

# St. John's Way, Truth and Life

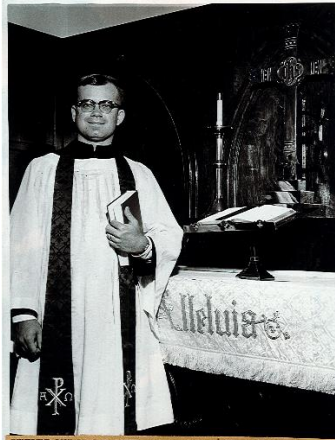
218 N. Jefferson St. Kittanning, PA 16201-1324

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## February 2025



PASTOR RICHARD CARL BAKER, ordained in 1970, is the 17th pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Kittanning, PA. He was called to St. John's in 1970 and served as pastor until 1999. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. S. Carl Baker of Kittanning, PA. He was born on 11/11/1939.

### St. John's Lutheran Church 1824 to 2024 to 2224

A congregation "uses up" a pastor every 40 years. It is said that a congregation needs to raise up a pastor at least once every 40 years in order to replace them. We may or may not think about this aspect of church life, but it is an important part of our Mission and Ministry nonetheless. Simple math tells us that at our 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we have "used up" 5 pastors (and counting).

Pastor Richard Baker, pictured above on the day of his ordination, is one of those who grew up at St. John's and heard the call from God to ordained ministry. After a life of faithful ministry he died at age 92 on January 11<sup>th</sup>. We will have a service celebrating his life, ministry, and the sure and certain hope of the resurrection that he faithfully proclaimed, (date not set).

Pastor Kathy Baker will be here February 9<sup>th</sup> to lead worship. She too grew up here at St. John's and was called by God into the ordained ministry. As our 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary continues, Sons and Daughters of the congregation (and past choir directors and organists) will be invited back to celebrate with us as we thank them for being such a vital part of our mission and ministry.

Never forget to encourage our children and youth to give prayerful consideration to going into the ordained ministry.

See you in Worship,

*Pastor Johnson*

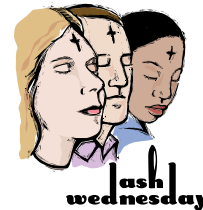


### Habitat Luncheon February 23, 2025

St. John's Habitat Luncheon  
Social Ministry & Fellowship Committee  
will be holding a luncheon  
On Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> following worship  
to raise money for Habitat for Humanity.

Please place your donations to benefit Armstrong  
County Habitat for Humanity  
by marking your offering envelope "Habitat  
Luncheon" in the space marked "other"  
and place in the offering plate during worship.

Our menu is: pork, mashed potatoes, sauerkraut,  
vegetable, applesauce, cake and beverages.



### Ash Wednesday Worship Service

The Ash Wednesday Communion Service will be held on March 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. This is the beginning of our Lenten journey. Please plan to attend this meaningful service of ashes and Holy Communion as we embark together on our Lenten Disciplines.

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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.
2. Make one-time or recurring donations using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account.
3. Log in or donate as a guest.
4. 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."**



**Mark Your Calendars**

February 25	Habitat for Humanity Luncheon
March 5	Ash Wednesday
March 23	Men's Banquet
April 6	Women's Banquet
April 20	Easter
May 4	Spring Concert
May 18	Youth Sunday
June 1	Graduate Recognition Sunday
June 8	Pentecost Sunday/Confirmation
June 22	Over 80 Banquet



- Elected Pastor Johnson as President, Ryan Shafer as Vice-President, and John Swanson as Secretary of Council.
- Approved recommending the 2025 Budget to the January 26th Congregational Meeting.
- Approved recommending the Benevolence Breakdown to the January 26th Congregational Meeting.
- Heard that the National NALC Convocation is August 3-8, 2025 in Pittsburgh. We need 3 delegates and a bevy of volunteers. Gene Hughes has volunteered to be one of the delegates.
- Received Thank You's from Bethesda Children's Home, Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries, Bethesda Lutheran Services, Water Missions, Lutheran Bible Translators (Ethiopian Seminary Project) and WVU Campus Ministry.
- Set the cost of being buried in the columbarium at \$800 plus the cost of the plaque. The money will go into a fund to maintain the columbarium.

*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:

Ryan Shafer, Vice President	724-859-2749
Bill Bouch -	724-859-0359
Chris Choncek	724-664-6947
Wendy Hodak	724-664-4345
Elija Holt	860-534-0023
Gene Hughes	724-543-3011
Patricia Kirkpatrick	724-525-0962
Susan Neal	724-763-8331
Brendan Swanson	724-525-7255
John Swanson	724-525-1381
Richard Thorell	724-349-5287
Jill Wranich	724-902-9389

*Spend some time with the One  
who knows you and loves you  
the deepest!*

*Only in God is your soul at rest.*

**Children and Youth  
February 2025**

**SPARK**  
**February 18, 2025**

**6:15-7:30pm**  
**Preschool-6th Grade**  
**COST: FREE!**

Dinner, Bible Story,  
Exciting Games, Fun, Crafts and More!  
Parents, stay or run some errands.  
**NEXT Spark Date March 18<sup>th</sup> 2025**  
Text **SPARK** to 724 276 5321  
for weather updates,  
announcements and reminders  
**REGISTER YOUR CHILD AT**  
[www.tinyurl.com/sparkstjohnskittanning](http://www.tinyurl.com/sparkstjohnskittanning)

**YOUTH GROUP**

**Sunday Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>:  
Youth Group  
6:30-8pm**

**Friday Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>:  
Ispirare  
Youth Meet Up  
No School  
Youth Led  
Bible Study @ 10am  
Bring \$ for Coffee & Treat**

**Sunday Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>: No Youth Group**

**Sunday Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>:  
Youth Group  
6:30-8pm**

**Sunday Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>:  
Family Skate at the Belmont  
2:30-4pm  
(after date confirmed)**

**February Winter outdoors  
activity may replace  
Youth Group at church,  
Depending on Weather**



Family Skate  
At The Belmont  
Public Skate  
Sunday  
February 23<sup>rd</sup>  
( Date needs to be confirmed  
when Belmont Calendar is  
released )  
2:30-4:00pm  
Cost: \$6,  
\$2 Skate Rental





**February Birthdays**

- 1 Sam Bowser, Jr.
- 4 Samantha Pyle,  
Payton Smail
- 5 Elodie Round
- 6 Alyssa Hankey
- 7 Mark Hankey, Jill Wranich
- 8 Jason Debnar
- 9 Amy Merryman, Cassidy Smith, Delaney Smith
- 11 Angela B. Clever
- 12 Linda Olinger, Kylie Zurn
- 14 Benjamin Swanson, Amelia Koeller
- 15 Richard Smail, Jr., Christina Hilty
- 16 Andrea Ehrman
- 17 John Graff, Jessica Arnette, Nancy Johnson,
- 18 Kent Walker
- 19 Natalie Reitano
- 21 Erica Kirkpatrick, James Neal
- 23 Mathias Koeller
- 24 Dirk Ahlgrim, Ian Fleeger, Melody Slater,  
Gracie Hodak, Theodore Round
- 25 Mary Jane Dawson, Hillary Schultze
- 26 Sara Shafer
- 27 Patrick Febinger

*If your birthday does not appear and you would like it to, please contact the church office*



**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.*

*Lord Jesus Christ,  
Son of God,  
Fill me with Your light and life.*



**Our December Church Offerings**

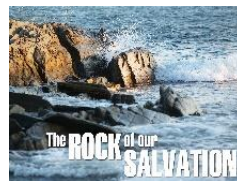
	Dec. Receipts	Dec. Budget	Year To-Date	Budget To-Date
<u>Offerings</u>				
Current				
Operating	69,484	26,887	313,828	322,645
Benevolence	4,895	3,333	22,271	40,000
Capital				
Campaign	6,945	1,762	38,615	21,143
<b>Current Account</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenses</b>		<b>Gain/-Loss</b>
Current Month	69,484	37,921		31,563
Year to Date	313,828	301,392		12,437



**ATTENDANCE**

**Our December Worship Attendance**

December	2023	2024
1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Dec	87	106
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Dec	96	127
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Dec	120	101
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Dec	112	136
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Dec	51 (E) 71 (L)	47 (E) 68 (L)
Average for Dec	107	117



**Rock of our Salvation Worship**

8:30 a.m. Sunday,  
February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>



**Women's Bible Study**

will return at the King's restaurant on **Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup> at noon.** Any questions, please contact Rose Montgomery at [rosatrix38@comcast.net](mailto:rosatrix38@comcast.net). All are welcome!



## Thank You's for January 2025:

- ♥ To Carol Runninger, Rose Montgomery, Mary Jane Dawson, Janice Smith, Ruth Ann Hankey, Betty and Alan Mitchell, Linda Charley, Susan Neal and Julie Smith for helping with the January newsletter mailing.
- ♥ Thank you to the praise band for helping lead early worship service December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- ♥ Thank you to Cassidy Smith, for teaching Sunday School when Julie was sick.
- ♥ Thank you to everyone who continually supports our Children's and Youth ministries!
- ♥ To Mark Hankey, Blair Dawson and Dean Crooks for disassembling and putting away the Christmas tree.
- ♥ To Mary Jane Dawson, Tammy Fleeger, Donna Livengood and Connie McMaster for cleaning up while we are between sextons.
- ♥ To Amber and Kylie Zurn and Tammy Fleeger for their work with Katie's Cupboard.
- ♥ To Dean Crooks and Blair Dawson for plumbing and HVAC projects.
- ♥ 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!
- ♥ Thank you to Donna Livengood and Megan Rupp for planning Sunday School every week!
- ♥ Thank you to Krista Fennel, Melissa Venesky & Jessica Bailey for chaperoning and driving to Quake! THANK YOU A TON!
- ♥ Thank you to the Praise Band for your dedication, time and talents that you use to help lead worship at St. John's!
- ♥ Thank you to Amber Zurn for the donation of Youth Group prizes.
- ♥ Thank you to Colin Toy for his work here at St. John's as Sexton. We wish him well in his new employment adventure.



### 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.**

## Pastor's Sunday School Class: Adult Sunday School

Pastor Johnson's class will be studying the book of Genesis.

Come journey with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We meet every Sunday. Coffee and Coffee Cake included.



NORTH AMERICAN  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH



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.

## Needed for Altar Care:

Plastic or Metal coffee cans for altar flowers. 30-to-40-ounce cans are ideal.

*For 200 years St. John's  
has been a bright beacon  
of Christ's light and life  
for the world.*

*200 years and the work continues:  
That all might know  
Christ's Love.*

## From Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis

"Being in love is a good thing, but it is not the best thing. There are many things below it, but there are also things above it. You cannot make it the basis of a whole life. It is a noble feeling, but it is still a feeling. Now no feeling can be relied on to last in its full intensity, or even to last at all. Knowledge can last, principles can last, habits can last; but feelings come and go. And in fact, whatever people say, the state called "being in love" usually does not last. If the old fairy-tale ending "They lived happily ever after" is taken to mean "They felt for the next fifty years exactly as they felt the day before they were married," then it says what probably never was nor ever could be true, and would be highly undesirable if it were. Who could bear to live in that excitement for even five years? What would become of your work, your appetite, your sleep, your friendships? But, of course, ceasing to be "in love" need not mean ceasing to love. Love in this second sense – love as distinct from "being in love" is not merely a feeling. It is a deep unity, maintained by the will and deliberately strengthened by habit; reinforced by (in Christian marriages) the grace which both parents ask, and receive, from God. They can have this love for each other even at those moments when they do not like each other; as you love yourself even when you do not like yourself. They can retain this love even when each would easily, if they allowed themselves, be "in love" with someone else. "Being in love" first moved them to promise fidelity: this quieter love enables them to keep the promise. It is on this love that the engine of marriage is run: being in love was the explosion that started it."



### Men's Prayer Breakfast

**Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m.**

The men of St. John's will be meeting Saturday morning for breakfast and study. Following the meal will be a brief program concluding by 9:00 a.m.

**GRACE**  
happens



at  
St. John's Lutheran Church  
Kittanning, PA

## Katie's Cupboard

February 2025

February is all "about love"...

Loving our neighbors as ourselves.

1 Corinthians 16:14 ***Do everything in love***

Can we set aside February for also loving our "***furry friends***"?

**Can we love like St Francis suggested?** He saw all of God's creation as sacred and believed that animals were a manifestation of God's love and grace.

Some folks I have met at the cupboard have mentioned appreciating the "random" dog/cat products that have been donated as it stretches their budget to just feed themselves.



Please prayerfully consider outside of normal food donations that help humans by donating something pet food related in February.

Winter months are hard on everyone, especially the furry kind.

### *Love makes us worthy*

*Unlike God, who loves unconditionally, humans often make choices and set limits when doling out affection. But Thomas Merton reminds us, "Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy. That is not our business and, in fact, it is nobody's business. What we are asked to do is to love, and this love itself will render both ourselves and our neighbors worthy."*

### **The realm of the impossible**

The wonderful thing about praying is that you leave a world of not being able to do something and enter God's realm, where everything is possible. He specializes in the impossible. Nothing is too great for His almighty power. Nothing is too small for His love.

—Corrie ten Boom

# February

## February 2

Assisting Ministers Julie Smith (E)  
Charlie Bleakney (L)

Lectors Jill Wranich (E)  
Val Lager (L)

Communion Assistants Rich Farah & Nick Wranich (E)  
Sara Shafer, Deb Bouch (L)  
Sue Neal, Nancy Pierce

Welcome Team The Smoyers (E)  
The Holts (L)

Acolytes Gracie Hodak (E)  
Quinn Kellner, William Bouch (L)  
Kendall Bailey, Logan Duncan

Camera Operator Nick Wranich (E)  
Bill Bouch (L)

## February 9

Assisting Minister Jonah Petruschke

Lector Colvin Adkins

Communion Assistants

Acolyte Lizzie Smoyer

Welcome team Deb & Jack Griffin

Camera Operator Keith Livengood

## February 16

Assisting Ministers Rebecca Swanson (E)  
Rose Montgomery (L)

Lectors Elizabeth John (E)  
Chris Choncek (L)

Comm Assistants John Swanson & Melissa Venesky (E)  
Karen Waugaman, Susan Barto (L)  
Mollie Bouch, Deb Bouch

Acolytes Brody Hodak (E)  
Camren & Lucas Bowser (L)  
Callie Adkins, Ella Fennell

Welcome team The Hodak Family (E)  
Tabitha & Randy Bowser (L)

Camera Operator Nick Wranich (E)  
Keith Livengood (L)

## February 23

Assisting Minister Keith Livengood

Lector Linda Charley

Communion Assistants

Acolyte Mitchell Wranich

Welcome team The Smith Family

Camera Operator Elizabeth John

## February

**Altar Guild:** Connie McMaster, Debbie Griffin

**Money Counters:** Wendy Hodak, Brendan Swanson, Chris Choncek

**Ushers:** Chris and Jeff Choncek, Brock and Brody Hodak

### Children's Hour:

Children's Hour is every Wednesday or Thursday from 9:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.

### St. John's Lutheran Church Staff:

Director of Children's & Youth Ministry	Julie Smith
Secretary	Angela B. Clever
Sexton	TBA
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."*



*"Worship is not one more thing to do, but the one thing to do."*

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">February</span> <span style="font-size: 3em; font-weight: bold;">St. John's Lutheran Church</span> <span style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">2025</span> </div>						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>26</b> Third Sunday after the Epiphany <small>Green</small> 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 Senior Choir 11:00 Worship <b>Congregational Meeting</b> <b>Youth Return from Quake Event</b> <b>Around 12:30 PM</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 9:30 Children's Hour  5:30 New Bells 6:30 Senior Bells 7:30 Senior Choir	<b>30</b> 9:30 Children's Hour  2:45 Catechism 7:00 Catechism	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b> Presentation of Our Lord <small>White</small> 8:30 Worship: Rock of our Salvation 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 Senior Choir 11:00 Worship: Communion  6:30 Youth Group	<b>3</b>  7:00 Property	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 9:30 Children's Hour  5:30 New Bells 6:30 Senior Bells 7:00 PJ's Bible Study 7:30 Senior Choir	<b>6</b> 9:30 Children's Hour  2:45 Catechism 7:00 Catechism	<b>7</b> 10:00 Youth Coffee at Ispirare	<b>8</b> 8:00 Men's Prayer Breakfast
<b>9</b> Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany <small>Green</small> 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 Senior Choir 11:00 Worship: Communion	<b>10</b>  7:00 Council	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 9:30 Children's Hour  5:30 New Bells 6:30 Senior Bells 7:00 PJ's Bible Study 7:30 Senior Choir	<b>13</b> 9:30 Children's Hour 12:00 Womens Study at Kings  2:45 Catechism 7:00 Catechism	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> Sixth Sunday after Epiphany <small>Green</small> 8:30 Worship: Rock of our Salvation 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 Senior Choir 11:00 Worship: Communion  6:30 Youth Group	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>  6:15-7:30 Spark Kids	<b>19</b> 9:30 Children's Hour  5:30 New Bells 6:30 Senior Bells 7:00 PJ's Bible Study 7:30 Senior Choir	<b>20</b> 9:30 Children's Hour  1:00 Newsletter mailing 2:45 Catechism 7:00 Catechism	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> Seventh Sunday after Epiphany <small>Green</small> 9:45 Sunday School 10:00 Senior Choir 11:00 Worship After Worship: Habitat for Humanity Dinner 2:30 Family Ice Skating	<b>24</b> 6:00 Mutual Ministry 7:00 Worship	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 9:30 Children's Hour  5:30 New Bells 6:30 Senior Bells 7:00 PJ's Bible Study 7:30 Senior Choir	<b>27</b> 9:30 Children's Hour  2:45 Catechism 7:00 Catechism	<b>28</b>	<b>1</b>