

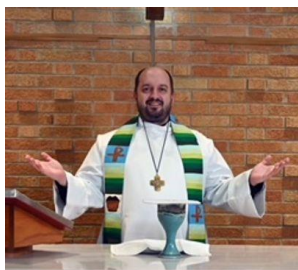


St. John's Lutheran Church

Hatboro, PA
Faith – Service – Community

Monthly News & Updates

December 2025



A Letter from Pastor Bo

December 2025
Prepare the Way

Matthew's presentation of the coming of Christ is not as much comfort and joy as we want. More like discomfort and struggle. Yes, that which we need, for which we have been hoping and longing, indeed is coming. But making space for such a gift is something we don't often think about in our holiday rituals. We may have saved up enough for presents, but what is the true cost of accommodating Salvation? We do not purchase God's salvation, but faith also looks like buy-in. Or surrender of destructive ways in order to be free and healthy.

December 7th – Baptized By Water, But Not Without Fire. John the Baptist is on the scene, ready to rebuke sinners and eat locusts, and he's all out of locusts. We are spending the season hoping for the coming of the Lord and of peace on earth, but John tells us that if we're waiting for that to happen when other people change, we're waiting for the wrong things. We are the ones who need to make way for the reign of God.

December 14th – I'll... Catch the Next Messiah. "God, sometimes you just don't come through. Do you need a woman to look after you?" – Tori Amos. Advent is a season of waiting. Yes, so we've heard. We've been waiting for a long time for things. When do we give up? Jesus draws our attention to signs of the kingdom in our midst, and gently encourages us not to stumble over our own disappointments.



Our Mission:

To be a loving, accepting community centered on growing in Christ.

Our Vision:

To give people a place to belong at any stage of their journey with God.



Important Dates in December

December 7 – Congregational Budget Meeting
December 7 – Christmas Caroling
December 14 – Music Sunday
December 20 – Joseph Musical Presentation
December 24 – Christmas Eve
December 25 – Christmas Day
December 31 – New Year's Day

A Letter from Pastor Bo – Continued.

December 21st – It's the Longest Night, and the Kid Isn't Yours, Either. This week, we look at the godly example Jesus has in stepfather Joseph. The cool thing is that this week's message will pair well with Joseph: The Musical (by our own Bob Evans), being performed Saturday the 20th!

December 24th – No Vacancy, But Still Plenty of Room. There's room in the inn – for Mary, Joseph, Jesus, shepherds, and you.

December 28th – The Empire Strikes Back. No good deed goes unpunished. When Jesus comes, the powers that be are threatened and make life even more miserable. But God continues to take care of God's people.

Ready or not, come Lord Jesus!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Bo



A Letter from the Generosity Committee:

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As we enter the holy season of Advent, we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. The One who brings hope, peace, joy, and love into our world. Advent is not passive waiting; it is a season of expectation, reflection, and purposeful action.

This year, our Advent theme is **“Waiting With Purpose.”** Throughout these four weeks, we will reflect on how God calls us to live generously with our time, love, service, and resources. Generosity is not limited to money. It is the way we share ourselves with the world God loves.

Each week of Advent will highlight a different dimension of generosity. You will see weekly reflections, service opportunities, and ways to bless others in our congregation and community. Together, we will prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ by serving, loving, and giving with joy.

May this Advent season renew our spirits and fill us with the hope and light of Christ.

In His Peace,

The Generosity Team

Food Pantry Report

November 7, 2025

October brought an unexpected increase in client visits due to the threat of stopping the SNAP benefits on November 1. We registered 63 new families! We served 468 families during the month.

We continue to restock using the MAHN grant in addition to the generous donations received from our partner churches as well as our other corporate donors. Grocery Outlet conducted a food drive for the pantry on October 11 and 12. We filled several SUV's with food as well as cash donations from the Grocery Outlet patrons.

We were blessed with an abundance of pork roasts enabling us to supply Church of the Advent with meat for some of their community meals.

We are currently soliciting donations of turkeys and all of the fixings to hopefully provide a Thanksgiving meal to all of our clients. We have received our first few turkeys with more on the way. Every year we have worried that we would not have enough turkeys but God has always provided. Giant Foods in Horsham saves the turkey certificates that are turned in from their customers and exchanges them for turkeys for our pantry. We are truly blessed to live in such a caring, compassionate community.

We continue to search for a substitute team leader. We are confident that the right person is out there. We just have to be patient.

As always, we are grateful for our volunteers and all of the organizations that support us in our efforts to provide food for those in need.

Due to the two large "Fill a Cop Car" food drives I do not have a current needs list but will provide one as soon as we inventory all of the donations.

(Needs List was compiled after this report and is current)



Hatboro Community Cupboard Most Needed Items

Cereal
Spaghetti Sauce
Tuna
Peanut Butter
Canned Carrots
Canned Potatoes
Hamburger Helper
Rice a Roni
Knorr Sides
Beef Stew
(small cans)
Baked Beans |
(small cans)
Fruit Cocktail

In addition to food and toiletry donations, the Community Cupboard is looking for donations of metal cabinets to hold our inventory.



Community Garden

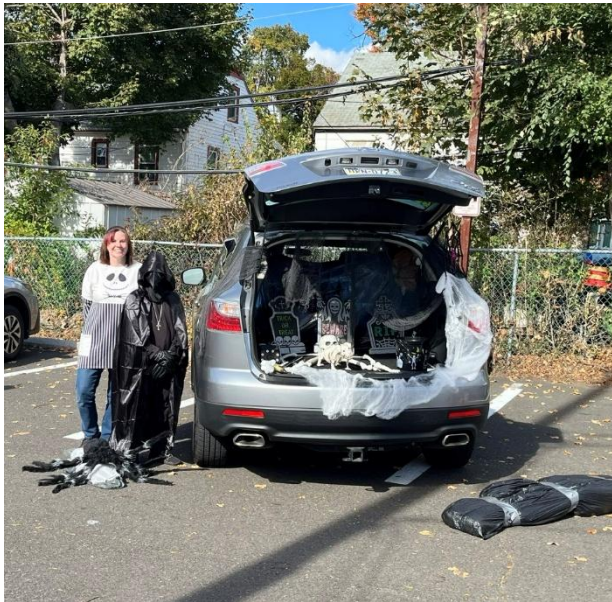
One of our Troop 81 scouts finished her Eagle project this month to build planter boxes for a community garden here at St. John's. Stay tuned for more details as we get closer to spring for how you can Grow With Us! Thank you to Hatboro Lumber for their donations of materials, and great job, Zoe!



Trunk or Treat

Thank you to everyone who came to our Trunk or Treat! It was a great day, and it was so fun to see our church members dress up! Both kids and adults had a great time!





Holiday Bazaar

Our Holiday Bazaar was a great success! With 60+ raffle baskets, 40+ vendors, and 4 food trucks, we raised over \$4,000! Thank you to our team of volunteers, our generous bakers and basket makers, our Generosity and Property Committees for their hard work, and to Audrey Gobetz for bringing such a wonderful event to life.



Youth News & Events



Join us for Sunday School! Bring your child to Sunday School on Sunday mornings at 10 am. All kids ages 3 (and potty trained) through 6th grade are welcome to join us! Youth in grades 7 and up are invited to help teach the younger kids!

Lesson Schedule:

December 7 – Fiery Furnace

December 14 – **No Sunday School**
(Music Sunday)

December 21 – Jesus' Birth & Santa Visit

December 28 – **No Sunday School**



Youth Group is held on the third Saturday of every month at 6:30 pm, from September – May.

This month's event will be a Christmas party offsite on **Saturday, December 13**. Watch your emails for more details!



Nursery

The nursery has been relocated to the Library. We are working to staff the nursery each week so that parents can drop their children off before worship, and pick them up after the service. The nursery will be open from 9:50 – 10 minutes after the service ends on Sunday mornings.

We are still looking for volunteers to help staff the nursery. We are hoping to have 4 teams, so that volunteers will only be needed in the nursery once a month. Please see Abbie Metheny or reach out to the office if you are interested.



There is no Confirmation Class this month. The next class is on **January 18, 2026**. We will be discussing The Small Catechism. Please read chapters 4-7 of *The Story* and complete your homework.

CHURCH NEWS



Poinsettia Dedications

Poinsettia dedication forms will be available attached to the weekly bulletins and in the Narthex this month. Poinsettias are \$25 each. Please return your order form and payment to the office by **December 1st**.



Christmas Caroling

We are going caroling on Sunday, **December 7th at 5:30 pm**. Sign up on the bulletin board to sing Christmas Classics to St. John's neighbors!

Questions? Contact Alan Divver at alan.m.divver@gmail.com or 215-436-0730.



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. Our next book for book club is "Michael without Apology" by Cathryn Ryan Hyde. We'll meet on **Sunday, December 7th at 1 pm** in the church library.



Congregational Budget Meeting

We will be holding a meeting to approve the 2026 budget on **Sunday, December 7th**, after the 10:00 worship service.

Please attend so we can approve the budget before the New Year! This meeting is in addition to our Annual Meeting in January.



County Choraliers Concert

The County Choraliers' 2025 "The Sounds of Christmas" concert will be on Sunday, **December 7th at 4:00 pm**. A free-will offering is appreciated. We hope to see you there!



Giving Tree

Beginning Saturday, November 29th and continuing through Sunday, December 14th, 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 14th**. Gift Cards should be sent to the Church Office, or 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.

Thank you,
The Community Outreach Ministries Committee.

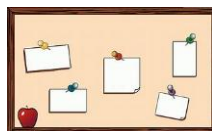


Team Spirit Fundraiser

Fellowship Connections invites you to support the air conditioning fundraiser while showing off your team spirit! Pay \$5.00 and wear your favorite team jersey the Saturday and Sunday of a home game for the Philadelphia Eagles! We will have mini paper footballs for you to sign your name and show off your support for the fundraiser, along with showing off your sports attire! A member of the Fellowship Connections Committee will be collecting \$5.00 before and after **Saturday and Sunday services** during the weekends of Eagles home games: **In December, that is December 13-14 and December 27-28**. If you decide to wear Dallas Cowboys attire, there will be a double charge for you!! Just joking! Everyone is welcome to wear their favorite team jersey! No worries at all if you do not own a jersey or sports attire. You can still donate towards the air conditioning unit!



We're gearing up for Music Sunday on **December 14th**! Michael Brinkworth and all of our ensembles are working hard and can't wait for the big day!



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.



Faith Explorers

The next Faith Explorers meeting will be on Thursday, December 18th at 6 pm at the Break Time Diner in Warminster.



Christmas Eve Service Schedule

We will 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



Dinner and a Show

We will once again be putting on Bob Evans' original musical *Joseph & Mary* this Advent! On **December 20th**, join us for dinner and a show.

Dinner will be served in Fellowship Hall from 5:00-6:30 pm. There will be a pasta buffet, salad, sides, and dessert. Dinner will be \$20 for adults and \$10 for children.

The musical presentation will be at 7:00, and we will accept a free will offering.

Please note: The Saturday Worship Service on December 20th will be at 3 pm to accommodate the musical.



Air Conditioning Fundraiser

We are anticipating that we will need to replace the sanctuary's air conditioner next year, and it's time to get a head start on fundraising! We are aiming to raise \$100,000, and as of the end of October we have raised over \$13,000! Please mark your donations for the air conditioner, and watch our progress on the thermometer in the Narthex!

Thank You!

Dear friends, I want to express my thanks for the beautiful altar flowers given to me after the lovely All Saints service on Sunday. The white carnations, chrysanthemums, and baby's breath add joy to my home as they remind me of Alan and all the saints who have gone home to our Lord before him. The continued thoughtfulness and encouragement you give me truly touches my heart, and I am so thankful. – Linda Eickhoff

Finance Corner:

End of October 2025 Deficit Update

Year-to-Date Financial Status through 10/31/25

Income	\$302,679.00
Expenses	\$328,620.34
Deficit	\$25,941.34

VOLUNTEER



Committee Members Needed

We need members for the following committees:

Altar Guild - We are looking for volunteers to join Altar Guild. Can you set up for a communion service and put away everything after the service? You will be working alongside someone that is an experienced team member. Set up and take down for communion takes approximately 40 minutes each time. Altar Guild is looking for members to help us out every four to five weeks. Contact the church office or Chris Brinkworth at 267-474-1395.

Coffee Hour - Coffee Hour is offered every Sunday following the 10:00 service in Fellowship Hall. Volunteers are needed for coffee hour. The teams make coffee and put out snacks, and clean up and put away after. Currently once every 3 weeks until we are able to add an additional team. Contact Marcie Divver. Thank you.

Property Committee - The Property Committee is inviting members of St. John's to consider joining the committee. This committee is responsible for the church building, the church grounds, as well as the building and grounds at 457 Crescent Rd (parsonage). Committee needs are currently most often handled by email contact. Check the tab for committees on the church website to see the postings of what has been done each month. If you are interested in joining, please contact the office.

Women's Ministry - Our Women's Ministry program is going to be "Re-imagined." We are looking for volunteers to join our committee to help plan future Women's Ministry activities and events. Please consider volunteering and being part of the future of Women's Ministry at St. John's. If you are interested, please see Carolyn Kircher or Pastor Bo, or email Carolyn Kircher at kirchercj615@verizon.net.



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?

We would love your help running the cameras, lights, and sound equipment that take our weekend and online services to the next level! Please reach out to the church office if you're interested in joining the Media Team!



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



Pastor Bo Bannister

Cell: 765-426-0500

Email: pastorbo@sjlch.org

Minister of Music: Michael Brinkworth

Director of Christian Education: Abbie Metheny

Email: sjchrised@gmail.com

Office Administrator: Ashdon Bobbie

Social Media Coordinator: Jess Flynn

Church Office: (215) 675-2031

Church Email: office@sjlch.org

Church Website:

www.stjohnslutheranhatboro.org

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday 9 am – 2 pm.

Please call the office before coming in.