St. John's Way, Truth and Life

218 N. Jefferson St. Kittanning, PA 16201-1324 Carl A. Johnson, Pastor, home: 724-548-5512 Web Site: www.stjohnskittanning.org

Office: 724-548-2051, and 724-543-4301 e-mail: stjohnskittanning@gmail.com

December 2024



Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come

Advent begins on Sunday December 1st. Enclosed is an Advent Devotion for your family's use.

For us, New Years is First Advent. We begin the year emphasizing that our King of Kings and Lord of Lords will return to judge the living and the dead. While the world is preparing for the feast of Christmas, we focus on the end times. You have to know where you want to wind up in order to know what direction to travel.

Hit Advent hard!

I invite you to fully enter into Advent. Daily devotions are enclosed. There are also family devotions available from Julie for families with small children. Find a special time to set aside every day in order to light the Advent candles and read the devotion.

Prepare every heart to make Him room!

On Sunday December 1st we will have available for every household that needs one a log with the four candles so that everyone is able to light the candles and do the daily devotions. December is a busy time of the year as we prepare for the celebration of Christmas, let us pause each day to make room in our hearts for our guest of honor!

December 1st we will also have a special Anniversary gift

Don't miss out. Keep your priorities. Remember what is important.

See you in Church, Pastor Johnson



St. John's Lutheran Church
Presents the

Annual Christmas Concert

Featuring: The Vocal Choirs The Bell Choirs

Under the direction of Rebecca Veith Accompanist Elizabeth Cramer Sunday, December 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Admission is free. No offering will be taken. Refreshments to follow the concert.



Sunday, December 8th following 11:00 am worship

for the purpose of electing new Congregational Council members, and voting on designating the 2023 New Church Building Fund earnings for the building loan.

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Electronic Giving is Good for You and the Church

You can now make a contribution to our church through a mobile app!

To get started, download GivePlus Church for free from the App Store or Google Play. Simply search for "GivePlus Church" to quickly find and download the app today. Then, you can easily make donations directly from your smartphone using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account.

You can also choose to donate as a guest or set up an account that allows you to securely and conveniently schedule recurring donations and manage and review your giving history.

We hope you enjoy this new way to contribute to our ministry, and thank you for your support.

- 1. Download the free app on your Apple or Android phone.
- Make one-time or recurring donations using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account.
- 3. Log in or donate as a guest.
- Securely and conveniently manage donations using Touch ID/Fingerprint, PIN or password.

To give through the app, search your phone's app store for "GivePlus Mobile" or contact the church office.

To give from your personal computer go to: https://secure.myvanco.com

"Give according to your income, lest God make your income according to your giving."

M	<u>ark Your Calendars</u>
December 8	Congregational Meeting
December 8	Christmas Concert
December 17	Christmas Pageant

Every Sunday morning
Jesus is waiting
to meet you in church.



- Decided to enter fully into Advent by sending out daily Advent devotions in this Newsletter, offering Advent candles and Advent log candle holders to members and providing family Advent devotions.
- Decided to recommend to the December 8th Congregational Meeting that the New Church Building Fund Earnings from 2023 be used to pay off debts to the Capital Campaign.
- Approved the use of the Social Hall for a Progressive Workshop Christmas dance, Wednesday, December 18th.
- Received thank yous from Received thank you from Bethesda Lutheran Services, Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries, Progressive Workshop, Water Missions, Lutheran World Relief, Hope Lutheran Church Smethport, Lutheran Bible Translators (for the Ethiopian Seminary), and North American Lutheran Seminary for donations.

A complete copy of the approved minutes from each month is posted on bulletin boards in the Narthex and Education Building.

Your Church Council members are always available for your questions and concerns:

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Kyle Kirkpatrick - Vice President	724-954-7366
Dean Crooks	724-664-2015
Wendy Hodak	724-664-4345
Gene Hughes	724-543-3011
Patricia Kirkpatrick	724-525-0962
Susan Neal	724-763-8331
Megan Rupp	724-859-1317
Brendan Swanson	724-525-7255
John Swanson	724-525-1381
Richard Thorell	724-349-5287
Kraig Walker	724-664-3085
Jill Wranich	724-902-9389



Children and YouthDecember 2024

SPARK

Christmas Event

Dec. 17th

5:00-7:30pm

Preschool-6th Grade
COST: FREE!

Dinner, Christmas Story,
Christmas crafts,
Stations, and FUN!
Parents! Stay and hang out,
OR Go wrap presents,
get ready for Christmas,
or run some errands!

NEXT Spark Date:

Jan. 21st

Text **SPARK** to 724 276 5321 for weather updates, announcements and reminders

REGISTER YOUR CHILD AT

www.tinyurl.com/sparkstjohnskittanning

YOUTH LOCKIN

Friday Jan. 3rd 8:00pm-Saturday Jan. 4th 5:00am Bowling, Pizza, Movies, Gross Games, Prizes, Bodybody, and MORE! Kids Christmas Pageant 2024
Is "A CAPITAL CHRISTMAS!"

Rehearsals will be during Sunday School, beginning Dec. 2nd. Pageant will be Sunday Dec. 22nd. 10:00am



Picking parts Sunday Dec. 2nd.

Sunday Dec. 2nd 9:45-10:40am Sunday Dec. 8TH 9:45-10:40am Sunday Dec. 15TH 9:45-10:40am

Sunday Dec. 22nd 9:15am-9:45

Pageant at 10am

(Dress Rehearsal at 9:15 right before show)
Pageant at 10am

Other rehearsals will be scheduled as needed and parents will be notified.

YOUTH GROUP

Sunday Dec. 3rd: NO YOUTH GROUP THANKSGIVING BREAK

Sunday Dec. 8[™]: Come to the Christmas Concert! 7pm



Sunday Dec. 15th:
Youth Group 6:30-8pm
Christmas Cookie
Bake-Off
Grinch on the Run!
& How to share JESUS
at Christmas Time!

Tuesday Dec. 17th: Youth Group Volunteer
Opportunity to help with SPARK 5:00-7:30PM
Sunday Dec. 22nd: Kids Christmas Pageant
No Youth Group

Sunday Dec. 29th: No Youth Group

Friday Jan 3rd- Sat. Jan. 4th: YOUTH GROUP LOCK IN 8PM-5AM Details will be released on TEXT blast.

DECEMBER



- 2 Kaitlyn Young
- 3 Erik Repak, Bob Barto
- 6 Bekki Lash, Tabitha Bowser,Alycia Lambert, Kylie Shultze7 Jeffrey P. Boarts, Mona Bouch
- Peggy Goldstrohm, Kelly Bearer, Lloyd Cravener
- 10 Megan Taylor, Vera Hartung
- 11 Rose Montgomery
- 12 Karl Walker, Noah Spatafore, Gail Purvis
- 13 James Enders, Emily Boarts, Helen Boarts, Helen Kaufman, Beverley Kozuch, Rochelle Debnar
- 14 Tanner Law
- 16 Edward Parry, Donna Loughery
- 17 Sandra Bradigan, Randy Lash,
- 18 Debbie Frye, Kent Walker, Nick Wranich
- 19 Jeffrey A. Boarts
- 22 Connie Choncek
- 23 Kiersten Houde, Kimberly Tregaskes
- 25 Crystal Olinger, Julie Tomiczek
- 26 Carol Runninger
- 27 Jonathan Pfeister, Katie Panchik, Tyra Sanders
- 28 Ashley Nolte
- 30 Josh Howlett



Christmas in the Barn

December 11th at 7:00 pm at 256 Adrian Sherrett Road St. Mark's is hosting a Christmas Carol Service for all area NALC congregations. The service will feature carol singing, and a special Christmas sermon by Vicar Matthew. Following the service there will be hot chocolate, cookies, and fellowship.

Come experience Christmas in the Barn amidst the cattle, sheep, oxen, and donkeys—and get a feel for the way the holy birth really took place.

Oh Come Let us Worship Him!



Our October Church Offerings

	Oct.	Oct.	Year	Budget
<u>Offerings</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Budget</u>	To-Date	<u>To-Date</u>
Current				
Operating	19,479	26,887	225,198	268,871
Benevolence	1,881	3,333	15,853	33,333
Capital				
Campaign	1,762	1,762	29,542	17,619

Current Account	Income	Expenses	Gain/ -Loss
Current Month	19,479	24,919	-5,439
Year to Date	225,198	234,358	— 9,160



Our October Worship Attendance

October	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
1st Sunday in Oct.	70	114
2 nd Sunday in Oct.	E(39) L(73)	94
3 rd Sunday in Oct.	E(41) L(65)	47(E) 74(L)
4th Sunday in Oct.	105	206
5 th Sunday in Oct.	183	
Average for Oct.	115	133



Heading into the hospital?

If you or a member of your family is hospitalized, please contact the office @

724-548-2051. Because of confidentiality issues, the hospitals are not as helpful in notifying us as they once were.



Historical binders can be found in the Gathering Space.
They will be available throughout the year.



Thank You's for December 2024:

- ▼ THANK YOU to Blair Dawson for the AWESOME 9-Square game that he built for our Youth Group!
- To Mary Jane Dawson, Cheryl Mechling, and Linda Charley for helping with the November newsletter mailing.
- Thank you to Donna Livengood and Megan Rupp for teaching Sunday school!
- Thank you to the praise band for your hard work and commitment to help lead songs for early worship service!
- Thank you to everyone who continually supports our children's and youth activities!
- To everyone who continues to support & donate to the Katie's Cupboard Ministry @ St. John's.
- ▼ To Men's Breakfast Cooking Crew: Marve Gaiser, Ken Burkett, Clair Roudebush, and Pastor Johnson.
- Thank you to everyone who helps with the Fellowship Hours after worship!
- Many thanks to all who came for the food, fun and fellowship for the local Turkey Fund Drive. It was a great success!
- Thank you to Mary Jane Dawson, Tammy Fleeger, Susan Bain, Lynda Howlett, Carol Runninger, Connie Mc Master, Mona Bouch and Michelle Kozlowski for the fantastic deserts for the Turkey Dinner.
- Thanks to the cooks and and clean-up crew for the Turkey Dinner: Colvin Adkins, Callie Adkins, Lynda Howlett, Connie McMaster, Deb & Bill Bouch, Molly, Emily and Bill Bouch, Debbie Griffin, Mary Jane Dawson, Blair Dawson, Dean Crooks, Jerah and Jill Wranich, Tammy Fleeger
- ▼ Thank you, to Connie McMaster for help with Childrens Hour.
- Thank you to Tammy Fleeger, Marve Gaiser, Sue Bain, Donna Livengood, the Rupps, Bouches, Smiths, Hodaks, Baileys, and Farahs for help with Spark. (Any more will be included later in Jan. Newsletter.)
- ▼ Thank you to Matt Smith for sound equipment for Anniversary dinner and Youth Group! And as always praise band!
- ▼ Thank you to our praise band members for your time, talents and service to God and St Johns, leading worship!
- Thank you to Donna Livengood and Megan Rupp for teaching Sunday School, so faithfully every week!
- ▼ Thank you to all who contribute to and support our children's and Youth Ministry at St Johns!
- Thank you to our Youth who step up to fill in to acolyte, serving in many ways at worship, cleaning up various

- events, or leading a Bible study, or Christian Group at school! You are a great example for the next kids coming up after you. Keep up the great work of God!
- ▼ Thanks to Emily Bouch and Stella Venesky for setting up the Hymn Festival reception.
- Thanks to our brass ensemble Dan Minnich, Brendan Swanson, Karina Blose and Nick Wranich for providing special music on Reformation Sunday.
- ▼ Thanks to Brian Kozlosky for the picture!



A time of fellowship will be provided each Sunday after worship in the Gathering Space.

Please plan to stay after worship to meet and greet fellow members and visitors of St. John's.

If you would like to help host a fellowship hour, please see Pastor Johnson.



CHURCH MUSIC NOTES

The Senior Ringers will hold a special Christmas Concert rehearsal Sunday December 8th immediately following the worship service from 12:30-1:30.

The Senior Vocal Choir will meet at 5:15 pm Sunday, December 8th to warm up for the Christmas Concert.

No choir rehearsals on December 11th – enjoy a well-deserved evening off!



Internet streaming St. John's Live Broadcast

The St. John's worship service is broadcast live on You Tube each Sunday at 11:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve service will also be broadcast live at 7:00 p.m. and again at 11:00 p.m.



Katie's Cupboard Winter Supply List

Personal Care Items

- Shampoo/conditioner
- Soap
- Toothpaste, Toothbrushes
- Pads/tampons
- Diapers/wipes
- Deodorant
- Chapstick
- Hats, Gloves, Scarves
- Handwarmers

Paper Products

- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Kleenex

Nonperishable Foods

- Peanut butter and jelly in plastic
- Boxed/bagged grains/beans: rice, couscous, quinoa, red beans, white beans
- Pasta: dry pasta, bagged pasta meals, mac n' cheese
- Pasta sauce in plastic
- Cereal: cold and hot
- Peanut butter and other snack crackers
- **Applesauce**
- **Dried fruits**
- Granola bars
- Canned complete meals (Dinty Moore, Lasagna, Spaghetti O's)
- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruits
- Dry Goods (coffee, hot chocolate, tea, flour, powdered milk, sugar)
- Cake mixes, cornbread mixes, muffin/pastry
- Canned meats (SPAM, Vienna sausage, tuna, chicken)

"It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself."

—Charles Dickens

Empower the Mission and Ministry of St. John's!

Amounts needed in offerings during November and December to meet our budget in the following accounts:

> **Current Account:** \$97,000.00 Benevolence: \$24,000.00

Every November and December we count on your generosity to make up the difference in these accounts so that we finish the year in the black.

This year presents a very great challenge for each and every one of us! Please consider increasing your giving and/or making a significant one time gift over and above your normal offerings. Thank you for your continued commitment to making the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ happen at St. John's.

Creative ways of year end giving to St. John's:

- It is possible, if you are over 70 1/2, to make a direct payment from your IRA to St. John's. This saves the taxes and the gift is still eligible for a charitable gift deduction.
- Giving stock saves capital gains taxes and the gift is still eligible for a charitable gift deduction.



Social Ministry Christmas Project

This year we have the opportunity to adopt families for Christmas. There are sign-up boards in the narthex that list wants, needs and sizes. If you are unable to shop but would

like to help, please make a donation in an envelope marked Christmas Families and place it in the offering. If you choose to purchase the item(s), please place a check mark in the box next to each item you wish to purchase. Please use gift cards for food assistance. Remember to get a gift receipt when purchasing the gift and enclose it with the gift.

Gifts should be wrapped and a gift tag on each gift with the child's number.

IMPORTANT! The gifts should be brought to the church by Sunday, December 4th and each package marked with a Post it note attached on the outside describing the item inside and the name of the child (this information is for the committee only).

Any questions, please contact Michelle Kozlowski at 724-816-1680. Thank you for your support!

"The more you recognize and express gratitude for the things you have, the more things you will have to express gratitude for."

—Zig Ziglar



During the Christmas holiday, please take a little time to remember our shut-ins. A card or letter would certainly brighten their holiday and let them know they are being thought of. For your convenience, their names and addresses are listed below:

SHUT-INS

Jane Neidig 1360 N. Grant Avenue Kittanning, PA 16201-1052 Mrs. Gloria Sgro 729 Ferne Dr. Kittanning, PA 16201

Mrs. Dorothy Rush 4165 W. Pike Road Indiana, PA 15701

Mrs. Mary J. Elder 134 Marwood Road RM 2171 Cabot, PA 16023

Mrs. Vera Hartung 246 East Brady Road Kittanning, PA 16201-2050 Mr. and Mrs. Emil Debnar 379 Lemmon Hollow Road Kittanning, PA 16201

Mrs. Carole Cable Concordia at Cabot 134 Marwood Road RM 2235 Lund Building Cabot, PA 16023

Mrs. Helen Boarts 147 Butler Road PO Box 974 Kittanning, PA 16201-0974

Mrs. Virginia Dodd Rivercliff Terrace 322 N McKean St Room 205 Kittanning, PA 16201

"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love."
—Hamilton Wright Mabie



We have a Texting App!

Mojo texting was created FOR churches! It is safe and doesn't sell your number to anyone else!

If you would like to receive schedule changes, updates, reminders and announcements from St. John's, please text the word **GRACE** to 724-276-5321. It will send you a welcome message.

You will now receive important messages via text about what's going on at St. John's!

Messages will only be sent out on occasion and when important changes need to be communicated.

Thank you so much!

If you have any questions, please contact

Julie Smith.

"So sing! The song of rejoicing softens hard hearts." —Hildegard of Bingen (12th century)



Rock of our Salvation Worship

8:30 a.m. Sunday, December 29th.



Women's Bible Study

will return at the King's restaurant on **Thursday, December 12**th **at noon.** Any questions, please contact Rose Montgomery at rosetrix38@comcast.net. All are welcome!

A Farmer's Prayer

A pastor asked an older farmer, decked out in bib overalls, to say grace for the morning breakfast.

"Lord, I hate buttermilk", the farmer began. The visiting pastor opened one eye to glance at the farmer and wonder where this was going. The farmer loudly proclaimed, "Lord, I hate lard." Now the pastor was growing concerned.

Without missing a beat, the farmer continued, "And Lord, You know I don't much care for raw white flower". The pastor once again opened an eye to glance around the room and saw that he wasn't the only one to feel uncomfortable.

Then the farmer added, "But Lord, when you mix them all together and bake them, I do love warm, fresh biscuits. So Lord, when things come up that we don't like, when life gets hard, when we don't understand what you're saying to us, help us to just relax and wait until you are done mixing. It will probably be even better than biscuits. Amen."



Christmas Tree Set Up and Decorating

Tuesday, December 10th @ 6:00 p.m.

Sanctuary Decorating

After Church, Sunday, December 22nd

Prepare Ye
The way of the Lord!
—John, Son of Zechariah



Christmas Poinsettias

If you would like to place a poinsettia(s) in our Church for the Christmas Eve service, please complete and return this form with your check made payable to: "St. John's Lutheran Church" marked "Christmas Flowers" in the

memo line. Poinsettias are \$10.00 each and orders must be received by Monday, December 2, 2024.

Number of RED: Number of WHITE:		
I wish for the acknowledgment in the bulletin to read as follows:		
PLEASE PRINT, US	SING FIRST AND LAST NAMES	
IN MEMORY OF:		
IN HONOR OF:		
GIVEN BY:		
Please check one:	CheckCash	
Check #	Amount \$	
Please check one:		
L will take m Christmas Eve service	ny poinsettia(s) with me after the	
Please take	my poinsettia to a shut-in.	

"The world can't save itself.
That's the message of Christmas."

—Timothy Keller

December

December 1

Assisting Minister Lector Acolyte Welcome Team

Camera Operators

Assisting Ministers Lectors Comm Assistants

Welcome Team Camera Operator

Acolytes

Assisting Ministers Lectors Acolytes Welcome team Camera Operator

Assisting Minister Lector Communion

Welcome team Camera Operator

Acolytes

Assisting Minister Lector Communion Acolytes Welcome team Camera Operator

Assisting Minister Lector Communion Acolyte Welcome team Camera Operator

Assisting Minister

Communion Acolyte

Lector

Welcome team Camera Operator

Lance Whiteman Christine Whitman Quinn Kellner The Swansons Keith Livengood

December 8

Charlie Bleakney Linda Charley Mollie Bouch, Sue Neal Sara Shafer, Keith Livengood Callie Adkins, Noelle Smoyer Brenna Zurn, Cassidy Smith Cheryl & Roger Mechling Bill Bouch

December 15

Rose Montgomery Val Lager Ava Rupp Sophia & Elijah Holt Nick Wranich

December 22

Sara Shafer Melissa Venesky Susan Barto, Charlie Bleakney Marlee and Julie Smith Ella Fennell, Anna Venesky Delaney Smith, Mitchell Wranich Emily Bouch and Stella Venesky Robert John

December 24: 7pm

Deb Bouch Patty Kirkpatrick Patty & Kyle Kirkpatrick Camryn & Lucas Bowser The Bailey & Jazwinski Families Bill Bouch

December 24: 11pm

Karen Waugaman Nancy Pierce Karen Waugaman, Nancy Pierce TBA

Keith Livengood

December 29

Becky Swanson (E) Karen Waugaman (L)

Jill Wranich (E)

Lance Whiteman (L) Nick & Jill Wranich (L)

Lizzie Smoyer (E) Kendall Bailey (L)

The Smovers (E)

Lance & Christine Whiteman (L)

Robert John (E)

Keith Livengood (L)

December

Altar Guild: Mary Jane Dawson

Money Counters: Dean Crooks, Richard Thorell, Patty Kirkpatrick

Ushers: Bill Olinger, Jarrod Olinger, Ryan Shafer, Roger Mechling

Children's Hour:

Children's Hour is every Wednesday or Thursday from 9:30 a.m. until



11:00 a.m. Christmas Party: Dec. 18th & 19th. Class resumes Jan. 8th & 9th

St. John's Lutheran Church Staff:

Director of Children's & Youth Ministry Julie Smith Angela B. Clever Secretary Sexton Colin Toy Director of Music/Organist Rebecca Veith Sr. Choir Accompanist Elizabeth Cramer

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."



St. John's Lutheran Church December 2024 Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun Blue 2 First Sunday in Advent 9:30 Children's Hour 9:30 Children's Hour 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 Senior Choir 5:30 New Bells 11:00 Worship 2:45 Catechism 6:15 Senior Bells First Advent Preparations 7:00 Catechism 7:00 PJ's Bible Study 7:30 Senior Choir 12 13 8 10 11 14 Second Sunday in Advent Blue 9:30 Children's Hour 9:45 Sunday School 9:30 Children's Hour 10:00 Senior Choir 12:00 Womens Study at 5:30 New Bells 11:00 Worship: Communion Kings 6:30 Senior Bells After Worship: Congregational Meeting 7:00 Advent in the Barn 6:00 Christmas Tree 2:45 Catechism Set-up, Decorating 7:00 Council 7:30 Senior Choir 7:00 Catechism 7:00 Christmas Concert 17 19 20 15 16 18 21 Third Sunday in Advent Blue 9:30 Children's Hour 9:45 Sunday School 9:30 Children's Hour 10:00 Senior Choir 5:30 New Bells 11:00 Worship 5:00 Spark 1:00 Newsletter mailing 6:30 Senior Bells 6:00 Mutual Ministry 7:00 PJ's Bible Study 2:45 Catechism 7:00 Worship & Music 7:30 Senior Choir 6:30 Youth Group 7:00 Catechism 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 Fourth Sunday in Advent Blue 9:45 Sunday School **Christmas Eve** 10:00 Christmas Pageant 7:00 Worship: 10:00 Senior Choir Communion 11:00 Worship: Communion 11:00 Worship: After Worship: Decorating Communion 29 31 30 First Sunday After Christmas White 8:30 Worship: Rock of our Salvation 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 Senior Choir 11:00 Worship: Communion 8:00 Youth Lock-in