

St. John's Messenger

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Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

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"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!" (Phil 1:2)

Over the past four weeks our readings for the second lesson have come from the book of Philippians. Our Bible Study group has been reading Paul's letter to the Philippians and discovering the riches that it has to offer.

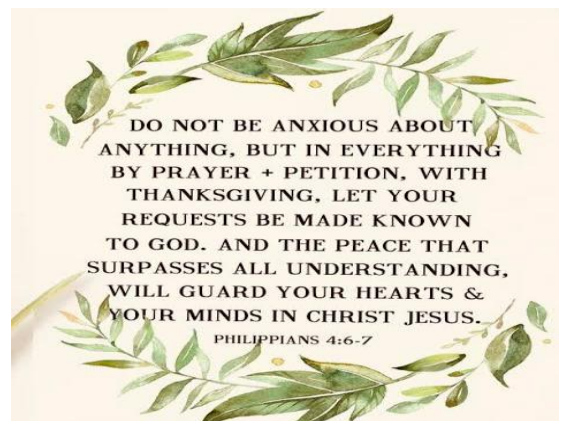
We began by exploring the background of this letter and found that was written by the apostle Paul around 50 CE to the first Christian church that he had established in Europe. The city of Philippi in Macedonia, modern day Greece, was on the Via Egnatia, a road that was used to transport goods and supplies between Rome and the eastern part of the Roman Empire. Paul and his fellow evangelist Timothy wrote this letter while Paul was in prison, although it is not clear where he was in prison at the time he wrote the letter.

The Letter to the Philippians despite Paul being imprisoned is a joyful one. It is filled with thanksgiving, rejoicing, and the message of God's abundant grace through Jesus Christ. Our group uncovered the themes of living for the gospel of Christ and living in unity with one another in Christ's name. Paul considered the loss of all things including his freedom as loss because of Christ. Even in prison, Paul was still proclaiming the gospel message of the risen Christ to all who would listen including the guards, servants, and other prisoners. He urged the saints in Philippi to "live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ...standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel." In a call to live in unity, he says we should live out our lives in faithful service to one another, putting aside selfish ambition, and looking toward the needs of others. Paul also talks about being content with what we already have and seeking what is true, honorable, just, pure, pleasing, and commendable. His message for the people of Philippi and us today is to fill our lives with prayer, thanksgiving, and supplication and keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

***"The Grace of the lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."
(Phil. 4:23)***

Blessings,

Pastor Karla





All,

As I announced this past Sunday, I will be stepping down from my role as the Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership Formation effective January 31, 2027. I will remain with St. John's as your pastor at $\frac{3}{4}$ time. Going from full time to part time will mean for St. John's that I will have one Sunday a month off. The council would like the input of the congregation as to what Sunday worship looks like on the Sundays that I am off. We'll be discussing options and ideas for that at the November Congregation Meeting. Please feel free to reach out to me or the council members if you have any questions or concerns in the meantime.

God's Peace,
Pastor Karla

St. John's Member, Betty Yerg, will be turning 93 years young on November 17th. If you would like to send Betty a birthday card, please address to:



Betty Yerg
Emmanuel Home
800 Priestley Avenue
Northumberland, PA 17857



Notes From the Director of Music



A Ringing Tradition: Handbells and Handchimes in the Church

A history of handbells handchimes in worship

We are also looking for additional ringers no experience necessary training, lots of fun and fellowship provided.

When handbells ring in worship, each note is part of a larger conversation. No single ringer plays the whole melody; the music comes together through listening, timing, and cooperation. That makes handbell and handchime music a fitting expression of life in the church.

The modern handbell tradition began in England. In the 17th and 18th centuries, tower bells were rung in complex patterns called change ringing. Ringers used small practice bells so they could rehearse indoors without climbing a tower or disturbing the neighborhood. Over time, these handbells became instruments in their own right, with one person—or a group—playing melodies and harmonies.

Handbells found a home in churches, schools, and community ensembles, especially in the United States during the 20th century. Their clear, bright sound made them well suited to hymns, seasonal music, and special services. In a handbell choir, each ringer usually plays one or more pitches, reading from a shared score and working together to make a single musical whole.

Handchimes are a related instrument, but they produce a gentler, more sustained tone. Rather than striking a bell's metal body, a handchime's internal clapper touches its aluminum tubing. The result is a mellow sound that can blend beautifully with voices, organ, or other instruments. Handchimes are also often used in beginning ensembles, since their tone is easy to produce and their lighter weight can make them accessible to more players.

Both instruments have a special place in Lutheran worship. They can introduce a hymn, accompany congregational singing, offer music during communion, or provide an anthem for a festival service. Their sound can evoke celebration, reflection, and the changing seasons of the church year—from the joy of Easter to the quiet expectation of Advent.

A handbell or handchime choir is also a small picture of the congregation. Each person has a part to play, and each part matters. The music depends not only on playing one's own notes, but on watching, listening, and supporting one another. When all the parts come together, the result is something no one ringer could create alone.

I am grateful for everyone who shares their time and gifts in our handbell and handchime music. Whether you are a longtime ringer or hearing the instruments for the first time, may their music remind us that we are called to make a joyful sound together.

William Jacavage (Bill)
Director of Music

Congratulations

*Chelsea Gemberling
&
Kanen Bucher*

*Married at St. John's on
September 26, 2026*



NEWS FROM KATE'S KUPBOARD

Kate's Kupboard was open on **September 19, 2026**.

We helped **481** people by distributing **157** household/personal care bags, **157** produce boxes, **314** packs of meat, and **258** bags of groceries. We helped **50** babies and provided adult care products to **15** people.

The total cost was **\$3,510.46**

Thank you to **ALL** the volunteers who helped with this Kate's Kupboard in any way.

We helped one family between our August and September Kate's Kupboard. We continue to help people through NEIGHBORLYPA. Com.

We had some extra produce that we put in the Blessing Shed.



CONFIRMATION 2026

On Sunday, October 25, the following youth will be confirmed at the 9:00 a.m. service.

**Van Bedisky
Paige Billman
Ryan Billman
Allan Lehman
Cameron Lehman**

Congratulations to all as they make public Affirmation of their Baptism.

GETTING READY FOR WINTER



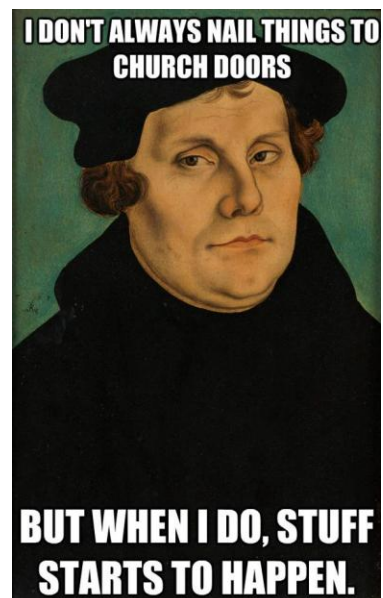
Kate's Kupboard will be helping children get ready for the upcoming cold, winter months. At the November 21st

Kate's Kupboard, hats, scarves, gloves and socks will be available for the children.

Children must be present to select the items that they need. Gloves will also be available for the adults.

Reformation Sunday, October 25th

On October 31, 1517 a German monk named Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door of Wittenberg Church. The impact of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation has been enormous on global Christianity. Luther called the Church back to the good news of salvation by grace alone through faith alone. Luther believed the Word of God was the supreme authority for the Christian faith, rather than tradition or papal decrees. In the process of bringing the Scriptures to the common person, Luther translated the Bible into German, published numerous books and sermons of biblical teachings, and composed numerous hymns based on biblical themes. Many of his hymns are still sung today.



Seafarer Bags Due

Please return any seafarer bags to the church by **October 25th** in order to get them to the synod and ready for transport to New York.

Basket Raffle

This year WELCA will again be having a Basket Raffle at the Christmas Bazaar.

We are looking for donation items for the baskets. A Christmas Tree has been placed in the rear of the sanctuary with tags of the specific items needed. Similar to how the Mitten Tree and Birthright Tree are done, take a tag or two, or more, purchase the item/s, and return it to the church **no later than November 8th**.

Monetary donations are always welcome if you would prefer.

Thank you for your support.

Bazaar Set Up Help Needed

Wednesday, December 2nd starting at 8:00 a.m. we will be setting up for the Christmas Bazaar. ***Any and all help is greatly appreciated.***

Christmas Items Wanted



Plans for this year's Christmas Bazaar sponsored by WELCA are shaping up. Mark your calendars for ***Friday and Saturday, December 4th & 5th***.

We are also looking for gently used Christmas decorations you no longer use.

Still hanging on to that birthday or last year's Christmas gift Aunt Matilda and Uncle Horace gave you that you didn't know what to do with – well, we'd welcome that too.

Items can be dropped off during normal office hours.

PLEASE NO RUMMAGE!!

Thank You

We had a record number of 52 school kits this year that were collected. Thanks to everyone who donated items for the kits.

Harvest Home Sunday November 22

Worship & Music will be collecting non-perishable foods, personal care items and cleaning supplies for Harvest Home now through November 19th. Donations will adorn the altar on Sunday the 22nd, and then will be given to this year's Mitten Tree families at Christmas. Any donation would be greatly appreciated.



Calling all St. John's bakers!

We've got some of the best bakers around and we need your help. Baked good items are needed for the Christmas Bazaar. Please have items bagged/wrapped for individual sale. Bake sale items should be brought to the church by December 4th.

Mitten Tree and Birthright Tree

Watch for the upcoming dates of when the trees will be up and ready to be undecorated!



PRAYERS: Cheryl Glavis; Jane Ramer; Eleanor Charles; Rick Smeltz; Trish Long; Betty Yerg; Bob Haile; Jim Herbert; Helen Peters; Connie Freitsch; Marty Rafter

HOMEBOUND and CONTINUED PRAYERS: **PRAYERS:** Chris Eisely; Kaye Wolfe; Barb Eisely; Jason Gulden; Helen Snyder; June Diehl; Nevin Brungard; Nancy Hendricks; Bill Wagner; David Bartholomew; Marti Row

Thank You

A big thank you to the S. Luther Savidge Charitable Foundation for their recent donation of \$850.00 to Kate's Kupboard. This donation is earmarked to purchase a freezer to replace the freezer that died earlier this year. We appreciate the support of this Foundation. Replacing the freezer that died will provide us the space needed to store the meat we purchase for the people coming to Kate's Kupboard.

Christmas Poinsettias

It's that time of the year to order poinsettias for Christmas Eve. Order must be received by November 15th in order to get them to the greenhouse.

Christmas poinsettias may be ordered by completing this order form. The form, along with payment, may be placed in the offering plate (using one of the envelopes, please mark it "Christmas Flowers") or can be dropped off at the church office. *Please make checks payable to: **St. John's Lutheran Church**.* Poinsettias may be picked up **after** the Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve.

Orders must be received by 11/15/2026

\$10.00 each – 6" pot

Qty _____ Red

Qty _____ White



Amount Paid _____

Check# _____

Cash _____

SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION FOR BOOKLET

Given by: _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

To the Glory of God _____

Coming Up in November..... Mark Your Calendars



REMEMBER – Set your clocks back 1 hour on Saturday night, October 31st.

All Saints Sunday November 1

All Saints Memorials:

Kilee Jo Showers Chapman
Ronald C. Ginck
Phyllis L. Lahr
Shirley J. Leiby
Michael Payne
Jane Sanders Ressler
Mary G. Rogers
Elaine Marion Kohl
Shirley J. Samois
Shirley L. Hummel

All Saints Baptisms:

Beau Buckholtz
Samuel Specht
Thomas Specht



Veterans Observance Sunday, November 15

Dear Lord, Today we honor our veterans, worthy men and women who gave their best when they were called upon to serve and protect their country. We pray that you will bless them, Lord, for their unselfish service in the continual struggle to preserve our freedoms, our safety, and our country's heritage, for all of us. We respect them, we thank them, we honor them, we are proud of them, and we pray that you will watch over these special people and bless them with peace and happiness. In Jesus' name we pray; Amen.

By Joanna Fuchs

Annual Congregation Meeting

On November 15th, St. John's will hold their annual congregation meeting. Purpose of the meeting will be to vote on the 2027 proposed budget and election of council members and review constitution changes. ***Please plan to attend.***

Copies of the proposed budget will be available on Nov. 8 for review.

2026	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Sept. Income:	\$ 24,763.68	\$ 24,097.83
Year to Date Income:	\$ 189,972.89	\$ 201,259.47
Sept. Expenses:	\$ 19,986.80	\$ 20,530.24
Year to Date Expenses:	\$ 202,721.88	\$ 202,341.84
	Income Less Expense – Sept.	\$ 4,776.88
	Year to Date	-\$ 12,748.99

UPPER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD

The Upper Susquehanna Synod recently announced the new missionaries for Liberia. They will be taking the place of the previous missionary, Brian Palmer, who had passed away unexpectedly. St. John's had supported Brian in his mission and will continue to support Hannah and Henrique. Watch for special collections in the future. Below is a letter of introduction.

Dear Siblings in Christ of the Upper Susquehanna Synod,

Greetings in the name of Jesus! We, Rev. Hannah and Rev. Dr. Henrique Fleming, have been called as missionaries with the ELCA serving in Liberia. Prior to this call, we served the South Dakota Synod as rostered leaders for over sixteen years. We have three adult children and an adorable granddaughter.

As we begin this service, we invite you to consider becoming missionary sponsors to support our work as part of ELCA Global Mission. This is one way to join us in our ministry through financial support and prayers as well as regular updates on our ministry. It is such an encouragement to us to know that you're walking with us on this journey. Allow us to tell you a bit about missionary service in the ELCA and why synod like yours plays such a vital role in the church's work of loving our global neighbors.

The ELCA's model of service is called accompaniment, and it shapes every form of service across our church. Accompaniment leads with listening to and getting to know those we serve so that we can walk alongside them as equals. This means that our work in Liberia will look a lot like your ministries in your neighborhood, even though our communities are a world apart.

As missionaries, we will accompany the people of Liberia in partnership, dignity, and shared leadership. We will be training lay leaders and prospective pastors who are called to Christian ministry at the Brian Palmer School of Theology and providing pastoral assistance to congregations in Totota, Liberia.

Support from the ELCA's churchwide organization and congregations allows us to focus on this ministry. It is also a powerful reminder that we are not alone in this work – we work on behalf of our entire church, which supports us and prays with and for us. A covenant relationship with a missionary is so much more than a financial gift – it is empowerment and encouragement as we answer God's call as well as our commitment to ensure you can hear about and experience the impact of this work. What a remarkable gift to be able to serve together!

Will you join us in this work as a covenant partner? It would be a joy to bring you stories from this work so that you will get to know our shared mission and the people who make it so special. You will get to see what life is like beyond news headlines, too, so that you can better understand the unique challenges faced by this community and how our work seeks to make a difference. We can learn about one another and pray for each other with the hope that our partnership will inspire both of our ministries in equal measures.

In Christ,
Rev. Hannah and Rev. Dr. Henrique Fleming

Embracing the Beauty of Change in Autumn

Autumn is in full swing. The trees are releasing their leaves, and the crisp air reminds us that winter is on its way. This season carries both beauty and a gentle ache - it's stunning to watch, yet it whispers of endings and transitions.

In many ways, the changing season mirrors our lives. The golden glow and fiery reds of the autumn leaves remind us that transitions, though often uncomfortable or painful, can also be beautiful.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 tells us: *"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot."*

Just as God ordains the rhythms of nature, He also ordains the seasons of our lives (Daniel 2:21). There are seasons when God calls us to plant – investing in prayer, service, or learning. There are seasons when we finally reap – the joy of answered prayers, growth or peace after struggle. And there are seasons to uprooting - when God asks us to release what we've clung to: old habits, heavy burdens, or even relationships that no longer align with His will.

But letting go is rarely easy. The struggle occurs because we doubt, resist, or grow impatient. However, God is the great *"I Am"* (Exodus 3:14). God has always been, is now, and will forever be who He is - love (1 John 4:8; Hebrews 13:8). His character never shifts, and His sovereignty never wavers (Malachi 3:6; Isaiah 46:9-10).

Unlike people, who change with moods, actions, and circumstances, God remains constant. He proved the depth of His unconditional, selfless love at the cross. To rescue us from eternal separation, He gave what was most precious - His own Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16). And if He gave us Jesus, how much more will He provide for us? The trees let go of their leaves without fear, because they will bloom again. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 6:28–30 that if God clothes the flowers of the field in beauty, how much more will He take care of us? When we trust Him, we often discover that the act of letting go creates space for something new to grow. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:17: *"If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"* Autumn whispers this truth with every falling leaf. Change is inevitable in the life of a believer because the Spirit is always shaping us into the likeness of Christ (Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 1:6). Sometimes, that shaping feels like a fiery furnace, but it is never without purpose (1 Peter 1:6-7).

Even in loss, waiting, or uncertainty, we can cling to God's promise in Jeremiah 29:11: *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* Seasons shift, but God is faithful to make *"everything beautiful in its time"* (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

Autumn won't last forever, but its lessons linger. Change is not our enemy - it's God's tool for transformation. So, instead of resisting, we can embrace it by:

- **Practicing gratitude - notice even the small ways that God is at work.**
- **Staying rooted just as trees draw strength from their roots before winter, deepening your faith through Scripture and prayer.**
- **Letting go with trust, asking Him to show you what you need to release.**
- **Looking ahead with hope, remembering that no season is final and change is always leading somewhere in God's plan.**

Whatever season you find yourself in today - sowing, reaping, waiting, or letting go - be assured of this: God is with you and in His hands, every transition can become something beautiful.

Obianuju Mbah
September 3, 2025



November



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 All Saints Sunday Worship w/Comm. 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Crew 2307 6-8:00 p.m.	2	3 Troop 325 6:30 p.m. AA 7:00 p.m.	4 Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m. MomCo 6:30 p.m.	5 Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m. Bell Choir 6:30 p.m. Al-anon 7:00 p.m.	6	7 Fellowship Hall reserved 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
8 Worship w/Comm. 9:00 a.m. Baptism Sunday School 10:15 a.m. <i>Basket Raffle items due</i>	9 Finance 7:00 p.m.	10 Troop 325 6:30 p.m. AA 7:00 p.m.	11 VETERANS DAY  Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m. Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.	12 Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m. Bell Choir 6:30 p.m. District Scout Comm. 6:30 p.m. Al-anon 7:00 p.m.	13 	14 Fellowship Hall reserved 12-5:00 p.m.
15 Veterans Observance Worship w/Comm. 9:00 a.m. Annual Meeting Sunday School 10:15 a.m. <i>Poinsettia orders due</i> Fellowship Hall reserved 2-8:00 p.m.	16	17 Troop 325 6:30 p.m. AA 7:00 p.m.	18 Blood Drive 1-6:00 p.m. Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m. MomCo 6:30 p.m.	19 Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m. Bell Choir 6:30 p.m. Scout Roundtable 6:30 p.m. Al-anon 7:00 p.m.	20	21 Kate's Kupboard 9-11:00 a.m.
22 Harvest Home Worship w/Comm. 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. 	23	24 Troop 325 6:30 p.m. AA 7:00 p.m.	25 OFFICE CLOSED Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m.	26. 	27	28
29 1st Sunday in Advent Worship w/Comm. 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Fellowship Hall reserved 2-9:00 p.m.	30	December 1 Troop 325 6:30 p.m. AA 7:00 p.m.	2 Bazaar Set Up 8:00 a.m.-?? Cub Scouts 6:30 p.m.	3 Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m. Bell Choir 6:30 p.m. Al-anon 7:00 p.m.	4  Christmas Bazaar 9 a.m.-5 p.m.	5  Christmas Bazaar 9 a.m.-1 p.m.