening, and teaching!



Amy Daub and her family have been St. John's church members for 24 years. Most of her teaching experience is with special needs children. She has four sons aged 24, 21, 19, and 13. She enjoys photography, reading, baking, hiking, watching her kids' sports, and teaching!



Martha Endy is a lifelong St. John's church member and has worked at the preschool for over 40 years. She enjoys reading, crafting, swimming, and KU football in her spare time. She also loves spending time with her two sons, Tom and Dan, and her three granddaughters and greatgrandson.



Melissa Geary grew up in Oley, Pennsylvania. She's a lifelong member of St. John's, even attending preschool herself! She has a bachelor's degree in psychology, focusing on developmental psychology, with a special interest in infant language acquisition. She's a licensed scuba diver and loves to kayak, swim, hike, and spend time outdoors.



Cathy Krause is starting her second full year with the preschool. She's been an assistant teacher with the Playgroup for 1 1/2 years. She has two adult children in their 30s: Tim and Stephanie. She's taught Sunday School at St. John's for about 20 years and hosts the class for a mixed-age group of children.



Melissa Schaeffer has ten years of experience working as a paraprofessional in elementary schools. She also worked with Kindergarten through 6th grade students in various roles, including learning support, one-to-one, and small-group instruction. Melissa has one daughter and a grandchild who will soon turn three. She enjoys running, biking, working in her flower gardens, baking, and spending time with family.



Dawn Yanonis has worked in education for over 20 years. Dawn has a 35 year-old son who's a police officer and a 13 year-old stepdaughter. She enjoys music, singing, cooking, gardening, and walking with her dog, Jasmine.



In October, our preschool students had the opportunity to see some fire trucks up close. As part of Fire Prevention Month, students were taught some fire safety basics and given a tour of the fire trucks and equipment that fire fighters use to help keep us safe.





# A SALUTE TO OUR VETERANS



Sponsored by the Boyertown Rotary Club Hosted by St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church 45 North Reading Avenue, Boyertown, PA

> THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2023 6:30 PM





#### Eagle Messenger Article Deadlines

- NOTE EARLIER DATES BECAUSE OF HOLIDAYS -

Monday, November 6 for December issue Monday, December 4 for January issue Monday, January 8 for February issue

#### ANNUAL MEETING

## Sunday, December 10 immediately following 9:30 am worship

In accordance with Article C.10.01.01 of our constitution, the Annual Congregation Meeting will be held on Sunday, December 10, 2023, immediately following 9:30 am worship. The agenda consists of the following items:

- accept the reports of the church
- present and approve the budget (Ministry Action Plan) for the next calendar year
- elect members to the Congregation Council



Thank you to the volunteers that helped harvest potatoes on October 1. Potatoes will go to local food banks through IHart Harvest - The Potato Project!

#### 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 <a href="https://www.wfmz.com.">www.wfmz.com.</a>



#### **WORSHIP MINISTRY**

Date	Day	Time	Liturgical Day	Acolyte	Altar Assistant	Altar Guild	Lector	Media	Prayers	Sound	Ushers	Video
11/5/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	All Saints Day	Tatum Friz	George Hill, Becky Scheiry	Dorothy & Walter Breitkreutz	Becky Scheiry	Sarah Eidle	Jean Machamer	Ashley Gheer	Becky & Barry Erb, Bunny & Ron Riffle	Jason Eidle
11/12/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	24th Sunday after Pentecost	Camryn Friz	Jen Friz, Becky Scheiry	Jodi Dykie, Bonnie Moatz	Terry Wade	Shannon Omlor	Bonnie Moatz	Brianna Rohrbach	Ashley Gheer, John Gheer, Jerry Krause, Ed Schaeffer	Abbe Grofe
11/19/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	25th Sunday after Pentecost	Alina Friz	Ashley Gheer, John Gheer	Paula Kriebel, Jean Machamer	Michele Eidle	Olivia Alderfer	Karen Pollock	Melissa Eidle	Joanne Dykie, Lauren Frey, Barbara Houp, Bill Rohrbach	Scott Scheiry
11/26/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Christ the King	Delaney Hersperger	Melissa Eidle, Lauren Frey	Melissa Eidle, Mary Kay Heimbach	Bev Blake	Jason Friz	Tom Engle	Myles Omlor	Charles Haddad, Phil Haddad, Carol Sematis, Terry Wadsworth	Justin Jones
12/3/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Advent 1	Tatum Friz	Amanda Ehst, Tom Engle	Sue Hill, Donna Little	Phyllis Kershner	Sarah Eidle	Sue Grofe	Ashley Gheer	Mike Gilbert, Jerry Krause, Ed Schaeffer, Scott Scheiry	Camryn Friz
12/6/2023	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Holden Evening Prayer	Alina Friz	NA	NA	TBD	Shannon Omlor	NA	Brianna Rohrbach	Mary Kay & Donnie Heimbach	Jason Eidle
12/10/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Advent 2	Philip Derr	Bev & Joe Blake	Mary Dierolf, Nancy Edwards	Sarah Eidle	Olivia Alderfer	Susan & Andy Varzally	Melissa Eidle	Darin Moyer, Kevin Moyer, Susan & Andy Varzally	Justin Jones
12/13/2023	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Holden Evening Prayer	Camryn Friz	NA	NA	TBD	Jason Friz	NA	Myles Omlor	Sandy & Terry Wade	Abbe Grofe
12/17/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Advent 3	Tatum Friz	Michele & Dave Eidle	Mary Kay Heimbach, Lauri Stofflet	Missy Endy	Sarah Eidle	Mel Roth	Ashley Gheer	Becky & Barry Erb, Bunny & Ron Riffle	Justin Jones
12/20/2023	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Holden Evening Prayer	Alina Friz	NA	NA	TBD	Shannon Omlor	NA	Brianna Rohrbach	Bev & Joe Blake	Camryn Friz
12/21/2023	Thursday	7:00 PM	Blue Christmas	Camryn Friz	NA	NA	TBD	Olivia Alderfer	Bonnie Moatz	Melissa Eidle	Ros & Brian Moatz	Jason Eidle
12/24/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Advent 4	Philip Derr	George Hill, Bonnie Moatz	Mary Kay Heimbach	Krista Fretz	Jason Friz	Ros Moatz	Brianna Rohrbach	Ashley Gheer, John Gheer, Mary Kay & Donnie Heimbach	Abbe Grofe
12/24/2023	Sunday	3:00 PM	Christmas Eve	Delaney Hersperger	Amanda Ehst, Becky Scheiry	Melissa Eidle, Mary Kay Heimbach	Jean Machamer	Sarah Eidle	Martha Bentley	Ashley Gheer	Martha Bentley, Joanne Dykie, Barbara Houp, Nathan Wanish	Justin Jones
12/24/2023	Sunday	8:00 PM	Christmas Eve	Tatum Friz	Tom Engle, Jen Friz	Joanne Dykie, Sue Hill	Jen Friz	Shannon Omlor	Lauren Frey	Myles Omlor	Bev & Joe Blake, Ben Rohrbach, Bill Rohrbach	Camryn Friz
12/25/2023	Monday	10:30 AM	Christmas Day	Philip Derr	Jen & Jason Friz	Joanne Dykie, Sue Hill	Terry Wade	Jason Friz	Sandy & Terry Wade	Melissa Eidle	Sandy & Terry Wade	Jason Eidle
12/31/2023	Sunday	9:30 AM	Lessons & Carols	Delaney Hersperger	Jen Friz, Becky Scheiry		TBD	Olivia Alderfer	Tom Engle	Brianna Rohrbach	Ros & Brian Moatz, Carol Sematis, Terry Wadsworth	Abbe Grofe

## NOVEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:30p Worship Team	2 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 8:00p Worship Broadcast	Rrofessional Learning 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study 6:30p MAP	4 1:00p Leonard Crowdell Celebration of Life 4:30p Come to the Table
5 All Saints Sunday 9:30a Sunday School 9:30a Worship Celebration	6 10:00a Preschool Picture Day 6:30p Girl Scouts	7 10:00a Preschool Picture Day 6:30p Veterans' Salute Rehearsal	8	9 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 6:30p Veterans' Salute 8:00p Worship Broadcast	10 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study	11 Veteran's Day 12:00p Bortz Family Luncheon 4:30p Come to the Table
9:00a Coffee & Conversation 9:30a Sunday School 9:30a Worship Celebration 10:45a Coffee & Conversation	13 5:00p Newsletter Submission 6:30p Girl Scouts 7:30p Optimist Club of Boyertown	14 6:30p Finance Team	15 9:30a Pottstown Soup Kitchen 6:00p Congregation Council	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 PCP Advent Correspondence 4:30p Come to the Table
9:30a Sunday School 9:30a Worship Celebration 11:00a Coffee Time 11:30a Community Thanksgiving Meal	20 6:30p Girl Scouts	21	22 Preschool Closed	<b>23</b> Thanksgiving Preschool Closed Office Closed 8:00p Worship Broadcast	24 Preschool Closed Office Closed 7:00a Men's Small Group Bible Study	25 4:30p Come to the Table
26 Christ the King 9:30a Sunday School 9:30a Worship Celebration	27 Preschool Closed 7:30p Optimist Club of Boyertown	28 1:00p Joyful Sisters of Service 6:30p Building a Better Boyertown	29	30 10:00a Chestnut Knoll Service 8:00p Worship Broadcast		I

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			Diane Cordero	Kathleen Smith	Nancy Graver	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Ashley Gheer	Angela Alexander Richard Derr			Donnie Heimbach	
		Karen Lewis				
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	Alex Forsyth	Scott Scheiry	Bonnie Moatz		Jim Kershner	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Chelsea Boyer	David Haws	Colleen Ritter				Patricia Strunk
Oliver Cook Salie Derr						
June Deri						
26	27	28	29	30		A LONG
Gail Longacre	Barbara Schaeffer	Adam Hersperger				
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Happy Birthday!

## 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

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As children of God and disciples of Christ seeking peace and justice in the world, we welcome, affirm, and include all people into the fullness of God's love. We celebrate and lift up people of all races, cultures, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities, physical or mental abilities, economic statuses, political affiliation, appearances, family status, and citizenship as equally loved and valued in the eyes of God and in this place. All are invited to join this community as we worship God, grow in faith, and strive to love and serve one another.

All, without exception, are welcome in this place.

Return Service Request - Dated Material Mailed October 24, 2023

#### WORSHIP

SUNDAY 9:30 AM
IN-PERSON & LIVESTREAM ON YOUTUBE

Office Hours Monday-Thursday 8:30 am - 3:30 pm Friday 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

Pastor Bob Machamer
Kay Christman, Finance Team
Sue Grofe, Finance Team
Donnie Heimbach, Property
Bonnie Moatz, Finance Team
Shannon Omlor, Communications Coordinator
Linda Rohrbach, Treasurer
Becky Scheiry, Parish Administrator
Renae Walther, Director of Preschool Ministry

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