



St. John's Lutheran Church

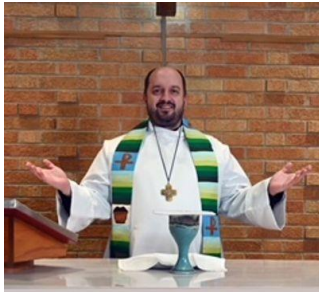
Hatboro, PA
Faith – Service – Community

Monthly News & Updates

December 2023

A Letter from Pastor Bo

December – The Prince and the P's



Advent! What a wonderful time of year. Prepare your hearts and lives for the coming of Jesus, the Prince of God.

We're still going to largely be in the Old Testament, and December will have a lot of the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah foretold the coming reign of God, and in Jesus, we see that reign come to rescue the world from our alienation from God and each other.

Looking over the texts, what jumped out at me was a way to talk about 6 P-words when talking about our hope in the coming reign of God.

December 3rd – The **Presence** of God. In Isaiah 64, everything relies on the presence of God. Same with Mark 13. When God is present, all is right; when God is (seemingly) absent, all is not right. And we can't fix it. We need God to draw near. How do we live in the space between 'God is nowhere' and 'God is now here'? And I hope you will be present at 11:30 that day to vote on your pastor! Your presence is important!

December 10th – The **Power** of God. The Good news from Isaiah 40, is that God will come with the power to make everything sad become untrue. Our exile, our alienation, our lostness – God has shown up and is leading us out of exile into the abundant life. God comes with power, yet gently leads us.

December 17th – The **Provision** of God. The bad news is that we have made a mess of things. The good news is that God provides us what we lack, even what we have lost – a beautiful garland when all we have is ashes, gladness when all we have is mourning, a mantle or praise when our spirit is faint.

December 24th morning (Advent 4) – The **Place** where God Dwells. David wants to build a magnificent palace for God. God says, 'No, I will build a house for you.' David's house is his royal dynasty God has promised. And it so happens that this 'house' will also house the presence of God, in a descendant of David who looks nothing like royalty.

Christmas Eve – The **Promise** God Fulfills. The joy God has for us is ours forever, and the enemy of our souls cannot steal it from us any longer.

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December – The Prince and the P's *Continued*

New Year's Eve – The **Punctuality** of God. We'll look at time from God's perspective. God makes everything beautiful in its time, and God's timetable might be different than ours. Ecclesiastes tells us that 'there is a time for everything under the sun.'

It's going to be a beautiful month of worshiping God. Take time in the month to remember what the season is about! Don't get caught up in the pressures of the world, but let God rescue from them, so that you can be present for others in heartfelt loving service.

One way to lean into the season is by coming to our Midweek Advent services, Wednesdays at 11! And just like our weekend services are 6 P's, our Wednesdays will be 3 'Let it Be's. Here are the themes, just to whet your appetite.

- Whispered Words of Wisdom
- There Will Be an Answer
- Shine Until Tomorrow

Grace and peace,

Pastor Bo



December Important Dates

December 2 – Advent Decorating

December 3 – Pastor Call Vote & Luncheon

December 10 – Music Sunday

December 17 – Christmas Carol Sing

December 24 – Christmas Eve

December 25 – Christmas Day

Food Pantry Current Need

- Tuna
- Boxed Pasta
- Canned Black Beans
- Canned Peaches
- Canned Pasta Sauce
- Baked Beans
- Beef Stew
- Toilet Paper

Food Pantry Volunteers Needed

We have openings for volunteers for both Monday night set up (5:30 pm until 7-ish) and Thursday night client serve (5:30-8:00 pm). Also, we are looking to create a substitute corps for our day shifts (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 10:00-1:00). If your middle school/high school students need service hours, now is the time to earn them. Contact Carol Schlegel (cschlegel9@aol.com) or Alan Eickhoff (alan_eickhoff@yahoo.com)



Food Pantry Report

This Thanksgiving Season the Cupboard Leadership Team would like to highlight the many people whose regular efforts keep the operation going. Throughout the year we have highlighted “special” actions and we are deeply appreciative of those. However, it takes a small army of people to keep things running on a daily basis.

First, a huge thank you to those who volunteer their time for the benefit of the Cupboard. These are the volunteers who work the shifts, the drivers who pick up donations and purchases, the volunteers who then sort and store the inventory in preparation to offering it to our clients.

Next to be recognized are those who make donations. There is a cadre of donors at Redeemer Lutheran and we regularly receive items that reflect their reading of our needs list. Church of the Advent has conducted special campaigns on a monthly basis. Hatboro Baptist collects items on a regular basis. Each church has also found folks who will deliver these items to us. St. John’s has a collection bin in the narthex. We also need to recognize those who write checks and donate gift cards so that we can purchase the things we need.

Members of the business community support us on a regular basis beyond the special campaigns. Grocery Outlet and Giant Supermarkets are the leaders in this field. The generosity is heartwarming. We get a donation of bread and pastry three times per week from the Wilson Senior Center in Warminster. There is a donation of bread and pastry once a week from Willow Grove Giant and another each week from Jamison Giant.

Then, too, there are the youth. Young people needing community service hours fill in the volunteer gaps during our shifts as we are open. We host young people from the Abington Achievement Program.

And finally, there are those of you who pray for us and the people we serve. Bless you all this Thanksgiving Holiday Season.

LAST MONTH

Youth Group Haunted House

Our Youth Group once again put on our annual haunted house for our congregation, and opened it up again that evening for a community dinner.



Youth Sunday

Our kids led worship again this Reformation Sunday, and they all did a great job! Thank you to Jill for preaching, and to everyone else for leading the rest: Joy, Katrina, Kiran, Piper, Rosie, Sadie, Sarah, Strat, and Tucker. The kids also presented Pastor Bo with one more gift for Pastor Appreciation Month, a t-shirt along with some cards they made him.



Youth Group Friendsgiving

Friendsgiving was a hit this year, with our Youth Group bringing dishes to build a feast! We shared food and laughs, and when dinner was done the kids played Manhunt in the dark church – their favorite thing to do!



Hatboro Holiday Parade

A few members of St. John's joined the fun in the Hatboro Holiday Parade this year! We handed out candy canes and hot chocolate, and spread some holiday cheer with Christmas songs playing from the truck! It was a great time!



Youth News & Events



Sunday School is back! Bring your child to Sunday School on Sunday mornings at 10 am. We are offering classes for two different age groups:

Preschool/Kindergarten, and 1st-6th grades. Youth in grades 7 and up are invited to help teach the younger kids!

The December Lesson Schedule:

December 3

The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost

December 10

No Sunday School

December 17

Advent Candles & Visit from Santa

December 24

No Sunday School

December 31

No Sunday School



We can't have Sunday School without our teachers! We'd love to have enough volunteers so that the commitment is only one Sunday a month. We are looking for teachers for a Preschool/Kindergarten class, and a class for our 1st-6th graders.

Our lessons are so easy and fun to teach that one Sunday last year, one of our students ran the class, so we know you can do it! If you're interested, please reach out to Abbie Metheny at sichrised@gmail.com.



Youth Group

Youth Group will meet on Saturday, December 9th at 6:30 pm for a gift exchange activity.



National Youth Gathering

We are trying to take our Youth Group to the ELCA's 2024 National Youth Gathering in New Orleans! If you'd like to support us, you can donate on St. John's website under "Children and Youth," then click "ELCA Youth Gathering." Thank you for your support!

CHURCH NEWS



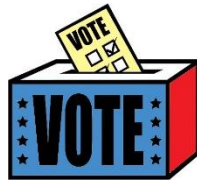
Decorating for Advent

Join us on **Saturday, December 2nd at 10 am** to hang the greens in the sanctuary to prepare for Advent! We need all the help we can get to have everything all set up for Advent.



Advent Readers

We are asking families or groups of friends to please sign up to read a short reading and light the Advent candle(s) each week. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex, or you can email the office to sign up.



Pastor Call Vote

We have an approved date for the Pastor Call Vote! The vote will be on **Sunday, December 3rd**, at 11:30 am. **All confirmed members are eligible to vote**, and are encouraged to attend. 150 members must be present for this meeting..



Call Vote Luncheon

There will be a light lunch after the vote, please sign up to attend on your yellow attendance card. We are asking the congregation for donations of salads (any kind) and desserts. Sign ups for donations are on the bulletin board.



County Choraliers Concert

The County Choraliers' 2023 "Let It Snow" concert will be on **Sunday, December 3, at 4:00pm** here at St. John's. A free-will offering is appreciated. We hope to see you there!



Christmas Caroling

Join us on **Sunday, December 17th at 5:30 pm** to go caroling! We will meet in Fellowship Hall and then leave to carol around the area for approximately two hours before returning for treats, hot chocolate, and stories for the children. We are looking for singers and drivers to join us for a night of singing, stories, and snacks! Sign up sheets are available on the prayer card table in the narthex, as well as on bulletin boards in Fellowship Hall.



We're gearing up for Music Sunday on **December 10th**! Michael Brinkworth and all of our ensembles are working hard and can't wait for the big day!



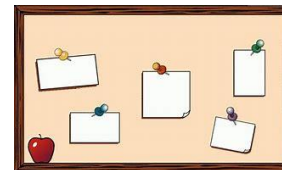
Ladies' Lunch Bunch

Our Women's Ministry Committee invites you to their first meeting in their new format, Ladies' Lunch Bunch. They will meet on Tuesday, December 5th at noon in Fellowship Hall. Bring your lunch and drinks, and enjoy a provided dessert.



Book Club

Come join us at book club! We meet monthly and discuss the book of the month. Each member chooses a book and we rotate through each member. The next book for book club is "Snowed in for Christmas" by Sarah Morgan. We'll meet **December 17th, at 4:30 pm** in the church library.



Next Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the January Newsletter is **December 15th**. Please send any events, notes, or volunteer opportunities to Ashdon at office@sjlch.org.



Giving Tree Donations

Beginning Saturday, November 25th and continuing through Sunday, December 10th, the Community Outreach Ministries Committee will be collecting gift cards and some gifts. You may take a gift tag off the tree which will be in the Narthex. We will be supporting the Breathing Room, which helps families affected by cancer, Valley Youth House in Warminster, which gives youth between the ages of 13 and 19 a safe place to live, and A Woman's Place, which helps women and children in domestic violence situations. All items must be returned by Sunday, December 10th. Gift cards should be sent to the Church Office, given to the Church Office during office hours, or put in an envelope and placed in the offering plate. **Please remember to attach the gift card receipt to the gift card, and please tell to which organization you would like it donated, if you have a preference.** Thank you –
The Community Outreach Ministries Committee



Faith Explorers

The Faith Explorers small group will meet on **Thursday, December 21st at 6 pm.** We will meet at the Country House Diner on York Road.



Christmas Eve Service Schedule

This year, the fourth Sunday of Advent falls on Christmas Eve, so here is the full weekend schedule. We will hold our regular weekend services at 5pm on Saturday and 10 am on Sunday morning, with **neither of those services offering Communion.**

We will then have three candlelight services on Christmas Eve, at **2pm, 5pm, and 8pm**, with the following details:

- 2:00pm** – Candlelight service with Communion
- 5:00pm** – Candlelight kids' service, no Communion
- 8:00pm** – Candlelight service with Communion



Men's Breakfast

Please join us on **December 20th** at **Lancer's Diner** for breakfast. We meet at **9:00**, but you can come as early as 8:45 and everyone gets a separate check. All men, any age, are welcome! Questions? Email me at: jimhowatjr@gmail.com

St. John's Committee Spotlights



Faith Explorers

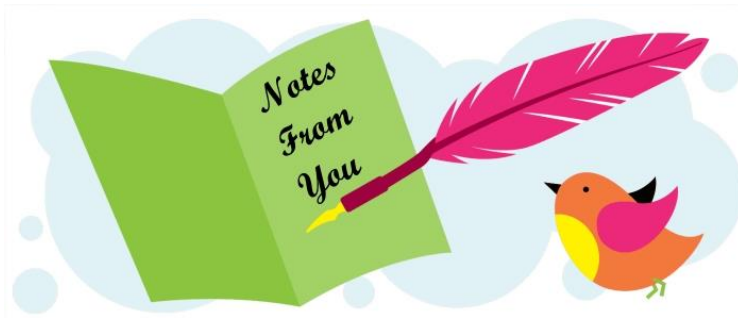
The Faith Explorers group meets monthly at the Country House Diner in Warminster to discuss a variety of topics. In the past year we've discussed various scripture readings, Pastor Bo's sermons, and a book on happiness. We would love for you to join us for a time of fellowship and discussion outside of the four walls of St. John's.



Prayer Card Ministry

As many of you know, the Prayer Card Ministry has been a small but important part of St. John's ministry for many years. Cards are one way to remind others that they are in both our thoughts and our prayers. Every year members who are 80+ receive cards wishing them a happy birthday. Young people are celebrated with special cards upon Confirmation. In times of need such as illness or grief, members and friends receive encouragement and comfort by opening cards and seeing the signatures of Pastor Bo and the many people of St. John's who are lifting them up in their prayers. Each weekend cards are placed on the Prayer Card Table in the narthex. Soon you will see Christmas cards for our shut-ins there. Please take the time to add your name to the cards to wish them a blessed Christmas and remind them they are not forgotten. To request a prayer card simply complete the form in the basket on the Prayer Card Table and return it to the basket, or contact Linda Eickhoff at 215 675-1298 or lindameickhoff@yahoo.com.

"The needs of your heart are in His Hands and in my prayers".
1 Peter 5:7



Thank you to the Needleworkers from all of us at Davita Dialysis!



Thank you to Pastor Bo for the phone calls, visits, and prayers during my recent illness, and thank you to the congregation for their continued support!

June Crippen

This [Youth] Sunday's service was a beacon of hope. Every one of those youngsters did a beautiful job. Kudos to all those staff members, parents, and to Pastor for a job well done. Im' sure it took a lot of time, patience, and effort, but the end product was beautiful.

Barb Quinn



Help Wanted

Are you...

- a Confirmand who needs to meet your Worship Participation requirements?
- a student looking for Community Service Opportunities?
- someone interested in learning a new skill and helping out behind the scenes?

Bob Muller would love your help running the cameras, lights, and sound equipment that take our weekend and online services to the next level!



Check Out Our Website!

Please find us at www.stjohnslutheranhatboro.org to stay up to date on what's happening at St. John's! Find Pastor Bo's sermons, upcoming events, and information about the church and the food pantry, and more!

Like Us on Facebook & Instagram!



St. John's Lutheran
Church – Hatboro



@sjlch505



Subscribe to Our YouTube Channel!

We're trying to get to 100 Subscribers! You can find us on YouTube by searching "St. John's Lutheran Church Hatboro."

Church Staff & Contact Information



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