



SERVE • CARE • WORSHIP • LEARN

ST. JOHN'S

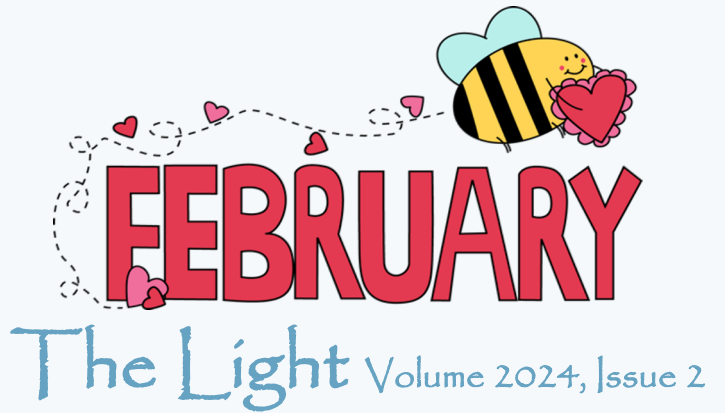
Evangelical Lutheran Church

4125 Penn Avenue
Sinking Spring, PA 19608
610-678-1088

Church Office Hours

Monday-Thursday: 9:00 AM – 2PM

Friday: Closed



The staff at St. John...

Reverend Richard Moore, Pastor:

pastor@saintjohnss.com

Deacon Diana Pelletier,

Director of Children and Youth Faith Formation:

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Michele Brossman, Custodian

Kevin Brossman, Custodian

Barbi Connor-Genesis Preschool Administrative Director

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Congregational Council:

President—Deb Dietrich

Vice President - Tim Fox

Secretary -

Treasurer— Gary Triviets

Care Team Liaison— Georgianne Jones

Learn Team Liaison— Mason Sassaman

Serve Team Liaison - Antonette Rosenmerkle

Worship Team Liaison - George Balchunas

Congregational Team Leaders:

Care Team - Deb Scheidt

Learn Team - Danielle Hale

Serve Team - Cole Luscombe

Worship Team - Cleann Pauley



Flowers(\$55) , Bulletins(\$20) & Newsletter (\$30)

Sponsorships are needed. Please fill out the form which is on the table at the front door, and put it in Lexie's mailbox. Thank you.

Flower and Bulletin Sponsors are needed!



Dear friends,

Grace and peace to you this February. One of my favorite candies is peanut butter cups---or, here at Saint John's, Peanut Butter and Milk Chocolate Eggs. 😊

Do you remember those old commercials that staged a collision of a person eating chocolate with a person eating peanut butter, and by their collision the two would discover that the two are a tasty combination? Voila`, the peanut Butter Cup!

This year, Valentine's Day coincides with Ash Wednesday. This is a unique intersection of two themes which are like peanut butter and chocolate. Two quite different things, but when they come together we realize that this combination was always meant to be. Valentine's Day is a secular observance that honors those whom we love. Meanwhile, Ash Wednesday is a sacred day in which we observe the sacrificial love of God for us shown forth in the cross of Jesus Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, the apostle Paul beautifully describes the essence of God's love:

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

As we exchange tokens of affection on Valentine's Day, let us remember that the ultimate expression of love is found in the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ. The ashes we receive on Ash Wednesday symbolize our mortality and the need for repentance, pointing us to the profound love that led Jesus to the cross for our redemption.

This Valentine's Day, let us approach the celebration with hearts full of gratitude for the love God has lavished upon us. In our relationships, may we strive to embody the qualities of love outlined in 1 Corinthians 13. Let patience and kindness guide our actions, humility and selflessness be our foundation, and forgiveness and perseverance be the pillars of our love.

The coincidence of Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday is a poignant reminder that true love involves self-sacrifice and a commitment to personal growth. As we exchange expressions of love, let us also reflect on the ways we can grow in our love for God and others.

May this Valentine's Day/Ash Wednesday be like a tasty treat for your soul. On one hand, let it be a time of spiritual reflection in which you honor the infinite love God has for you. And on the other hand, let it be an opportunity for you to share that love with those around you.

As we journey through the season of Lent, let our acts of love be a testament to the transformative power of Christ's sacrificial love.

In His Love,

T Pastor Rich

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| <p>Contacts for Pastor Rich Mobile/Text Msg: 610-401-5602 Email: pastor@saintjohnss.com Find me on Facebook: Rich Moore Find me on Twitter: @LuthRevRich</p> |
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What's love got to do with it?

With Valentine's Day falling square in the middle, February is traditionally the month we take a little extra time to focus on the ones we love. Valentine's Day has its roots in Christian Tradition though it has been greatly secularized over the last several decades. We now pamper the ones we love with gifts of candy or flowers, romantic dinners. Perhaps we might even let our creative sides shine by writing love letters, poems, or songs. No matter how you look at February, love is in the air. How appropriate it is that in 2024 Valentine's Day, the holiday celebrated by emphasizing our Love for others, falls on the same day as Ash Wednesday, the day we begin our focus on Jesus' journey to the Cross... the ultimate symbol of God's love for us.

Lent is the season when we are called to examine the ways and places our lives have strayed from who God calls us to be, and how God calls us to live and to ask for forgiveness. This examination process can leave us feeling filled with guilt and sadness. These are good feelings to feel if they propel us to change our lives so we are sharing God's love more fully. We can then move forward knowing we are already forgiven!

Without the Sacrifice God made for us on the Cross we would never experience the Fullness of the Forgiveness shown to us in the Resurrection. The journey through Lent can often feel heavy. As you journey this year through the season of Lent, as you turn your lives more fully toward God, may you remember how much God loves you and how that love frees you to live your life loving and serving your neighbors.

peace, *Diana*



Our middle and high school youth will gather in the youth room on Sunday, Feb 4th to talk about the call to Love our Neighbors.

YOUTH GROUP SERVICE EVENT

We gathered on January 13th at Good Shepherd in Reading to learn about how when we care for our neighbors we are actually caring for Jesus, as we hear about in Matthew 25. With you help, we were able to create **32** hygiene kits that are being donated to Bethany Children's Home in Womelsdorf! For more information, and other ways to help, please look at their website bethanyhome.org.



Noisy Offering



As a way of supporting our youth initiative to combat hunger we will be asking for a “Noisy Offering” of Feb 4th and 11th. Please bring any loose change you have on those days to add to the offering. Let us make a joyful noise and fill some hungry bellies!!

Coldest Night of the Year



On February 24, 2024 New Journey Community Outreach will be hosting its second Coldest Night of the Year event on Penn State Berks Campus. It is an outdoor walk that is an international endeavor to raise awareness and funds for those challenged by food and shelter insecurity.

The basic schedule is 4pm Check-In 5pm Send Off 6pm Light meal and fellowship

Last year was the first year and over 170 people participated and raised almost \$30,000!

We would like to put together a team from St. John’s. Mark your calendar and look for more information to come.

STRONGER TOGETHER YOUTH GROUP



Our next Stronger Together adventure will be an experiential event focusing on hunger. We plan to stay overnight at Trinity Lutheran in Reading February 17-18th. We will experience what hunger feels like by eating very little and learning about hunger in our community and around the world.

When: Saturday, 2/17 at 3:00 p.m. - Sunday 2/18 @12:00 noon

Where: Trinity Lutheran Church 527 Washington St. Rdg., PA 19601

Who: Youth in grades 7-12 and their adult chaperones

What: Making a difference and doing something about hunger in our community and world

We will begin at 3 at Trinity. If you cannot spend the night feel free to join us from 3-10. As always, friends are welcome!



40 Days - 40 Items

Take the 40 Days - 40

Items challenge. Clean out your closets and donate the items to help our neighbors at Hope Rescue Mission in Reading who,

Since 1894, has been a place of refuge for the homeless men, women, and children of Berks County, PA. We offer residential programs that people can work their way through to transition back into the community as productive and independent individuals.

They accept all seasons of men, women, and children's clothing. We accept hats, scarfs, coats, shirts, pants, dresses, belts, purses, backpacks, towels, sheets, blankets, socks, and new underwear.

Pick up a bag outside the church office, fill it, and drop it off by Easter!

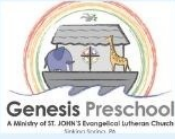
For Unto Us A Child is Born...



On Christmas Eve 2023 we were blessed with a creative retelling of the birth of our Savior, Jesus, by the children and youth of our Congregation, our Preschool, and our Community. Mary and Joseph bravely followed the Angels and travelled to the stable in Bethlehem where God would break into the world as a baby. The Shepherds also listened to the Angels and followed the Star to the place of Jesus' birth. We also had several cute and cuddly animals to remind us of the chaos that first Christmas morning. Many thanks to the children and youth who narrated, stage directed, and acted. Many thanks to Arlene for the glorious music and to all those who brought their voices to help share in the proclamation!

May we continue to loudly share the Good News of God's Love throughout 2024!





Join us for a new year at **Genesis Preschool!**

2024-2025

Preschool Enrollment

**Allow your child's love of learning to start here!
Registration opens in February!**

- ✓ Age 2 through Pre-K
- ✓ Extended-Day Options
- ✓ Hands-On Learning & Play
- ✓ Creative & Nurturing Environment

SCHEDULE A TOUR!

☎ 610-678-9908

✉ genesispreschool@saintjohnss.com

🌐 www.saintjohnss.com/our-preschool



As you may recall, during the congregational meeting held in June regarding the church budget, the decision was made to remove the purchase of the projector for the sanctuary from the annual budget and establish a Capital Campaign to fund the purchase. Following that meeting, the Worship Team agreed to lead the campaign for the projector. This campaign has been approved by the church council and is moving forward with raising the necessary funds. The Worship Team strongly believes that a projector in the sanctuary will provide us with a means to enhance worship in ways we are currently unable to do as well as have a positive economic and environmental impact by reducing the costs associated with the producing the bulletin in its current form. The overall cost of the projector and associated equipment will be +/- \$7500. Thanks to some generous donations and fundraising, \$2933.90 has already been added to the fund. Please consider targeting a donation toward the purchase of the projector. Also, look for fundraisers in the future to help us reach our target and add this additional piece of technology to our worship experience.

A LOOK At Our Budget

| | 2023 | 2022 | 2023 budget |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| INCOME | | | |
| General Fund Giving | \$209,170 | \$203,137 | \$217,453 |
| Targeted Giving | \$32,132 | \$34,846 | \$31,233 |
| Fundraising | \$16,974 | \$16,904 | \$10,500 |
| Other Income | <u>\$13,313</u> | <u>\$23,775</u> | <u>\$3,000</u> |
| Subtotal | \$271,590 | \$278,662 | \$262,186 |
| Genesis Income | \$130,476 | \$83,328 | \$99,514 |
| Bequests | <u>\$75,655</u> | <u>\$27,003</u> | <u>\$54,435</u> |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$477,721 | \$388,994 | \$416,135 |
| EXPENSES | | | |
| Care Team | \$407 | \$113 | \$500 |
| Learn Team | \$2,889 | \$2,866 | \$3,375 |
| Serve Team | \$16,780 | \$13,412 | \$16,698 |
| Worship Team | \$6,328 | \$6,023 | \$5,350 |
| Property Team | \$109,127 | \$93,864 | \$116,650 |
| Hospitality | \$135 | \$154 | \$500 |
| Office/Support Team | <u>\$39,840</u> | <u>\$32,051</u> | <u>\$32,423</u> |
| Subtotal | \$175,505 | \$148,482 | \$175,496 |
| Staff | \$258,519 | \$253,915 | \$266,752 |
| Genesis Expense | <u>\$104,192</u> | <u>\$64,175</u> | <u>\$97,422</u> |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$538,216 | \$466,573 | \$539,669 |
| UnBudgeted Expense | \$18,438 | \$43,104 | |
| Net Income | -\$78,933 | -\$120,683 | -\$123,534 |
| Unbudgeted Expense | | | |
| Fellowship Hall | \$0 | \$40,355 | |
| Easter Egg Funds used | | \$125 | |
| Maintenance & Repair | \$0 | \$0 | |
| Pastor Discretionary Fund | \$2,773 | \$1,629 | |
| Speidel Bequest | \$0 | \$0 | |
| Use of Memorial Funds | \$10,500 | \$0 | |
| Youth | \$4,151 | \$425 | |
| VBS | \$1,015 | \$570 | |
| Total | \$18,438 | \$43,104 | |
| Forgiven Covid 19 Loan | | \$0 | |
| Change in Investment Value | \$16,641 | -\$87,691 | |

Comfy Corners in the Sanctuary

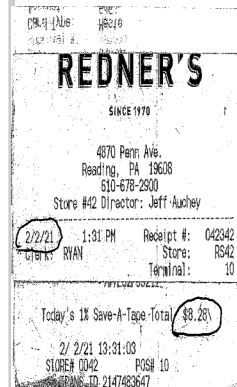
We have a 'soft space' in the back corner of the sanctuary with carpet, a rocking chair and quiet toys. The other corner has crayons and coloring pages. We are inviting families with infants, toddlers, children, or even adults that need to move around more freely, or who need some extra space, to stay in worship more comfortably. Please check out these spaces and invite folks to use them.



Redner's Save-a-Tape program is simple:

Please put your receipts in your envelopes that you mail into the church or when you drop them off in the locked mailbox outside and also on the table inside the door. St. John will receive 1% of each bill. **You need to use your Redner card in order for the church to Receive the 1% as shown on receipt...Thank you!**

Redner's
WAREHOUSE MARKETS
SAVE-A-TAPE PROGRAM



Circle of Friends

Please join us 1pm, February 20, 2024 at 1pm
Calbria Italian Restaurant
6646 Penn Ave, Wernersville, PA 19565
Call Jeanette Minnich 610-678-1740
for questions



We are still collecting for animals in need: blankets, towels, throw rugs, etc.

Thank you for your donations!



We are continuing to collect soda and soup can tabs to help support the Ronald McDonald House of Philadelphia. Put them in the jar on the table outside the church office. Thank you!

Mark your Calendars

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Feb 4 | Faith in Action |
| Feb 4 & 11 | Noisy Offering |
| Feb 6 | All Teams Mtg |
| Feb 13 | Council |
| Feb 14 | Ash Wednesday |
| Feb 17-18 | Act 2 Day 4 Tomorrow Overnight |
| Feb 24 | Coldest Night of the Year |
| March 3 | Congregation Council-Meeting to approve 2024 budget |
| March 24 | Palm Sunday |
| March 30 | Easter Egg Hunt |
| March 31 | Easter |



St. Johns Congregation Church Council held their regular monthly meeting on January 16, 2024. The following business was conducted:

- Discussed chapter 6 of Giving to God, Support and Sacrifice. We will ask for input regarding a pledge/commitment campaign to support the church's operating budget at the next Congregational Conversation. The Giving Team will continue to explore ways to help the congregation think about their giving in these terms of duty and delight. Duty being doing your part, in proportion to your means, to support the operating budget. Delight being going beyond "what you ought to do" to joyful giving as a cheerful sacrifice.
- We thank Becky Ruth for her service as Council Secretary. We will appoint a congregation member to fulfill the remainder of the term. Interested individuals should reach out to Deb Dietrich.
- Discussed timelines in preparation for upcoming Congregational Meetings, which will be held as follows:
- February 18, following service to approve the Annual Report.
- March 3, following service to approve the 2024 Annual Budget (to be effective April 1). Council will finalize their budget proposal at their February meeting.
- The monthly Congregational Conversation will follow the meeting to be efficient.
- Officially endorsed the formation of a planning committee to pursue the development of a second worship service with a different format, music, etc. That group is encouraged to learn what is working in other congregations.
- Continued to discuss the draft budget and make adjustments to the personnel investment lines.
- Learned that our 2023 income was greater than 2022 and better than budgeted, while expenses were less than budgeted.
- Average weekly attendance in 2023 was 106 members up from an average of 86 in 2022.
- Average weekly giving was also up in 2023 to \$4700, up from \$4300 in 2022.
- The main point of contact for any property concerns is now Tim Fox.
- The 3 month trial period for communion to be held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month plus festival days is over. On the recommendation of the Worship Team, this will continue permanently.
- The Serve Team is adjusting the designations for the monthly Mission envelopes and will publicize those changes with the congregation. The mission work we are supporting remains the same just for assigned to different months.
- The Care Team will be sending Valentines to our members whose "smiles we miss".
- The Learn Team developed a calendar of events and activities for 2024.

CHECK OUT OUR ONLINE CALENDAR

Saint John's has a newly updated online calendar. You can find this on our church website. Use the QR code on the right to check it out now. Check it to see what's happening, when is the newsletter deadline, or when Sunday's service includes Holy Communion.



While you're there...

Click  to print the calendar.

Click  to add the calendar feed to your device.



CONNECT WITH OUR
zoom
BIBLE STUDIES

TUESDAYS: 5PM-6PM
Led by Pastor Rich
Register by emailing to:
pastor@saintjohnss.com



Altar Flowers

In October we learned that Stein's florist in Shillington would no longer be doing altar vases for churches. After making calls to many local florists, Royers has

the most economical prices for our needs. The price will be \$55, only a dollar more than we are currently paying Steins. If you are interested in sponsoring flowers, please fill out a sponsorship form on the table outside of the office.

December 2023 mission was to benefit Moment of Magic and together we raised \$242.69. February's mission is SAFE berks.



**MEN'S
BREAKFAST**

Food | Fellowship | Faith
2nd and 4th Thursdays, 9 AM



Please **RSVP**
to Pastor Rich
By the prior **Tues-**
day

pastor@saintjohnss.com
610-401-5602



Ash Wednesday

February 14th

7:00 PM



Saint John's Famous

Easter Eggs

Orders accepted

Until March 17th



February Happenings



| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| <p>28 9:00am Worship Service 8:00pm AA/Alanon Meeting</p> | <p>29 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM</p> | <p>30 Bulletin announcements due by Noon Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM 5:00pm Pastor Rich's Zoom Bible Study</p> | <p>31 Annual Reports Due today. Thank you! Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM</p> | <p>1 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM 5:30pm Spaghetti Dinner 7:00pm Choir Practice</p> | <p>2 Church Office is Closed Deacon Diana Day Off Pastor Rich Day Off</p> | <p>3</p> |
| <p>4 Noisy Offering to Support Community Hunger 9:00am Worship Service with Holy Communion 8:00pm AA/Alanon Meeting</p> | <p>5 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM</p> | <p>6 Bulletin announcements due by Noon Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM 5:00pm Pastor Rich's Zoom Bible Study 6:30pm Team Meetings</p> | <p>7 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM</p> | <p>8 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM 9:00am Men's Breakfast 7:00pm Choir Practice</p> | <p>9 Church Office is Closed Deacon Diana Day Off Pastor Rich Day Off</p> | <p>10 9:00am Fellowship Hall Rental</p> |
| <p>11 Noisy Offering to Support Community Hunger 9:00am Worship Service 8:00pm AA/Alanon Meeting</p> | <p>12 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM</p> | <p>13 Bulletin announcements due by Noon Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM 5:00pm Pastor Rich's Zoom Bible Study 6:30pm Executive Committee Meeting 6:30pm Spring Township Women's Club</p> | <p>14 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM 6:30pm Property Committee Meeting 7:30pm Ash Wednesday Service</p> | <p>15 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM 12:30pm Food Pantry Setup 7:00pm Choir Practice</p> | <p>16 Church Office is Closed Deacon Diana Day Off Pastor Rich Day Off 10:00am Soup Kitchen 2:30pm Food Pantry Distribution</p> | <p>17 3:00pm Act 2Day 4Tomorrow Youth Hunger Event</p> |
| <p>18 12:00am Act 2Day 4Tomorrow Youth Hunger Event 9:00am Worship Service with Holy Communion 8:00pm AA/Alanon Meeting</p> | <p>19 Church Office is closed</p> | <p>20 Bulletin announcements due by Noon Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM Newsletter Articles Due Today 5:00pm Pastor Rich's Zoom Bible Study 6:30pm Church Council</p> | <p>21 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM Easter Egg Candy</p> | <p>22 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM Easter Egg Candy 9:00am Men's Breakfast 7:00pm Choir Practice</p> | <p>23 Church Office is Closed Deacon Diana Day Off Pastor Rich Day Off Easter Egg Candy</p> | <p>24 Easter Egg Candy 4:00pm Coldest Night of the Year Community Walk 7:00pm Opportunity House</p> |
| <p>25 Easter Egg Candy 9:00am Worship Service 10:00am Congregational Conversation 4:00pm Monthly Scout Troop 456 Meeting 8:00pm AA/Alanon Meeting</p> | <p>26 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM Easter Egg Candy</p> | <p>27 Bulletin announcements due by Noon Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM Easter Egg Candy 5:00pm Pastor Rich's Zoom Bible Study</p> | <p>28 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM Newsletter Assembly Easter Egg Candy</p> | <p>29 Church Office Hours 9AM-2PM Easter Egg Candy 7:00pm Choir Practice</p> | <p>1</p> | <p>2</p> |

