



St. John's Lutheran Church

Hatboro, PA

Faith – Service – Community

Monthly News & Updates

March 2025



A Letter from Pastor Bo

March 2025

March 2025 – **The First Half of Lent: Turning Towards the Light.** I see a journey in these weeks, a journey towards the true light. Like a plant bending towards the sun, our spirits bend to the light of God's love. That can be our prayer during this season: Bend me/us toward the light!

March 2nd – **Transfiguration: The Light** – It's good to know what the endgame is. It's Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Listen to him! By gazing on the light of Jesus' face, and by going down the mountain with him, we are transformed into the light. Two baptisms today as well! How fitting!

March 5th – **Ash Wednesday: Putting Out False Fires.** We don't see light; rather, light allows us to see everything else. But what if the light we're using is bad? What if we don't see everything else properly. The world gives us false lights that never give us the whole picture. Ash Wednesday calls us to come to terms with our darkness, and with the fact that no light can help us but the true light of God's love.

March 9th – **Stripped of Pride** – As Jesus shed his support system to fast in the wilderness (Luke 4), and as Israel came into the Promised Land on a humble recognition that it was by God's grace and not by human strength that they got there (Dt. 26), so we too are called to confess God's strength through our weakness.



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.

A Letter from Pastor Bo – March 2025 – Contd.

March 16th – **Total Trust** – This one will be delivered by the wonderful Reverend Katherine Cartwright Knodel (pronounce the 'K') of Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Yardley. What I'm seeing in these texts is this: So close to the finish line, we may be, like Jesus (Luke 13.31-35) or Abraham (Gen. 15), tempted to give up and settle for the blessings God has given us so far, even if they fall short of what was expected from God or from us. Now is not the time to give up, but to keep going forward in risky faith.

March 23rd – **Invitation to Receive Freely** – Now that we come to a place where we don't think too highly of our own contributions to the world's well-being, God invites us to freely receive gifts that we did not earn, by which God gives us strength to actually do some good in the world.

March 30th – **Eating the Fruit.** We stop in this middle week of Lent to enjoy some of the fruit of the land before we fully get there. This reminds us that this journey is not 100% faith and 0% sight. We do see the promises of God coming to fulfillment all the time, and this gives us encouragement that we are on the right track. In this mid-point, let's take a moment and enjoy the presence of God with us all through this lonesome valley.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Bo



Important Dates in February

March 2 – Fastnacht Talent Show

March 5 – Ash Wednesday

March 9 – New Members Class



Food Pantry Report

February 13, 2025

January 2025 has contained several surprises, most them have been neutral or positive in their impact. Certainly, the weather has been a surprise. Luckily, none of the storms forced the closing of the Cupboard during January though attendance for the month was down slightly from January 2024. This year we served 412 families as compared to 448 in 2024. When inclement weather occurs, we follow the Hatboro Horsham School District. If they close, then so do we. We are not impacted by any two-hour delays that they may employ.

The year started with a surprise monetary donation from co-sponsor Redeemer Lutheran. This was in addition to their regular product donations.

Church of the Advent conducts month-long campaigns from their congregation and then matches the amount of the donation. This produced 144 boxes of pasta and 214 boxes of cereal.

The students of Hallowell Elementary in the Hatboro Horsham School District conducted a food drive and delivered their collection to us at the start of the new year. This was part of our working with the district to help not only keep our shelves stocked but to educate students about food insecurity and community responsibility.

The really negative surprise came on Monday January 27 when we discovered that a 50 cubic foot freezer had stopped working. It was full of meat and lasagna family meals. All of that was lost. However, in this tragedy we have found good news. Though the fan motor burned out, the compressor was still in working condition and did not need replacing. Also, because this is a commercial unit it means a company that serves commercial units is needed. We have not had a need for such a company until now. We found a local company that responded the same day that we called them. They diagnosed the problem, ordered the part and installed it in under a week's time. We are back to full storage capacity again.

We are thankful for your continued support and prayers as we help our neighbors combat food insecurity.

Most Needed Items

Pasta Sauce
White Rice
Canned Potatoes
Beef Stew
Rice a Roni
Baked Beans
Hamburger Helper
Jelly
Peanut Butter
Apple Juice

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

LAST MONTH

Youth-Led Worship

Our youth led worship on Sunday, January 26th. Thank you to the kids who participated, especially Christine Sweeney for her lovely sermon!



Youth News & Events



Sunday School is back! 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:

March 2 – What Is Lent?

March 9 – Palm Sunday (Lesson)

March 16 – Last Supper

March 23 – Jesus Is Betrayed

March 30 – Youth Sunday – *No Sunday*



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

Stay tuned for details for our March activity!



Easter Egg Hunt

Join us for our annual Easter Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday, **April 13th**, after the 10:00 service.



Confirmation Classes will be held on the fourth Sunday of every month, at 6:30 pm, from September – May.

Our next Confirmation class will be on Sunday, March 23, at 6:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. Pizza will be provided. Students should complete their homework before class!



First Holy Communion Classes

Our fourth-grade Sunday School class will meet during the season of Lent to prepare for their First Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday. Classes will be held during Sunday School (10 am). Please reach out to Abbie at sichrised@gmail.com if you are interested in signing your child up for classes!

Class Schedule:

March 9 – Class #1

March 23 – Class #2

April 6 – Class #3

April 13 – Baking Bread

April 13 (after the Egg Hunt) – Review with Pastor Bo

Thursday, April 17 – Students Receive First Holy Communion

CHURCH NEWS



Community Outreach Pet Drive

The Community Outreach Committee will be holding a Furry Friends Drive from Saturday, February 15th through Sunday, March 2nd. We will be collecting wet and dry food for dogs and cats. Treats, toys, collars, food/water bowls and leashes will also be appreciated. Please consider helping our furry friends in our community. All donations will go to local pet rescues or the Hatboro Community Cupboard here at St. John's. There will be boxes in the Narthex for the items. Thank you for your support. All our Furry Friends thank you with a big bark and meow! The Community Outreach Ministry Team thanks St. John's for all the support throughout the year! If you have any questions, please see Jaime Cameron or send an email to cameronviteacher02@gmail.com, or call 267-992-2323.



Fastnacht Talent Show

Yes! It is time again for fun and donuts! And to usher in the season, please join us on **Sunday, March 2nd at 2 pm** for an afternoon filled with plenty of fun and entertainment, and of course donuts! Please join us in the sanctuary, with donuts to follow in Fellowship Hall.

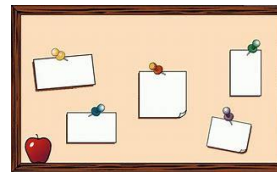
Drive-Thru Ashes



Ash Wednesday this year will be on **Wednesday, March 5th**, and we will once again offer Drive-Thru Ashes in the loop out front. We will be out there from 6:30 am – 9 am.



Ash Wednesday is on **March 5th**, and we will offer an Ash Wednesday service at 7pm.



Next Newsletter Deadline

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



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 "In an Instant" by Suzanne Redfearn. We'll meet on **March 8th at 1 pm** in the church library.



Women's Ministry's Ladies Lunch Bunch will return on **Tuesday, March 18th at 12 noon**. Bring your lunch and drinks, and enjoy a provided dessert. Please sign up to attend on the bulletin board on the ramp to Fellowship Hall.

The Ladies Lunch Bunch meets on the third Tuesday of each month at noon in Fellowship Hall.



New Members Class

The next New Members Class will be on **Sunday, March 9th** after the 10:00 worship service.



Faith Explorers

The Faith Explorers small group will meet on **Thursday, March 27th at 6 pm**. We will meet in Fellowship Hall.



There will be Midweek Lenten Services every **Wednesday at 11 am**, starting on **March 12th**.



Lower Bucks Conference Pulpit Swap

On March 16th, 11 pastors in the Lower Bucks Conference of our Synod (we are in Lower Bucks even though technically Montgomery) will be swapping pulpits. Our dean, Nathan Krause, put it this way:

My goal for this is two fold, although you may have others. First, I hope that we can increase awareness amongst ourselves and our congregations that we are called to be pastors of the congregation, but also to be pastors to the whole church. And there are going to be times what our fellow conference churches will need our help and support. Second, I hope that we can get a different view of our own ministry after being in another. It might help us to think differently, try something different, or even imagine a whole new thing in our own context.

Pastor Bo will be preaching at Lutheran Church of God's Love in Newtown. Preaching at St. John's will be Katherine Cartwright Knodel (K is pronounced) from Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Yardley.



The Rev. Katherine Cartwright Knodel, Pastor

Pastor Katherine brings a wealth of experience in transitional ministry and will shepherd the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Yardley through this next phase in the congregation's journey.

A life-long Lutheran, Pastor Katherine hails from Washington, DC. She completed her undergrad work in journalism, literature, and creative writing at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, and her Master of Divinity degree at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (now United Lutheran Seminary).

She has been ordained for 31 years and has served congregations near Pittsburgh, in Wilmington, DE, and throughout the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod. She is a poet and writer, and has interests in spirituality, healing, anthropology and archaeology, and myth and sacred story across cultures. Her two children, Alyson and Charlie, are grown and enjoying their young adulthood and burgeoning careers.



Food Collection

Instead of giving up something for Lent, let us bring in a food item for the Hatboro Community Cupboard. Each week in Lent there will be a different theme:

March 8-9: Pasta Sauce

March 15-16: Boxed Pasta

March 22-23: Canned Meats (Spam, Chicken, Salmon, etc.)

March 29-30: Canned Potatoes

April 5-6: Side Dishes (Knorr, Rice a Roni, Hamburger Helper)

April 12-13: Cereal

The Community Outreach Committee thanks you for your continued response!



Easter Dedications

Dedication forms for Easter flowers will be attached to bulletins as well as loose on the Hospitality Table during the season of Lent. Tulips and lilies are \$15 each, and hydrangeas are \$24 each. Hydrangeas will be first come, first served, and flower type and color are not guaranteed. Please return dedication forms and payment by **Palm Sunday, April 13.**



Stations of the Crockpots

Lenten Family Night will be Sunday, **April 6th at 5pm.** We are using last year's theme again, Stations of the Crockpots, as this event will double as our Chili Cook Off. Start perfecting your chili and cornbread recipes now to be sure you're ready for the competition! Sign up on the bulletin board.



Coming Soon!

Before we know it, Spring will be in full bloom. The 75th Anniversary Committee will be sponsoring a fundraising plant sale for Mother's Day. The plants will be outdoor hanging baskets and large patio pots. More information will follow but make a note on your calendars for **May 11th.**

Orders will be taken six weeks prior to that date with pick up on May 11th.



Holy Week Worship Schedule

Maundy Thursday & First Holy Communion

April 17th

7 pm Worship

Good Friday – Tenebrae

April 18th

7 pm Worship

Easter Vigil

April 19th

5 pm Worship

Easter Morning

April 20th

7 am Sunrise Service

10 am Worship



Troop 81 B&G News

Numerous scouts were recognized at the January Court of Honor. Merit Badges are part of the advancement in rank requirements and were earned by: Jonah C. (Pets), Ashley Y. (Pets), Autumn W. (Camping, Citizenship in the Community, Personal Management), Lily D. (Family Life, Citizenship in the Community, Personal Management), Jacqueline H. (Automotive Maintenance, Personal Fitness, Personal Management, Pioneering, Camping, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nations, Family Life). Rebecca R. earned the Kayaking BSA Award and the World Conservation Award. Advancement in Rank was achieved by James A. and Ashley Y. advancing to First Class Scout, and Robert R., Brynn A., Rebecca R., and Zoe B. advancing to Life Scout. Scout of the Year recognition was given to Ethan C. for Troop 81 B and to Brynn A. for Troop 81 G. Great job everyone. Congratulations!

Thank You!

Thank you to all who came out to support the Youth Group at their annual Pasta Dinner. They raised about \$500 towards future activities. Thank you so much!

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.

Kids & Family Ministry - Our team works together to plan and execute Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and other events for youth and families at St. John's. Please let Abbie Metheny know at sjchrised@gmail.com.

Stewardship Committee - We are looking to bring back our Stewardship Committee. If you are interested in joining, please reach out to the office.

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 Alan Eickhoff (215-675-1298) or Ken Woods 215-290-9246.

Finance Corner

End of January 2025 Deficit Update

Year-to-Date Financial Status through 1/31/25	
Income	\$27,961.14
Expenses	\$32,272.01
Deficit	\$4,310.87



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



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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

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Director of Christian Education: Abbie Metheny

Email: sjchrised@gmail.com

Office Administrator: Ashdon Bobbie

Social Media Coordinator: Jess Flynn

Media Coordinator: Bob Muller

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.